



GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY

# STUDENT HANDBOOK





## **Welcome to the 2024–25 Academic Year!**

As members of the Governors State University community, it is important that we all know what to expect of one another and how we make our shared values come to life every day. Our mission is not a static statement – it is what we live by. Any well-functioning community must have a set of values; this Handbook is meant to serve as a guide not only for our students, but also for faculty, staff, and administrators to ensure that all members of our community are informed about policies, procedures, rights, and privileges.

Our Student Code of Conduct, along with other university policies, will give you clear guidance on both what you can expect from GSU faculty and staff and what we will expect from you. The Student Handbook also contains helpful information, guides, and directories that will make navigation of campus life easier.

If after reading through this Handbook you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of the Dean of Students in C1310 or at 708.235.7595 or [deanofstudents@govst.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@govst.edu)

We wish you the best this academic year and remember, we are here to help you succeed!

*Dr. Cheryl Green, University President*

*Mushtaq Choudhary, Dean of Students*



# *Governors State*

## UNIVERSITY

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## Overview

### Welcome from the Dean of Students!

As your Dean of Students, it is my pleasure to welcome you to Governors State University for the 2024-25 academic year. During your time at GSU, I encourage you to take an active role in your education and our community as a whole. As a member of this community, it is your responsibility to know our policies as they establish a model for civility, care, honesty, and respect on our campus. I ask that you review this Student Handbook and abide by the conduct policies.

The Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) works with students to advocate and provide access across a wide spectrum of areas. ODOS works closely with university services and community agencies and clears a pathway to success in areas ranging from university policies and procedures to academic performance and personal crises. If you need assistance, I encourage you to contact my office. Here are some of the ways we can help:

- Provide an opportunity for students to share their feedback, questions, or concerns.
- Help students understand and navigate through the university policies and procedures.
- Support students in making decisions related to educational, personal, and other barriers that may impede the completion of their academic goals.
- Connect students with campus and community resources regarding food and housing needs.
- Provide initial notification to university faculty/staff in the event of a major illness/injury.
- Assist with emergencies that impact a student's educational experience.
- Consult with the campus community about addressing student behavior, including misconduct, disruptive behavior, students of concern, or students in distress.

I encourage you to explore new ideas and continue to challenge yourself this academic year. I hope to have an opportunity to talk with you and if you see me on campus, please say hello. I am truly delighted that you have chosen to attend Governors State University.

Warm regards,

**Mushtaq Choudhary**

**Dean of Students**

Campus Location: C1310

Phone: 708.235.7595

E-mail: [deanofstudents@govst.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@govst.edu)

Website: [www.govst.edu/DOS](http://www.govst.edu/DOS)

## About the Student Handbook

The Student Handbook is an official document published to facilitate student access and understanding of university policies and procedures. Language in the handbook may differ slightly from official university policies to provide organization and clarity. While there are no substantive changes or procedural implications due to rephrasing, the original policies are available for review at [www.govst.edu/policies](http://www.govst.edu/policies), the University Catalog ([www.govst.edu/catalog](http://www.govst.edu/catalog)), and the Governors State University Board of Trustees website ([www.govst.edu/About/Board\\_of\\_Trustees](http://www.govst.edu/About/Board_of_Trustees)). Students are subject to all applicable laws and university policies, rules, and regulations, and are responsible for informing themselves about their responsibilities and obligations. The Office of the Dean of Students can answer questions about the interpretation or application of the Student Handbook or the Student Code of Conduct (Policy 4).

## Publication & Distribution

The Student Handbook is published online and electronically distributed annually. Printed copies are available upon request in the Office of the Dean of Students.

## Revisions

The Office of the Dean of Students reviews this handbook before the start of each academic year. The university reserves the right to revise the handbook at other times effective upon publication so long as there is appropriate notice. Proposed changes to the handbook are welcome from all GSU community members.

## Supplemental Handbooks

Supplemental handbooks addressing expectations and procedures for specific student populations are also available:

Population	Resource	Website
Student Clubs and Organizations	Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs Manual	<a href="http://www.govst.edu/cseip/">www.govst.edu/cseip/</a>
Prairie Place Residents	University Housing Handbook	<a href="http://www.govst.edu/housing/">www.govst.edu/housing/</a>
Student-Athletes	Student-Athlete Handbook	<a href="http://www.gsuaguars.com/">www.gsuaguars.com/</a>

## Consumer Information

Federal regulations require all institutions to provide specified information to prospective and current students, staff, and the general public. This information provides current and prospective students with resources and campus metrics in a variety of areas related to general institutional information, student services, student financial aid, campus security, and student outcomes. For convenience, this information has been collected and published centrally online:

[https://www.govst.edu/Admissions/Financial\\_Aid/Consumer\\_Information/](https://www.govst.edu/Admissions/Financial_Aid/Consumer_Information/).

