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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Greetings Trojans:

It is a pleasure to welcome you to a new academic school year at Virginia State University (VSU). Here you will learn how to craft your skillset, receive a high-quality education and transform into the leader you are destined to become.

In 1882, Delegate Alfred W. Harris founded this institution with you in mind "where all may come and drink from the fountain of knowledge." His vision has enabled VSU to continue completing its mission "to provide educational programs that challenge the intellect and to prepare students to become knowledgeable, perceptive, and humane citizens of the world."

VSU has dedicated administrators, faculty and staff that will help you achieve success not only within education but also professionally. They will motivate and encourage as long as you push for excellence.

Our institution is "Virginia’s Opportunity University." While at VSU, challenge yourself, build lasting relationships and have the best transformative experience you possibly can. On behalf of the VSU Board of Visitors, administrators, faculty, staff and alumni, welcome and have a successful school year!

Sincerely,

Makola M. Abdullah
President

“VSU: Education, Research and Community Service in Central and Southside Virginia...”
An Equal Opportunity Employer/Equal Access Institution
VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

MISSION

Virginia State University, a public, comprehensive 1890 Land Grant institution and historically black college/university, is committed to the preparation of a diverse population of men and women through the advancement of academic programs and services that integrate instruction, research, extension, and outreach. The University endeavors to meet the educational needs of students, graduating lifelong learners who are well equipped to serve their communities as informed citizens, globally competitive leaders, and highly effective, ethical professionals.

VALUES

1. Student Centered – Promoting the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development of students in all facets of University life.
2. Integrity – Displaying the highest degree of ethical commitment in the pursuit of knowledge.
3. Engagement – Developing civically engaged citizens who value all persons and demonstrate the desire to positively impact their immediate surroundings, nation, and world.
4. Customer Service – Creating an atmosphere of respect, collegiality, and responsiveness to provide excellent service to our internal and external constituents.
5. Excellence – Utilizing a balanced approach to create a high expectation of achievement, awareness, and intellectual development among our students, faculty, and staff.
6. Scholarly Research – Conducting scholarly activity at the forefront of our disciplines and applying translational discoveries and intellectual pursuits to benefit the community.
7. Global – Preparing globally aware citizens that respect and appreciate cultural differences of all people through service and the dissemination of knowledge to the world.
8. Teaching – Providing learning environments and activities consistent with best educational practices to create a framework where scholarship is intentional, transformational, and deepens understanding in the preparation of future leaders.
9. Diversity – Fostering a community that identifies, values, and respects differences of all people by creating a positive experience for students, faculty, staff, and the community.
ACADEMIC POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND REGULATIONS

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.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completed Semesters</th>
<th>Semester GPA</th>
<th>Cumulative GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3+</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>OR 2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Quality Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Satisfactory completion: at the graduate level, successful completion of research and thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Satisfactory completion: at the undergraduate level, successful completion of certain experiences Satisfactory progress: at the graduate level Satisfactory progress: in research and thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory performance: student has not earned credit hours for which she/he has enrolled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Withdrawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>No credit given: administrative indication; awarded to Special Services students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU/Z</td>
<td>Course audit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Non-attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Omitted Grade: administrative indication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**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/](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.

**Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (Effective July 2011)**
Students receiving Federal Financial Aid must adhere to the following Federal Regulations regarding standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).

Virginia State University is required by Federal Regulations to adhere to minimum standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) that relate to a student's eligibility for federally funded financial aid programs, state and institutional grants, scholarships, employment and loan programs.
Students must meet the minimum satisfactory academic progress standards in order to initially receive and maintain eligibility for Title IV funds. The satisfactory academic progress standards apply to all students in degree seeking programs of study who wish to be considered for financial assistance.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS** (This Category of Students includes Baccalaureate and Post-Baccalaureate)

Cancellation letters are mailed as a courtesy to students. Whether or not a student receives a cancellation letter, each student is expected to understand the SAP requirements and monitor his/her academic performance. A Cancellation letter is a notice that a student is not eligible to receive financial aid. A student will receive a cancellation letter if any one of the following criteria is reached:

- The student’s cumulative GPA is less than 1.5 after attempting less than 30 hours, or less than 2.0 after attempting 30 or more hours (transfer credits are included in total hours attempted)
- The student earns less than 67% of their overall attempted hours at VSU (transfer credit hours are not included)
- The student attempts more than 150% of the hours required for their degree program (transfer credits included)
- The student completely withdraws from his/her last two semesters.

Example: A student in an undergraduate program that requires 120 credit hours will have eligibility for aid canceled after attempting more than 180 hours.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS** (This Category of students includes Master, Post-Masters, and Doctoral)

Cancellation letters are mailed as a courtesy to students. Whether or not a student receives a cancellation letter, each student is expected to understand the SAP requirements and monitor his/her academic performance. A Cancellation letter is a notice that a student is not eligible to receive financial aid. A student will receive a cancellation letter if any one of the following criteria is reached:

- The Student’s cumulative GPA is less than a 3.0
- The Student earns less than 67% of their attempted hours (transfer credit hours not included)
- The student attempts more than 150% of the hours required for their degree program (transfer credits included)
- The student completely withdraws from his/her last two consecutive semesters

Example: A student who is in a graduate degree program would be sent a SAP cancellation letter at the point his/her cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 or they fail to pass the required credit hours.