***The 2024-25 Student Handbook is effective August 26, 2024.***

***The most current version of the Student Handbook is published online ([www.govst.edu/handbook](http://www.govst.edu/handbook)) and is compatible with many e-readers and other assistive devices.***

## SECTION ONE: UNIVERSITY OVERVIEW

### A. Mission, Vision, and Values

#### Mission

Governors State University is committed to offering an exceptional and accessible education that prepares students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to succeed in a global society.

#### Vision

Governors State University will create an intellectually stimulating public square, serve as an economic catalyst for the region, and lead as a model of academic excellence, innovation, diversity, and responsible citizenship.

#### Core Values

- **Invest in Student Success** through a commitment to mentoring and a deliberate university focus on student achievement of academic, professional, and personal goals.
- **Provide Opportunity and Access** to a first-class public education to residents of our surrounding communities and all those traditionally underserved by higher education.
- **Serve as an Economic Catalyst** for the citizens of the state of Illinois and our larger Midwest region, so that our communities grow and flourish.
- **Prepare Stewards of our Future** to thrive in the global economy, contribute to ongoing innovative research, and serve as stewards of the environment.
- **Demonstrate Inclusiveness and Diversity** to encourage acceptance of wide-ranging perspectives among students, staff, faculty, and members of the broader community.
- **Promote Quality of Life**, which encompasses civic, personal, professional, and cultural growth.

## B. Campus Information & Acronyms

Acronym/Resource	Information	Location
ARC	Academic Resource Center	B1215
ASSD	Access Services for Students with Disabilities	B1215
BoT	Board of Trustees, GSU Governing Body	<a href="http://www.govst.edu/bot">www.govst.edu/bot</a>
CAS	College of Arts & Sciences	E2578
CHHS	College of Health and Human Services	G156
CJY	Center for the Junior Year	C1321
COB	College of Business	G263
COE	College of Education	G256
CPA	Center for Performing Arts	D Building, first floor
CSEIP	Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs	A2110
CSO	Community Service Officer	Prairie Place Front Desk
C-Store	Convenience Store	Prairie Place first floor
Cube	Computer Connection Central/Technology Help Desk	D Building, second floor
CWC	Counseling and Wellness Center	A1120
DDP	Dual Degree Program	A2122
DPS	Department of Public Safety	C1375
FAFSA	Financial Aid Application	<a href="http://www.govst.edu/finaid">www.govst.edu/finaid</a>
FDC	Family Development Center, childcare center	Adjacent to West Lot 1 and 2
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Student Privacy Law	<a href="http://www.govst.edu/registrar">www.govst.edu/registrar</a>
First Gen Center	First Generation Center	C1331
Gender Inclusive Restroom	Single Stall Gender Inclusive Restroom	C Building, first floor near C1310
GMT	Goodman Malamuth Technology Building	Adjacent to West Lot 2
HOG	Hall of Governors	D Building
HOH	Hall of Honors	D1490
ITS	Information Technology Services/Help Desk	Cube, second Floor D Building
Lactation Room	Lactation Room	E2530B
Lakeside Lounge	Dining and social space	D Building, adjacent to café
LRC	Latinx Center	Library
NSP	New Student Programs	B1215
ODOS	Office of the Dean of Students	C1310
OIS	Office of International Services	GMT Building
PP	Prairie Place, on-campus residence hall	1 Prairie Place
SEI	Student Evaluation of Instruction	<a href="http://www.govst.edu/sei/">www.govst.edu/sei/</a>
SSC	Student Success Commons	B1215
The Den	Jaguar Den (Student Lounge)	A2140
TRiO EOC	TRiO Education Opportunity Center	B1215
TWAG	This Week at GSU, student run campus news	<a href="http://www.govst.edu/twag">www.govst.edu/twag</a>
UAAC	Undergraduate Academic Advising Center	C3385

## C. Student Support Services

Whether you are a first-year student living in Prairie Place, a working adult commuting to class, or a graduate student with a family, some resources that fit your needs include:

Tutoring, Disability Services, Writing Center, Study Skills, New Student Programs, GSU STAR, Retention Initiatives, GEER Program	Academic Resource Center / Student Success Commons B1215, 708.534.4090 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/arc">www.govst.edu/arc</a>
Career Services, Student Employment, Internships, Resume Review, Mock Interviews	Career Services C3311, 708.235.3974 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/careerservices">www.govst.edu/careerservices</a>
Academic Advising, Degree Audit, Study Plans	Undergraduate Academic Advising Center C3385, 708.534.8043 <a href="mailto:advising@govst.edu">advising@govst.edu</a>
Student Absence Notification, Emergency Leave, and Non-academic Grievance	Office of the Dean of Students C1310, 708.235.7595 <a href="https://www.govst.edu/DOS/">https://www.govst.edu/DOS/</a>
Educational Interest, Major, and Career Exploration	Center for the Junior Year C1322, 708.235.2855 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/CJY">www.govst.edu/CJY</a>
Student Financial Accounts, Payment Plans, Billing	Cashier's Office C1336, 708.534.4055 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/student-accounts/">www.govst.edu/student-accounts/</a>
Student Conduct, Student Advocacy, Student Concerns, and Campus Threat Assessment	Community Standards C1310, 708.235.2845 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/communitystandards">www.govst.edu/communitystandards</a>
Lost and Found, Safety Escort, and Car Unlocking Services, Police Services	Department of Public Safety C1375, 708.534.4900 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/campus-safety">www.govst.edu/campus-safety</a>
Financial Aid, FAFSA, Grants, Scholarships	Office of Financial Aid D1423, 708.534.4480 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/finaid">www.govst.edu/finaid</a>
Childcare Services	Family Development Center FDC Building, 708.235.7300 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/FamilyDevelopmentCenter">www.govst.edu/FamilyDevelopmentCenter</a>
Advocate Health Services, Individual & Group Counseling, Sexual Assault Prevention Education	Counseling and Wellness Center A1120, 708.235.7334 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/counseling-and-wellness">http://www.govst.edu/counseling-and-wellness</a>
International Student Services, Study Abroad, Cultural Programming	International Student Services GMT 168, 708.235.7611 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/ois">www.govst.edu/ois</a>

myONECARD, Student Identification Services	Student Central/Welcome Desk or University Housing D1400 or C1331, 708.534.4363 <a href="https://www.govst.edu/myonecard/">https://www.govst.edu/myonecard/</a>
Recreation and Fitness, Intercollegiate Athletics	Recreation and Fitness A1106, 708.534.4556 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/recfit">www.govst.edu/recfit</a>
Class Registration, Graduation, Commencement, Student Information Change, FERPA, Transcripts	Registrar C1300, 708.534.4500 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/registrar">www.govst.edu/registrar</a>
Latinx Student Resources, Undocumented Student Resources	LatinX Center 708.235.8528 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/lrc/">www.govst.edu/lrc/</a>
Student Clubs & Organizations, Student Senate, Civic Engagement, Community Services, Diversity & Intercultural Programs	Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs A2100, 708.235.7362 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/cseip">www.govst.edu/cseip</a>
Student Military, Veteran's Support	Veterans Resource Center GMT 160, 708.235.7597 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/veterans">www.govst.edu/veterans</a>
Student News Media, Phoenix Newspaper, This Week at GSU (TWAG)	Phoenix: <a href="https://phoenixgsu.com/">https://phoenixgsu.com/</a> TWAG: <a href="http://www.govst.edu/twag">www.govst.edu/twag</a>
Food Pantry, Housing/Food Insecurity, Social Services Referrals	GSU4U A1120, 708.235.7334 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/gsu4u">www.govst.edu/gsu4u</a> Food Pantry A1115, 708.235.7362 <a href="https://www.govst.edu/Campus_Life/Civic_Engagement/GSU_Food_Pantry/">https://www.govst.edu/Campus_Life/Civic_Engagement/GSU_Food_Pantry/</a>
Title IX: Sex Discrimination, Sex-Based Harassment, Sexual Violence, Dating/ Domestic Violence, Stalking	Title IX Coordinator G328, 708.534.4846, <a href="mailto:titleixofficer@govst.edu">titleixofficer@govst.edu</a> <a href="http://govst.edu/titleix">govst.edu/titleix</a>

## D. Academic Catalog

The University Academic Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog (Academic Catalog or simply, Catalog) include information about the academic colleges and programs. The Academic Catalog is a comprehensive listing of current information regarding:

- Degree Requirements
- Course Offerings
- Undergraduate and Graduate Rules and Regulations
- Tuition and Fee Payment Policies
- Admissions Information
- Financial Assistance
- Academic Calendar

Students should keep a copy of the catalog for the year they first enrolled for reference throughout their academic career. All catalogs by Academic Year are posted as a pdf and can be accessed via OPUS (<https://opus.govst.edu/catalogs/>). Information in the catalog is subject to change and does not constitute a contract or guarantee that the university will indefinitely offer the program in which a student enrolls. The university expressly reserves the right to change, phase out, or discontinue any program or course of study. Such changes take precedence over catalog statements.

The most current catalog is available on the Academic Catalog website (<https://catalog.govst.edu/>).

## E. Academic Resource Center & Student Success Commons

The Academic Resource Center (ARC) provides student support that goes beyond the classroom to meet individuals where they are to help them achieve academic and personal goals. The ARC offers a variety of academic support services and works closely with students, faculty, and staff, to provide writing assistance, subject tutoring, academic recovery plans, disabilities services, new student programming, peer mentoring, and other retention programs and initiatives.

### Tutoring

The Academic Resource Center provides support in Math, Statistics, Science, and Business courses through tutoring and online resources. Peer tutors are available to assist students in all first-year math and science courses. Tutoring is also available for many elective and upper-division courses. Students can make an appointment online at [www.mywco.com/govst](http://www.mywco.com/govst).

### Writing Center

The Writing Center helps students at every stage of the writing process and encourages them to view writing as a craft they must master through revision, reading, and perspective. Students can schedule a one-on-one appointment at [www.mywco.com/govst](http://www.mywco.com/govst).