**FINANCIAL AID STATUS EXPLANATION**

- **Good** – Student is in good academic standing
- **Warning** – Student is alerted that their financial aid is in jeopardy due to their academic performance
- **Cancellation** – Student is informed by letter that their financial aid has been canceled
- **Over** - Student attempted 180 credit hours or more (Undergraduate); 45 hours or more (Graduate)
SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (Appealing Cancellation of Financial Aid Eligibility)

A student whose eligibility for financial aid has been canceled may submit an appeal if mitigating circumstances prevented the student from achieving Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). If a student feels that they violated SAP standards due to mitigating circumstances, the student may submit a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form to the VSU Office of Student Financial Aid.

DECISIONS OF THE SAP APPEALS COMMITTEE ARE FINAL

Supporting Documentation (All appeals must include supporting documentation)

To confirm your circumstances, you must attach documentation from an objective third party (Example: physician, counselor, lawyer, social worker, teacher, religious leader, academic advisor and/or VSU Counseling Center).

Your third party documentation must:

- Be submitted on official letterhead with appropriate signatures or via email form a valid VSU email account
- Verify that the circumstances occurred during the timeframe referenced in your appeal
- Verify that the circumstance(s) will no longer influence your academic performance
- If document submitted is an obituary notice of immediate family member, then your relationship to that family member must also be documented

Mitigating circumstances must be documented, and any appeal submitted without documentation will be denied. In some cases, the student will be instructed on the SAP Appeal to submit an Audit form from your advisor.

We realize that sharing personal information may be difficult. Be assured that your statement will remain confidential. Only Financial Aid Personnel will review your appeal. Appeals without appropriate supporting documentation WILL NOT BE REVIEWED.

 DEADLINES

To insure timely processing, it is your responsibility to initiate an appeal before the specified deadline.

Please submit Completed SAP Appeals to:

Office of Student Financial Aid
Attn: SAP Committee
P.O. Box 9031
112 Gandy Hall
Virginia State University, VA 23806
(804) 524-6818 Fax

Students will be notified in writing or by email of the results of their appeal
Appeal decisions are based on the information presented on the appeal form and the SAP criteria; therefore, it is important that the appeal contain as much supporting information and documentation as possible. Lack of supporting documentation is grounds for denial of the appeal. Appeal will fall into the following categories:

1. A-Deny (Denied) - Student is not eligible to receive financial aid (Private Loans Only)
2. Reinstated – Student is approved to receive financial aid for one semester but must meet specified criteria during the term to receive aid the next term.
**RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

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 Department of Student Success and Engagement 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 to 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, HARASSMENT, SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND RETALIATION

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clearly and unequivocally that Virginia State University prohibits discrimination, sexual assault, harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking and retaliation as well as any other sexual misconduct by individuals subject to its control or supervision.

Authority, Responsibility, and Duties

This policy governs the conduct of all university students and visitors (including, but not limited to, students participating in camp programs, non-degree seeking students, exchange students, when on the campus of Virginia State University, on university property, or in facilities, owned, or controlled by Virginia State University, or being utilized for university-related events. Any exceptions in the application or enforcement of these policies must be approved by the President of Virginia State University or his/her designee. This policy also is applicable to any conduct that occurs off campus that has continuing effects that create a hostile environment on campus. Allegations of on-campus or off-campus violations of this policy should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator in accordance with the guidance below and the Discrimination Grievance Procedures.

Policy Statements

The University is committed to maintaining an environment that is safe and free from harassment, sexual assault, stalking, dating and domestic violence, and discrimination based on race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, genetic information, against otherwise qualified persons with disabilities, or based on any other status protected by law. The University will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct against its students, faculty, staff, approved volunteers or visitors.

Prohibited Acts

A. The following acts are prohibited and therefore are policy violations:

1. Engaging in sexual assault, harassment, stalking, or relationship violence or any other act of sexual misconduct;

2. Retaliating in any manner against an individual who reports sexual assault, harassment, stalking, or dating violence or any other act of sexual misconduct;

3. Interfering with procedures to investigate or redress a complaint of sexual assault, harassment, stalking, or dating violence or any other act of sexual misconduct; and
4. Making an intentionally false accusation of sexual assault, harassment, stalking, or dating violence or any other act of sexual misconduct through the University’s procedures.

B. Any member of the University community who engages in one of these prohibited acts against any other member of the University community may be subject to corrective action, inclusive of sanctions, termination, and/or legal prosecution.

Definitions

A. **Discrimination** is inequitable and unlawful treatment based on an individual's protected characteristics or statuses -- race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, genetic information, disability, or any other status protected by law -- that excludes an individual from participation in, denies the individual the benefits of, treats the individual differently or otherwise adversely affects a term or condition of an individual's employment, education, living environment or participation in an educational program or activity. This includes failing to provide reasonable accommodation, consistent with state and federal law, to persons with disabilities.

B. **Harassment** is a form of discrimination in which unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct is directed toward an individual on the basis of his or her protected characteristics or statuses, by any member of the campus community. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents. Harassment violates this policy when it creates a hostile environment, as defined below.

C. **Sexual harassment** is a form of discrimination based on sex. It is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other conduct of a sexual nature including: verbal (e.g., specific demands for sexual favors, sexual innuendoes, sexually suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, or sexual threats); non-verbal (e.g., sexually suggestive emails, other writings, articles or documents, objects or pictures, graphic commentaries, suggestive or insulting sounds or gestures, leering, whistling, or obscene gestures); or physical (e.g., touching, pinching, brushing the body, any unwelcome or coerced sexual activity, including sexual assault). Sexual harassment, including sexual assault, can involve persons of the same or different sexes. Sexual harassment may also include sex-based harassment directed toward stereotypical notions of what is female/feminine v. male/masculine or a failure to conform to those gender stereotypes.

This policy prohibits the following types of sexual harassment:

a. Term or condition of employment or education. This type of sexual harassment (often referred to as "quid pro quo" harassment) occurs when the terms or conditions of employment, educational benefits, academic grades or opportunities, living environment or participation in a Virginia State University activity are conditioned upon, either explicitly or implicitly, submission to or rejection of unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, or such submission or rejection is a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment, education, living environment, or participation in a Virginia State University program or activity.

b. Hostile environment. Acts that create a hostile environment, as defined below.

D. **Hostile environment** may be created by oral, written, graphic or physical conduct that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive and objectively offensive that it interferes with, limits or denies the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from educational programs, services, opportunities, or activities or the individual's employment access, benefits or opportunities. Mere subjective offensiveness is not enough to create a hostile environment. In determining whether conduct is severe, persistent or pervasive, and thus creates a hostile environment, the following factors will be considered: (a) the degree to which the conduct affected one or more individuals'
education or employment; (b) the nature, scope, frequency, duration, and location of the incident(s); (c) the identity, number, and relationships of persons involved; (d) the perspective of a “reasonable person” in the same situation as the person subjected to the conduct, and (e) the nature of higher education.

Sexual Misconduct includes sexual assault, sexual exploitation, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking.

E. Sexual Assault is non-consensual contact of a sexual nature. It includes any sexual contact when the victim does not or is unable to consent through the use of force, fear, intimidation, physical helplessness, ruse, impairment or incapacity (including impairment or incapacitation as a result of the use of drugs or alcohol, knowingly or unknowingly) when the victim does not give or is unable to give consent; intentional and non-consensual touching of, or coercing, forcing, or attempting to coerce or force another to touch, a person’s genital area, groin, inner thigh, buttock or breast; and non-consensual sexual intercourse, defined as anal, oral, or vaginal penetration with any object. Some types of sexual acts which fall under the category of sexual assault include the following: rape, attempted rape and fondling.

Rape is defined as the penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.

Fondling is defined as the unwanted touching of the private parts of another person or forcing an unwilling person to touch another person’s intimate parts (e.g. genitalia, groin, breast or buttock, or clothing covering them) for the purposes of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental incapacity.

F. Consent is knowing, voluntary and clear permission by word or action, to engage in mutually agreed upon sexual activity. Silence does not necessarily constitute consent. Past consent to sexual activities, or a current or previous dating relationship, does not imply ongoing or future consent. Consent to some sexual contact (such as kissing or fondling) cannot be presumed to be consent for other sexual activity (such as intercourse). The existence of consent is based on the totality of the circumstances, including the context in which the alleged incident occurred.

Consent cannot be granted by an individual who:

1. Is incapacitated by any drug or intoxicant;
2. has been purposely compelled by force or threat of force;
3. is unaware that the act is being committed;
4. is impaired because of a mental or physical condition;
5. is coerced by supervisory or disciplinary authority; or
6. is less than the statutory age of consent.

G. Coercion is unreasonable pressure for sexual activity. Coercion cannot be used to obtain consent. Coercion includes the use of physical force, threats, and intimidating behavior to get another party to engage in sexual activity. When someone makes it clear that he or she does not want to be a part of such sexual activity, wants to stop, or does not want to go past a certain point of sexual interaction, continued pressure beyond that point can be coercive.

H. Incapacitation occurs when an individual is unable to give consent because she or he is mentally and/or physically helpless, unconscious, or unaware, due to drug or alcohol consumption (voluntarily or involuntarily) or for some other
reason. Engaging in sexual activity with someone a person knows to be – or should know to be – mentally or physically incapacitated is non-consensual and a violation of this policy. Mental or physical incapacitation can be a result of alcohol or other drug use, unconsciousness, blackout, sleep, involuntary physical restraint, or consuming so-called “date-rape” drugs, Rohypnol, Ketamine, Gamma Hydroxybutyrate(GHB), Burundanga, etc.