## Retention Initiatives

Our priority is to ensure students return to and/or remain in Good Academic Standing here at GSU. Students experiencing challenges in pursuit of their degree can connect with ARC Retention support staff to obtain the tools needed to succeed. ARC Retention support staff assist students in creating a goal driven success plan to address any obstacles impeding on their academic and personal success.

## GSU Star

GSU STAR provides all GSU students with a central location to connect to the people and services that can help them finish what they start. Students along with their advisors and instructors can easily communicate in STAR. Log in to your GSU STAR Home page by going to the GSU STAR button in the myGSU Portal.

## New Student Programs

New Student Programs provides a welcoming and supportive transition to GSU by coordinating orientation programs for new students including first-time undergraduate, transfer, and graduate students.

## Pathways to Academic Recovery Program

The Pathways Program supports students on academic probation. The 15-week course allows students to learn about what it means to be on academic probation, build on academic skills, and help develop positive behaviors to be successful in college.

## Access Services for Students with Disabilities

ASSD provides academic assistance to students and works closely with faculty to facilitate access in the learning environment. ASSD provides students with temporary or permanent disabilities, reasonable accommodations, and services in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. For more information and/or to arrange for accommodations, visit <http://www.govst.edu/disability-services/>.

## F. Bookstore

The Bookstore (D1493) managed by Follett, sells textbooks, GSU and Jaguar apparel, and other academic supplies. Please view our Bookstore website ([www.govst.edu/Campus\\_Life/Bookstore - GSU Follett/](http://www.govst.edu/Campus_Life/Bookstore_-_GSU_Follett/)) for more information regarding our price match program, how to use your Financial Aid to purchase or rent books, and bookstore hours.

## G. Campus Dining

The GSU Café is located in the middle of everything and is a great place to grab a meal or snack. You will find hot specials every day for lunch and dinner, plus a salad bar, sandwich bar, soup and pizza, and healthy choices that will keep you fueled all day long. Arena Food Service, Inc. is the University's dining, catering, and vending partner. Arena provides full retail food services in the GSU Café and Prairie Place C-Store. Review the Campus Dining website [www.govst.edu/Campus\\_Life/Campus\\_Dining/](http://www.govst.edu/Campus_Life/Campus_Dining/) for more information regarding vending services, catering services, and daily hours and menus.

Meal plans are available for all enrolled students. Convenient and flexible meal plans allow individuals to dedicate money specifically for food and beverage purchases on the GSU campus. Residential students

receive a specific meal plan according to their room type. Commuting students can select the meal plan program that best meets their needs:

- Gold Plan: \$1500/semester
- Silver Plan: \$1000/semester
- Bronze Plan: \$500/semester

## H. Career Services

Career Services provides a wide range of services available to currently enrolled students and alumni. Services include individual career counseling sessions, assistance with resume and cover letter preparation, job and internship search strategies, interviewing skills, career exploration, and much more. In addition, Career Services coordinates job search skills workshops, customized workshops, and career and internship fairs.

## I. Center for Student Engagement & Intercultural Programs

The Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs (CSEIP) is where involvement and learning meet. CSEIP encourages students to participate in and plan activities and events. Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs highlighted programming includes:

- Clubs & Organizations (Student Senate, Honor Societies, etc.);
- Campus Programs & Traditions (Student Activities Council, Welcome Week, Homecoming, etc.);
- Civic Engagement (community service); and
- Intercultural Education (diversity programming)
- Greek Life (fraternities and sororities)
- Leadership Development

For more information, call 708-235-7362 or visit us at <https://www.govst.edu/cseip/>. To learn more about clubs and organizations, visit Jaguar Connection at <https://govst.campuslabs.com/engage/>.

## Prayer & Meditation Room

The Interfaith Prayer and Meditation room is located in A2150.

## Food Pantry

In partnership with the Northern Illinois Food Bank, the GovState Food Pantry (A1115) offers non-perishable and perishable food, including produce, meat, and dairy, as well as toiletries and over-the-counter medication to GovState students and their families, as available. The Food Pantry is located next to the Gaming Lounge and hours of operation vary each semester. If you are interested in volunteering at the Food Pantry, please contact the CSEIP at 708-235-7362.

## J. Counseling & Wellness Center

The Counseling & Wellness Center (A1120), in partnership with Advocate Health Care, provides comprehensive medical, mental health, and case management services. The CWC's mission is to help

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improve GSU students' mental health, academic experiences, and overall well-being through facilitating personal, emotional, and social growth so that they can achieve their goals and aspirations.

### **Counseling Center**

The Counseling Center is open Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., and provides:

- Individual Counseling
- Group Counseling
- Couples Counseling
- Assessments
- Crisis Services
- Consultation
- Case Management
- Outreach Presentations
- GSU4U

To request an appointment, call 708.235.7334 or visit <https://www.govst.edu/wellness/>  
In-person and virtual appointments are available

Walk-in Triage (no appointment necessary): Mon. – Fri., 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Let's Talk Sessions: Mon. - Fri., 3 p.m. - 4 p.m.

The Counseling Center also provides 24/7 immediate access to teletherapy through its partnership with uWill. To schedule an appointment online visit <https://www.govst.edu/livingwell@gsu/>

### **Advocate Health Center**

Advocate Aurora Health provides healthcare services, Monday – Thursday, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m., and Friday, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

The following services are available to actively enrolled students, and only covers services at the Governors State University clinic site:

- Immunizations in compliance with the College Student Immunization Act [110 ILCS 20]. Visit <http://www.govst.edu/immunization/> for more information about the required immunizations.
- Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD)/Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) screenings
- Tuberculosis (TB) testing- (screening compliance and program related)
- Women's Health Screenings
- Basic Physicals (sports, and program related work)
- Minor Illnesses: Coughs, colds, nausea, earaches, sinus infections, fevers, urinary tract infections
- Diagnostic Testing: Strep, Influenza (Flu), and COVID Testing
- Minor Injuries: Sprains/Strains
- Skin Conditions: Rashes, bites

**Meningitis Versus Meningococcal Disease: There IS a Difference**

Meningitis is an inflammation (swelling) of the protective membranes covering the brain and spinal cord. A bacterial or viral infection of the fluid surrounding the brain and spinal cord usually causes the swelling. However, injuries, cancer, certain drugs, and other types of infections also can cause

meningitis. It is important to know the specific cause of meningitis because the treatment differs depending on the cause. For more information please go to:

<https://www.cdc.gov/meningitis/index.html>

Meningococcal disease refers to any illness caused by bacteria called *Neisseria meningitidis*. These illnesses are often severe, can be deadly, and include infections of the lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis) and bloodstream. Keeping up to date with recommended vaccines is the best protection against meningococcal disease. For more information, please go to:

<https://www.cdc.gov/meningococcal/about/index.html>

To schedule an appointment, visit <http://www.govst.edu/advocate-health-center/> or call 708.235.2114. Same day appointments may be available (schedule dependent).

The information provided by students is voluntary and confidential. For more information and/or to arrange for accommodations, please contact ASSD at:

Campus Location: B1215, inside the Student Success Commons

Email: [assd@govst.edu](mailto:assd@govst.edu)

Website: <http://www.govst.edu/disability-services/>

Phone: 708.235.3968

## **K. Financing Your Education**

### **Tuition and Fees**

Governors State University (GovState or University) tuition and fees are among the lowest in Illinois. GovState's Board of Trustees approves rates for the next academic year usually during February of each year. After the rates are approved, they are available on our website. Please visit the following link for the current academic year's tuition and fees: <https://www.govst.edu/payment-plan-24-25/>

### **Payment of Tuition and Fees**

Payment due dates are term specific. Tuition and applicable fees must be paid no later than the date specified for each term. A \$100 late fee will be assessed to all accounts not paid in full by the due date. Information regarding these due dates is available on the GovState website (<https://www.govst.edu/deadlines-24-25/>), and is also communicated to students via the students' GovState e-mail.

Electronic payment plan options for each term are available on the GovState website or the myGSU portal. Refer to the "Payment Plan" section of this Student Handbook for more information.

Students who fail to pay by the published due dates will be placed on a University Hold list and are at risk of being dropped for nonpayment. This includes those students who receive financial aid, tuition waivers, and work/organization sponsored tuition assistance.

Non-payment of tuition and fees is not an acceptable method to notify GovState of intent to drop classes. If you do not plan to attend GovState, it is your responsibility to drop your classes by the 100% refund deadline. Students who fail to drop their classes by the 100% refund deadline will be responsible to pay for the related tuition and fee charges.

## Payment Methods

GovState offers various types of payment methods, as follows:

- Online - via credit card, debit card, or electronic check (checking or savings account) by clicking on the Online Services tab on your myGSU portal.
- By phone - via credit card or debit card by phoning the Cashier's Office at 708.534.4055.
- In-person - at the Cashier's office (C1336) using cash, money order, check, debit card, or credit card.
- By mail - using a money order or check by mailing payment to:  
Governors State University  
Cashier's Office  
1 University Parkway  
University Park, IL 60484-0975

The University accepts Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express.

Payments made via credit card and debit card will be assessed a non-refundable service charge of 2.95% (minimum \$3) for domestic issued cards and 4.25% (minimum \$3) for international issued cards. This service charge will be automatically added to your card payment. This service charge offsets the credit card transaction fees charged by the credit card companies. GovState does not control these credit card transaction fees and proceeds from this service fee goes to the credit card companies.

Please visit the following link for more information: <https://www.govst.edu/cashier/>

## Payment Plan

GovState offers several payment plan options for each term through the online TouchNet system. A \$40 non-refundable payment plan set-up charge will need to be paid at the time of enrollment in the plan.