I. Sexual Exploitation occurs when a person takes non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for anyone’s advantage or benefit other than the person being exploited, and that behavior does not meet the definition of sexual assault. Sexual exploitation includes prostituting another person; non-consensual visual or audio recording of sexual activity; non-consensual distribution of photos, or postings (such as audio, video, images, or transcriptions) of an individual’s sexual activity or intimate body parts with an intent to embarrass such individual, non-consensual voyeurism and observation of people engaging in intimate behaviors, performing normal bodily functions, or displaying various states of undress without the person’s consent; knowingly transmitting a sexually transmitted infection (STI); or exposing one’s genitals to another in a non-consensual circumstances, or inducing incapacitation with the intent to engage in sexual misconduct.

J. Stalking is a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to: (i) fear for her, his or others’ safety, or (ii) suffer substantial emotional distress, meaning significant mental suffering or anguish that may, but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional treatment or counseling. A “course of conduct” means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts which the stalker directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about, a person, or interferes with a person’s property.

A "reasonable person" means a reasonable person under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the victim. "Substantial emotional distress" means significant mental suffering or anguish that may, but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional treatment or counseling.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

1. Following a person;
2. Appearing uninvited and unwanted at their home, place of business, or classroom;
3. Making harassing phone calls;
4. Mailing written messages, or sending electronic messages, including but not limited to e-mail, voice-mail, text messaging, and use of GPS and social networking sites;
5. Leaving messages or objects at a person’s home, place of business, vehicle, or classroom;
6. Stealing personal property and identity information
7. Vandalizing personal property; and,
8. Posting information or spreading rumors about the victim on the internet, in a public place, or by word of mouth.

K. Dating Violence is violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim. A social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature means a relationship which is characterized by the expectation of affection or sexual involvement between the parties. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on the reporting party statements and with a consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. Dating violence can be a single event or a pattern of behavior that includes, but is not limited to, sexual or physical
abuse or the threat of such abuse. Dating violence does not include acts covered under the definition of domestic violence.

L. Domestic Violence is a pattern of behavior, including acts or threatened acts, that includes asserted violent misdemeanor and felony offenses committed by (i) by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim; (ii) by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common; (iii) by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner; (iv) by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia; or (v) by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person’s acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred.

M. Relationship Violence is a term used to reference conduct associated with dating or domestic violence.

Retaliation Prohibited

Any form of retaliation, including intimidation, threats, harassment, and other adverse action taken or threatened against any complainant or person reporting or filing a complaint alleging discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct or any person cooperating in the investigation of allegations of discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct to include testifying, assisting or participating in any manner in an investigation pursuant to this policy and the Discrimination Grievance Procedures is strictly prohibited by this policy. Action is generally deemed adverse if it would deter a reasonable person in the same circumstances from opposing practices prohibited by this policy. Retaliation may result in disciplinary or other action independent of the sanctions or interim measures imposed in response to the underlying allegations of discrimination, sexual harassment or sexual misconduct.

Reporting and Filing Complaints

Complaints and reports of discrimination, retaliation, sexual misconduct, and sexual harassment should be made to the Title IX Coordinator. VSU’s Title IX Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the investigation of all reports of alleged discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct in accordance with the Discrimination Grievance Procedures and to oversee and address any problems that arise during any complaint.

The Virginia State University’s Title IX Coordinator is Julia Walker.

Julia Walker
Room 101 Virginia Hall
804-524-1007 or 804-524-5090
jawalker@vsu.edu

Confidential and Anonymous Reporting.

Confidential reporting resources are available on campus in the Counseling Center, Student Health and United Campus Ministries. Licensed mental health providers, medical providers, and the campus minister are the only persons who may guarantee confidentiality on campus. Off campus confidential counseling resources are listed below. VSU officials have varying reporting responsibilities under state and federal law. If a victim of conduct in violation of this policy or another reporting party wishes to make a confidential report, it must be made to physicians and other medical personnel at Student Health Services or Counseling Center staff. These individuals will encourage victims to make a report to VSU police, the Title IX Coordinator, or local law enforcement.
The victim- otherwise called the complainant- and the accused - otherwise called the respondent - should ask about confidentiality before reporting to other offices because other offices are limited in their ability to maintain confidentiality. Students and student organizations cannot keep reports confidential, even if working with officials above that are able to maintain confidentiality of reports.

**Reporting**

The University strongly encourages the reporting of all incidents of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator or any member of the Title IX team. A report is an account or description of a specific incident. There is no time limit for filing a complaint of sexual misconduct. However, complainants should report as soon as possible to maximize the University’s ability to respond. Filing a formal complaint is a written or verbal request for the University to investigate an incident and take appropriate actions. The University will investigate all formal complaints of sexual misconduct and will take appropriate disciplinary or corrective action in each instance. The University will investigate informal and formal complaints of sexual misconduct in a manner that preserves to the greatest extent possible the confidentiality of both parties.

A. A student, who files a formal complaint of sexual misconduct, will be provided a written explanation of her or his rights and options found in the Trojan Bill of Rights.

B. The University encourages individuals who make a report or file a formal complaint of sexual assault, stalking and relationship violence, regardless of where the report is made, to also contact the Sexual Assault Services Coordinator for assistance. The Coordinator will assist the victim in accessing and navigating services, resources, and referrals both on and off campus

C. Sexual assault, stalking and relationship violence may be reported to VSU Department of Police and Public Safety, local law enforcement, Sexual Assault Services, Student Conduct, Vice President of Student Affairs, Associate Vice President of Human Resources, Title IX Coordinator, or anonymously to a Campus Security Authority (CSA).

**Campus Reporting and Investigation:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julia Walker, Title IX Coordinator</th>
<th>Deborah Mallory, Deputy Title IX Coordinator</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Hall</td>
<td>20720 4th Avenue, Athletics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.O. Box 9412</td>
<td>804-524-5571</td>
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<tr>
<td>804-524-1007 or 804-524-5090</td>
<td>Email <a href="mailto:dmallory@vsu.edu">dmallory@vsu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:jawalker@vsu.edu">jawalker@vsu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<th>Sachiko Goode, Deputy Title IX Coordinator</th>
<th>Henry DeBose, Associate Vice President</th>
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<tr>
<td>Virginia Hall - Office of the Provost</td>
<td>(804) 524-5350</td>
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<tr>
<td>804-524-5305</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:hdebose@vsu.edu">hdebose@vsu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:sgoode@vsu.edu">sgoode@vsu.edu</a></td>
<td>Address: 21012 Service Rd</td>
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Sexual Misconduct Survivor Procedures and Services

Individuals who experience sexual assault or relationship violence are strongly encouraged to seek medical attention and to be examined for physical injury, the presence of sexually transmitted diseases, or pregnancy.

**Medical Care and Preservation of Evidence.** An individual who has been sexually assaulted should seek medical care and a forensic examination as soon as possible after the assault at one of the local hospitals listed below. An individual may request a Sexual Assault Advocate at any hospital, if one is not provided.

**It is important for the individual to be examined within 72 hours of the assault to recover physical evidence.** The Preliminary Evidence Recovery Kit (PERK) is a free exam that is used to collect evidence. Preserving evidence is often a key step in the successful investigation of alleged sexual misconduct.

Individuals have the right to have evidence collected and retained anonymously by law while they consider whether or not to pursue criminal charges.

Individuals who have been assaulted can enhance the preservation of physical evidence if they 
- Do not wash their hands, bathe, douche, or urinate until after the forensic examination;
- Do not eat, blow their noses, drink liquids, smoke or brush their teeth if oral contact took place until after the forensic examination;
1. Do not change clothes until after the forensic examination. Individuals who change clothes should place in a paper bag the clothing worn during the assault and take the bag with them to the forensic examination;

2. Do not clean or straighten the location of the crime until law enforcement officials have an opportunity to collect evidence;

3. Do not erase or destroy text messages, pictures, online postings, video and other documentary or electronic evidence that may corroborate a complaint.

On-campus care For Virginia State University students, medical care/consultation is available at Student Health Services if the complainant chooses not to go to the hospital. Student Health Services provides pregnancy and STI testing, and prophylactic treatment for STIs.

Students may obtain taxi vouchers for transportation to a medical facility for the forensic or PERK exam. A taxi voucher is obtained from Student Health Services, Counseling Services or Residence Life staff. Transportation by ambulance is obtained by dialing 911. The campus police can assist in transporting individuals who choose to report to law enforcement.

Hospitals:
VCU Health System, Medical College of Virginia
Forensic Nurse Examiner available 24 hours (804) 828-5250
1006 E. Marshall St. Richmond, VA 23298

Bon Secours St. Mary's Hospital
Forensic Nurse Examiner available 24 hours (804) 285-2011
5801 Bremo Rd. Richmond, VA 23226

Southside Regional Medical Center
(804) 765-5000
200 Medical Park Boulevard – Petersburg, VA 23805

Campus Support Resource Numbers:

Counseling and Support Services (All offices are located in Memorial Hall):

Sexual Assault Services …………………………… … (804) 524-6942 or (804) 524-5939
Counseling Services …………………………… .... (804) 524-5939 or (804) 524-5061
Student Health Services …………………..………… (804) 524-5711

Free Off Campus Counseling Resources:

The James House 24 hr. Hotline/TTY …………………………… ……… (804) 458-2840
Chesterfield Domestic and Sexual Violence Resource Center……….. (804) 318-8265
YWCA Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline ………………………………(804) 643-0888
Rights and Responsibilities

LGBTQ Partner Abuse & Sexual Assault Helpline ………………………….….. 1-866-356-6998

Criminal Reporting

A. If a victim is in immediate danger or needs immediate attention, the individual should contact 911 or use the emergency call box (blue emergency lights) to connect directly to the campus police station. Some conduct in violation of this policy may also be a crime under Virginia law. Individuals are encouraged to report incidents of sexual misconduct to law enforcement; even if the reporting individual is not certain if the conduct constitutes a crime. Crimes dealing with minors must be reported to law enforcement.