TouchNet payment plans include a feature that will automatically deduct the monthly payments from the student's or parent's bank account, debit, or credit card. When a checking or savings account is selected as the desired payment method, it is important to note that it will take up to 14 days once you enter your banking information (bank routing number and account number) to complete the verification process. By enrolling in the plan, payments are scheduled and processed on the due dates without additional action needed on the part of the student or parent. If a payment declines or does not go through due to insufficient funds, the student's account will be assessed a \$25 late fee for each late installment. Failure to have met prior payment plan obligations may prohibit you from entering into a payment plan with the University for future semesters.

Please visit the following link for more information about the current academic year's payment plan options: <https://www.govst.edu/payment-plan-24-25/>

## Refund Process

Students who drop from courses on or before the published 100 percent refund deadline are entitled to a full refund of tuition and fees. Refunds of tuition and fees may also be made because of excess of tuition payments, Financial Aid, student's death, disability, extreme hardship, or institutional error. Refunds may be made via check or direct deposit. Federal regulations allow for the refund process to take up to 14 days to complete. Please visit the following link for more information about the student refunds process: <http://www.govst.edu/student-accounts/>

### **Unsatisfied Financial Obligations**

Unsatisfied financial obligations to the University are pursued through placement with a collection agency, placement in the Illinois Comptroller's Offset System, and/or litigation. Collection costs incurred by the University in collecting monies due will be assessed to the student/debtor.

## **L. Financial Aid**

The primary purpose of the financial aid program at Governors State University is to assist students in obtaining the financial resources necessary to cover their educational costs. Located in D1423, the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships is available year-round and committed to helping you navigate the financial aid process. Please refer to the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships website at [www.govst.edu/finaid](http://www.govst.edu/finaid) for the most current and up-to-date information.

### **Eligibility Criteria and Application Procedures**

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships encourages all students to apply early for financial assistance. Financial aid programs are designed to supplement student or family resources by bridging the gap between costs and the student's or family's measured ability to pay. The analysis of a student's or family's financial strength includes consideration of current income, assets, family size, and any other factors that seriously alter a student's or family's financial situation.

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships processes aid on a year-round basis. Students are encouraged to apply for financial assistance annually, as early as October 1st to maximize their financial aid eligibility. Students should refer to the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships website at [www.govst.edu/finaid](http://www.govst.edu/finaid) for detailed information on available types of aid and application forms/deadlines.

Requirements for federal and state sponsored financial aid vary, but generally, a student must:

1. be a U.S. citizen or a permanent resident;
2. be admitted to an eligible degree or certificate program; and
3. be enrolled at least on a half-time basis (six hours) for most forms of aid.

To determine eligibility for all forms of need-based aid, students must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA is available at [www.studentaid.gov](http://www.studentaid.gov). Additional information and supporting documentation may be requested if the application is selected for verification. The financial aid application is not complete until all required forms and supporting documents are on file and verified by the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships.

Please note: If you are an Illinois resident but are ineligible for federal aid as an undocumented student, you can still apply for state assistance under the Retention of Illinois Students & Equity (RISE) Act. Information about the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid, including the application itself, can be found on the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) webpage at [www.isac.org/Alternative-Application](http://www.isac.org/Alternative-Application).

## Financial Aid Disbursement

The first financial aid posting for each semester is after the census date for students who are enrolled at least half-time, have accepted their financial aid, and are maintaining satisfactory academic progress. Direct deposits and refund checks are completed within two weeks after financial aid is posted to student accounts.

## Programs Available

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships administers and coordinates aid funds from federal, state, university, and private sources. The various aid programs available may be divided into four broad categories: grants, scholarships, loans, and student employment. Grants and scholarships are referred to as "gift aid" since they are not repaid. Loans must be repaid, with payments usually beginning six months after leaving school or when a student drops below half-time enrollment status. Student employment is often available during the academic year. In addition, tuition waivers covering in-state tuition for both undergraduate and graduate students are available.

### Grants

The federal government provides grants for students attending college or career school. Most types of grants, unlike loans, are sources of financial aid that generally do not have to be repaid. Grants can come from the federal government, your state government, your school, or a private or nonprofit organization. Do your research, apply for any grants you might be eligible for, and be sure to meet application deadlines! For specific grant information, please refer to the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships website at [www.govst.edu/finaid](http://www.govst.edu/finaid).

### Scholarships

A scholarship is financial support awarded to a student, typically based on academic achievement or other criteria that may include financial need, for the purpose of schooling. Scholarships are typically awarded using a variety of factors, including but not limited to academic achievement, departmental and community involvement, employment experience, areas of study, and financial need.

There are various types of scholarships, but they are primarily broken down into two categories: institutional scholarships and outside scholarships. Institutional scholarships are exclusively available to students attending Governors State University. The donor or department funding the scholarship sets the criteria for recipient selection, and the grantor specifically defines how the money is to be applied. The funds are used to defray the costs of tuition, books, room, board, and other expenses directly tied to a student's educational cost through the university. Outside scholarships are available to all students enrolled at institutions across the country. The agency/company/etc. funding the scholarship sets the criteria for recipient selection, and the grantor specifically defines how the money is to be applied.

Applying for scholarships, **both** institutional and outside, has been made easy at Governors State University with the help of [Scholarship Universe](#). Scholarship Universe is an intuitive software that allows Governors State University students to easily apply online to multiple scholarship opportunities

through their own personalized portal. Students are prompted to answer questions which will help to match them to scholarship opportunities that best fit their student profile. Students will also be alerted whenever they are matched to new scholarship opportunities and receive automated reminders about outstanding tasks and next steps. To find out more about scholarships and Scholarship Universe, students are encouraged to visit the scholarship webpage at <https://www.govst.edu/Scholarships/>.

### **Federal Direct Loans**

Governors State University participates in the Federal Direct Loan Program through the U.S. Department of Education. If this is your first Federal Direct Subsidized or Unsubsidized Loan at Governors State University, or you have an expired promissory note, you are required to sign an electronic Master Promissory Note (MPN) and complete Entrance Counseling online at [www.studentaid.gov](http://www.studentaid.gov). This MPN and Entrance Counseling will be in effect throughout your time at Governors State University.

Student loans are not prorated based on enrollment. However, you must be enrolled at least half-time in eligible coursework to receive loans. “Eligible” coursework includes courses officially recognized in your program curriculum as outlined by the University Catalog and corresponding Degree Audit. Failure to stay enrolled at least half-time may cause ineligibility for student loans.

**Federal Direct Subsidized Loan:** This loan is only available to undergraduate students and the Department of Education pays the interest on the loan while you are enrolled in school. Loan repayment begins six months after you graduate or drop below half-time enrollment status. More information about Federal Direct Subsidized Loans can be found on the [Federal Student Aid website](#).

**Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan:** The interest on this non-need-based loan accrues from the time the loan is disbursed until paid in full. You may pay the interest while you are in school, or it will be added to the principal balance of the loan when you begin repayment. Loan repayment begins six months after you graduate or drop below half-time enrollment status. More information about Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans can be found on the [Federal Student Aid website](#).

### **Federal Direct PLUS Loans**

This loan is not automatically awarded to students. This federal program allows graduate students or parents of dependent students with no adverse credit history (a credit check is required) to apply for up to their Cost of Attendance each year, less any financial aid. Repayment begins 60 days after the loan is disbursed, however, repayment can be deferred. Graduate students or parents of dependent students seeking a Federal Direct PLUS Loan must complete a Federal Direct PLUS Loan application and Master Promissory Note online at <https://studentaid.gov> and complete a Governors State University Grad/Parent PLUS Loan Application Form through the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships

### **Alternative Loans**

Alternative loans are non-federal educational loans that may be used as a source of financial aid in addition to scholarships, state, and federal assistance. These loans are typically offered by private lenders (educational financing institutions, guaranty agencies, banks) to assist with educational and

living expenses not covered by other financial aid. Alternative loans are subject to credit analysis and may require a co-signer. Before you apply for an alternative loan, Governors State University recommends researching all Title IV federal forms of aid, including PLUS loans, as they may be more favorable to borrow.

### **Federal Work-Study**

Subsidized by the federal government, Federal Work Study (FWS) is a need-based financial aid award that allows you to work and earn money. You may apply for federal work study jobs once you have completed your FAFSA and have been offered a “Federal Work Study Award.”

The FWS award amount is the maximum amount you may earn through this type of employment during the corresponding award period. You must also maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP) and maintain enrollment in 6 or more credit hours of eligible coursework.

Many FWS positions are available in departments throughout campus. The type of work will vary by department. All on-campus student employment jobs are posted on the [Jobs for Jaguars](#) site. For more information on the application process, please contact [Career Services](#) at 708.235.3974 or send an email to [career@govst.edu](mailto:career@govst.edu).

### **FA Link: Use Aid for Textbooks**

Purchase or rent books at the Governors State University bookstore using financial aid. To be eligible, you must:

- Have submitted your FAFSA and completed the financial aid process.
- Have received a Financial Aid Award email. This can be viewed in your myGSU portal.
- Have received enough financial aid above and beyond the amount that covers your tuition, fees, and housing (if applicable).
- Have registered for classes for the term for which you wish to purchase books.
- Meet all other financial aid requirements including Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), have no prior balances on your student account, and have no other registration holds that would prohibit you from receiving financial aid.

You must remain eligible for financial aid to use your financial aid at the bookstore. Before you make any registration changes, be sure to check with The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships first.

FA Link will be available before the first financial aid disbursement of each semester. For more information on FA Link and semester deadlines, please visit [https://www.govst.edu/Admissions/Financial\\_Aid/Buy\\_Books\\_with\\_Aid/](https://www.govst.edu/Admissions/Financial_Aid/Buy_Books_with_Aid/).

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**

Regulations governing the federal student aid programs require that institutions develop standards of satisfactory academic progress (SAP) for student aid recipients. These guidelines require that we evaluate your progress by all three of the following: the length of time it takes to complete your program of study, the rate of completion, and your cumulative grade point average (GPA). Your academic record is reviewed at the end of each semester, including summer, to ensure you are meeting the SAP requirements. For full SAP information, please refer to the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships website at [www.govst.edu/finaid](http://www.govst.edu/finaid).