Amnesty for Other Violations

The University encourages reporting of incidents of sexual misconduct. Sometimes, complainants are hesitant to make reports because they fear that they may be charged with violations of the Student Code of Conduct, such as underage drinking at the time of the incident. To encourage reporting of sexual misconduct incidents, the University will consider all factors and exercise discretion on a case by case basis towards a complainant with respect to taking action for other violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

Interim Measures

During the investigation and resolution of complaints, the University may take interim measures to protect the complainant and other members of the VSU community from any harassment, discrimination, retaliation, and/or further violation perpetrated by the accused individual. If in the judgment of the Vice President of Student Affairs, Title IX Coordinator or other VSU administrative leader, the accused individual jeopardizes the safety and well-being of any member of the VSU community, the University may provide interim remedies to address the situation. To the degree feasible, VSU will seek the consent of the complainant before taking interim measures. Interim measures may include, but are not necessarily limited to, changing class schedules and housing, enforcing no-contact orders, barring access to campus, utilizing escorts on campus, requiring referral and coordination of counseling and health services, and modifying work, academic or training requirements.

Rights of the Complainant and the Respondent

Regardless of whether or not a complainant elects to pursue a hearing or whether or not the incident is alleged to have occurred on or off campus, the University will assist complainants of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking and will provide each complainant with a written explanation of her or his rights and options (see Trojan Bill of Rights in the appendix).

1. Confidentiality of the names of both parties and personally-identifiable information will be protected and excluded from timely warning, emergency notifications and record-keeping such as Campus Security Authority reports. Personally-identifiable information will be safeguarded in disciplinary proceedings and criminal investigations.

2. Both parties are entitled to the same opportunities to attend any pre-hearing and to review each other’s written statements, and have others present during an institutional disciplinary proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by an advisor of their choice.
3. Both parties have the right to change university housing and academic arrangements if requested and such changes are reasonably available.

4. Both parties have the right to have access to existing campus mental health and support services.

5. A complainant who obtains an Order of Protection from Virginia should provide a copy to campus police and the Title IX Coordinator. A complainant may then meet with campus police to develop a Safety Action Plan, which is a plan for campus police and the complainant to reduce risk of harm while on campus or coming and going from campus. This plan may include, but is not limited to, escorts, special parking arrangements, or independent study arrangements.

**Corrective Actions and Disciplinary Procedures**

1. If the respondent is a student, the University utilizes the process outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. Mediation or informal, cooperative resolution is not appropriate in cases of sexual misconduct.

2. The Sexual Assault Services Coordinator, in consultation with the Vice President of Student Affairs or designee, Office of Human Resources, and/or the Office of University Counsel, can advise a complainant of the procedures applicable in a given case.

3. **Standard of Evidence.** In accordance with the Office on Civil Rights (OCR), a preponderance of the evidence is the standard for investigation and conduct of student discipline proceedings in domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking cases. The "preponderance of the evidence" standard requires that the weight of the evidence, in totality, supports a finding that it is more likely than not that the alleged misconduct occurred. Decisions based on a preponderance of evidence may not meet other evidentiary standards required for a finding of guilt in criminal proceedings.

4. Sanctions that may be imposed for students resulting from the University disciplinary process include verbal warning, written reprimand, denial of specified university privileges, fines, restitution, removal of the student from the course in progress, community service, probation, mandatory assessment or education program, suspension, and expulsion.

5. Both the complainant and the respondent shall be informed simultaneously and in writing of the outcome of any institutional disciplinary proceeding, appeal procedures; any change to the result before it becomes final; and when the result becomes final.

**Education and Prevention Programs**

The University engages in comprehensive, intentional, and integrated programming, initiatives, strategies, and campaigns intended to end discrimination, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.

Educational programming consists of primary prevention and awareness programs for all incoming students and new employees and ongoing awareness and prevention campaigns for students and employees that:

1. identifies domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking;

2. defines sexual misconduct, coercion, and consent,
3. provides a description of safe and positive options for bystander intervention.
4. includes information on risk reduction.
5. explains statistics and risk factors for sexual assault; explains the role of alcohol and drugs in sexual assault; identifies the rights of victims and accused; explains confidentiality and reporting options;
6. includes disciplinary procedures and sanctions; resources available on campus and in the community which include advocacy, counseling, medical attention, and law enforcement regulations and web-based resources;

**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
Rights and Responsibilities

- 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 Center
The Student Health Center provides quality health care services to all students attending VSU. Our professional staff includes a physician, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, medical assistants, health educator, clinical and administrative assistants. Students must present a validated Trojan ID card for health care services. Our services include acute care, laboratory testing, prescriptions, immunizations, physicals, and health education. All services provided are strictly confidential, and staff members adhere to HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) FERPA 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. Students presenting to the Student Health Center are only provided excuses for missed classes upon the discretion of the clinician. Medical excuses are not given during the midterm or final examination periods. The Student Health Center medical excuses are accepted at the discretion of the professor.

The Student Health Center is responsible for assuring college entrance health compliance for all full time students. A completed physical examination and health history form within the past year; along with an immunization record in compliance with the Commonwealth of Virginia laws must be on file for all full-time students upon entering Virginia State University. In efforts to provide surveillance for tuberculosis on the campus, all students must be screened for tuberculosis upon entering the university according to the guidelines of the American College Health Association and Centers for Disease Control. Students who fail to meet these requirements will not be permitted to register for classes for the following semester. This compliance is to protect the health and safety of our campus population.

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:
Rights and Responsibilities

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.

(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.

**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

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 make 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 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 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 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 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 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 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 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 on university and college campuses.
Safety and Security

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 Department of Student Conduct. The student may also relate the incident verbally, with a friend present if the student wishes. The Department 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 remain 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

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

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.
Mr. and Miss Virginia State University and Class Kings and Queens

Mr. and Miss Virginia State University serve as the University’s official ambassadors and student host and hostess. They make personal appearances on and off campus and participate in events on behalf of the University. They must be students in good standing at the University, maintaining a 3.00 or higher grade point average during their reign. They are selected each spring through a combination of a panel of pageant judges and student voting.

Mr. and Miss Virginia State University's court includes their first and second runner-ups and class kings and queens: Mr. and Miss Freshman (elected during the fall elections), and Mr. and Miss Sophomore, Mr. and Miss Junior, and Mr. and Miss Senior (each elected during the spring elections). Mr. and Miss Virginia State University 1st and 2nd Runner-Up must maintain a 3.00 or higher grade point average, while class kings and queens must maintain a 2.50 or higher grade point average.

Qualifications for Mr. and Miss Virginia State University Candidates

1. Must be a current full-time Virginia State University undergraduate student in good social and academic standing with the University and plan to be a full-time student for the upcoming year.

2. Must have successfully completed the Students Leader Development Program (include copy of certificate if applicable).

3. Must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00 with no “I” grades on the academic transcript.

4. Must have earned 65–85 semester hours.

5. Must be no younger than 18.

6. Must be of good moral character and shall not have been convicted of any crime, excluding vehicular moving violations. Any Student Conduct infractions must be resolved at the time of candidacy.

7. 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 Kings and Queens

1. Must be a current full-time Virginia State University undergraduate student in good social and academic standing with the University and plan to be a full-time student for the upcoming year.

2. Must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.50 with no “I” grades on the academic transcript.

3. Must be no younger than 18
4. Must have earned the following semester hours:

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

*Mr. and Miss Freshman are exempt from the minimum GPA requirement.

5. 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 Acitivites 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**

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 Department 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 Department 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 Department of Student Conduct. This Court also hears cases when circumstances prevent the Department 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 Department 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 Department 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 Department 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 Department 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 Department 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 Department 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 DEPARTMENT 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 Department 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 Department 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.

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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 themself 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 – Gender Based Violence and Sexual Misconduct

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination based on sex. It is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other conduct of a sexual nature including: verbal (e.g., specific demands for sexual favors, sexual innuendoes, sexually suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, or sexual threats); non-verbal (e.g., sexually suggestive emails, other writings, articles or documents, objects or pictures, graphic commentaries, suggestive or insulting sounds or gestures, leering, whistling, or obscene gestures); or physical (e.g., touching, pinching, brushing the body, any unwelcome or coerced sexual activity, including sexual assault). Sexual harassment, including sexual assault, can involve persons of the same or different sexes. Sexual harassment may also include sex-based harassment directed toward stereotypical notions of what is female/feminine v. male/masculine or a failure to conform to those gender stereotypes.

Prohibited Acts
The following acts are prohibited and therefore are policy violations:

1. engaging in sexual assault, stalking, dating or domestic violence or any other act of sexual misconduct;
2. retaliating in any manner against an individual who reports sexual assault, stalking, dating or domestic violence or any other act of sexual misconduct;
3. interfering with procedures to investigate or redress a complaint of sexual assault, stalking, dating or domestic violence or any other act of sexual misconduct; and,
4. making an intentionally false accusation of sexual assault, stalking, dating or domestic violence or any other act of sexual misconduct through the University’s procedures.

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 sexually 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; indecent exposure; other electronic means or devices, including pictures, video, electronic messages and social media.
12.05 Students are prohibited from stalking any members of the University community or campus visitors.
12.06 Students shall not be involved in dating violence with any members of the University community or campus visitors.
12.07 Students shall not be involved in domestic violence with any members of the University community or campus visitors.

12.08 Students are prohibited to be involved in any other actions, including retaliation, interfering with procedures, or making an intentionally false accusation.

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 Department of Student Conduct will exercise jurisdiction over recognized student organizations, including
fraternities and sororities, and the conduct of their members. Action by the Department 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 Department 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 Department of Student Conduct. The Department 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*. 

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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**

**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 freshmen 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.
Appendix A: Information to Know

**Medical Excuses:** Students presenting to the Student Health Center are only provided excuses for missed classes upon the discretion of the clinician. Medical excuses are not given during the midterm or final examination periods. The Student Health Center medical excuses are accepted at the discretion of the professor.

**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 Student Health Center provides quality health care services and health education programming to all students attending VSU. Our professional staff incluces a physician, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, medical assistants, health educator, clinical and administrative assistants.

**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 health coverage, the Health Center refers students to the Affordable Care Act website at www.healthcare.gov.

**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 (within the past year) 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 and a hold will be placed on the student’s account.

**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 or Better Med open 8am to 8pm 4600 Puddleduck Road Prince Geroge, VA. Our local hospitals are available for 24 hour emergency care at Southside Regional Medical Center 200 Medical Park Boulevard in Petersburg or John Randolph Medical Center 411 West Randolph Road Hopewell, VA. 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 coordinator or residence lif staff. 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 Department 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-abuse related 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 Division of Student
Success and Engagement (804) 524-5504 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 Department 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 Department of Student Conduct regarding violations of University policy.

**Dating Violence**: Violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim. A social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature means a relationship which is characterized by the expectation of affection or sexual involvement between the parties. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. Dating violence can be a single event or a pattern of behavior that includes, but is not limited to, sexual or physical abuse. Dating violence does not include acts covered under the definition of domestic violence.

**Domestic Violence**: A pattern of behavior, including acts or threatened acts, that includes asserted violent misdemeanor and felony offenses committed by (i) by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim; (ii) by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common; (iii) by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner; (iv) by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia; or (v) by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person’s acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred.

**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 haz ing 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 Assault:** Non-consensual contact of a sexual nature. It includes any sexual contact when the victim does not or is unable to consent through the use of force, fear, intimidation, physical helplessness, ruse, impairment or incapacity (including impairment or incapacitation as a result of the use of drugs or alcohol, knowingly or unknowingly); intentional and non-consensual touching of, or coercing, forcing, or attempting to coerce or force another to touch, a person’s genital area, groin, inner thigh, buttock or breast; and non-consensual sexual intercourse, defined as anal, oral, or vaginal penetration with any object. Some types of sexual acts which fall under the category of sexual assault include: rape, attempted rape and fondling.

**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
Appendix B: Definitions

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.

**Stalking:** A course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to: (i) fear for her, his or others’ safety, or (ii) suffer substantial emotional distress, meaning significant mental suffering or anguish that may, but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional treatment or counseling. A “course of conduct” means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts which the stalker directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about, a person, or interferes with a person’s property.

**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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOR</th>
<th>WEB ADDRESS</th>
<th>PHONE</th>
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<td>Absences (with Academic Excuses)</td>
<td>Professor’s Department</td>
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<td>Academic Advising</td>
<td>Academic Advisor’s Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>Account/Balance Due</td>
<td><a href="http://www.vsu.edu/student-accounts">http://www.vsu.edu/student-accounts</a></td>
<td>(804) 524-5506</td>
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<td>Adding/Dropping Courses</td>
<td>Academic Advisor’s Department</td>
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<td>Admissions</td>
<td><a href="http://www.vsu.edu/admissions">http://www.vsu.edu/admissions</a></td>
<td>(804) 524-5902</td>
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<td>Career Services</td>
<td><a href="http://www.vsu.edu/career-services">http://www.vsu.edu/career-services</a></td>
<td>(804) 524-5211</td>
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<td>Credit Union</td>
<td><a href="http://www.vsufcu.org">http://www.vsufcu.org</a></td>
<td>(804) 526-6708</td>
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### Appendix C: Directory Information

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<th>Service</th>
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<td>(804) 524-5000</td>
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<td>and Policy and Petitions</td>
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<td>Committee Procedures Manual)</td>
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<td>Refunds</td>
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<td>(804) 524-5506</td>
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<td>Student Trips (Approval)</td>
<td>Vice President for Student Success and Engagement</td>
<td>(804) 524-5350</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology Help Desk</td>
<td><a href="http://www.vsu.edu/technology-services/">http://www.vsu.edu/technology-services/</a></td>
<td>(804) 524-5210</td>
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<tr>
<td>University Police</td>
<td><a href="http://www.vsu.edu/police/">http://www.vsu.edu/police/</a></td>
<td>(804) 524-5411</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 that 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.