## M. First Gen Center

At the First-Generation Student Center, we envision a future where every first-generation student at Governors State University thrives, excels, and achieves their highest potential. Through comprehensive support services, tailored programs, and holistic guidance, we aim to equip first-generation students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to overcome obstacles, navigate higher education, and achieve their dreams. We strive to empower them to become leaders, change-makers, and advocates within their communities, inspiring future generations to pursue their own educational goals.

## N. GSU4U Student Assistance

GSU4U is an initiative to strengthen support for student success. GSU4U connects students facing personal difficulties, such as food and housing insecurity, to campus and community resources. We are dedicated to assisting all students, no matter how serious or small the situation may seem.

What we do:

- Assist students to navigate campus resources to strengthen their academic journey.
- Connect students to community resources that assist with housing and food insecurity.
- Assist students with applications for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food purchasing benefits through mRelief.
- Assist students with applications for CCAMPIS federal grant funds to provide free or discounted childcare.
- Facilitate workshops that raise awareness about basic needs insecurities and the impact on student success.
- Partner with community agencies, faith-based organizations and, various GSU academic programs to enhance support services for students.
- Provide students with GSU4U Personal Care Bags which include the following:
  - Body Wash
  - Lotion
  - Deodorant
  - Shampoo
  - Conditioner
  - Toothpaste
  - Toothbrush
  - Dental floss
  - Also Included in the female bags: Sanitary Pads

For more information, visit <https://www.govst.edu/gsu4u/> or contact us at [gsu4U@govst.edu](mailto:gsu4U@govst.edu) or 708-235-7334.

## O. Latinx Resource Center

Bienvenidos to the Governors State University!

I hope this message finds you thriving and ready for an exciting semester ahead. As we kick off the new academic year, I'm thrilled to extend a warm welcome to all our new and returning Latinx students to the Latinx Resource Center!

Whether you're a first-year student navigating campus life for the first time or a seasoned senior looking to connect with your community, the Latinx Resource Center is here to support you every step of the way.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Learn more about Latinx Resource Center</b></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Learn more about Undocumented Student Resources</b></p>	

I encourage each of you to stop by the Latinx Resource Center, introduce yourself, and see all that we have to offer. Our doors are always open, and we're excited to meet you!

¡Adelante y juntos somos más fuertes!



**Emmanuel López** (*He/Him El*)

Director of the Latinx Resource Center

Email: [elopez6@govst.edu](mailto:elopez6@govst.edu)

Office: C-2340

Call: 708-235-8528

Text: 708-263-7983

## P. Information Technology Services (ITS)

The ITS department is centrally located in the Computer Connection Central “The CUBE” on the second floor of the D building, located adjacent to the Library. Computer labs for instructional use and

computing stations for individual use are abundant across the campus, especially in the Library, Cube, the Hall of Governors, and individual college labs.

The majority of GSU's classrooms are equipped as "smart" classrooms with instructional technology including podiums with computers and projection technology. There are 344 WiFi Access Points in the educational buildings and the GSU parking lots. Campus and housing facilities are equipped with an extensive wireless environment allowing students, faculty, and staff to maintain access as they move between classrooms and buildings.

### **myGSU Student Portal**

The myGSU Student Portal is a single digital hub for students. myGSU provides many resources, quick links to critical student-related systems, time-sensitive announcements, bookmarks, and much more. myGSU is where students register for classes, check on Financial Aid, view class schedules, request transcripts, make payments, contact advisors, and much more. The myGSU student portal is an information hub and launching point for University resources.

### **Student Email**

Each student is provided with a GSU student email address to be used as a secure and official method of communication. Students are encouraged to check their student email for important notifications at least once a day.

### **ITS Helpdesk**

Students looking for help with technology may contact the ITS helpdesk in several ways by phone at 708-534-4357, email [help@govst.edu](mailto:help@govst.edu), in-person at the CUBE, or the "Helpdesk ITS" quick link in myGSU.

## **Q. University Housing**

Prairie Place is the only residential building on the Governors State University campus. Students of all levels – from freshmen to doctoral candidates – are eligible to live in University Housing. A student may choose from a semi suite (double occupancy bedroom) or two or four-bedroom apartments with either single or double occupancy bedrooms. Other amenities include community rooms and lounges, study spaces, laundry facilities, kitchens, and a convenience store.

Please visit the website <https://www.govst.edu/housing/> and view the University Housing Handbook for more information regarding contract types, general information, and policies.

## SECTION TWO: STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As stated, the policies and procedures listed within the Student Handbook do not constitute a comprehensive outline of all the university's rules and regulations. Students are subject not only to all applicable laws, but also to all university policies, rules, and regulations, and are responsible for informing themselves about their responsibilities and obligations.

### A. Overview

Governors State University recognizes the basic rights and responsibilities of the members of the university and strives to provide for its members the opportunities and protections that best serve the nature of the educational process. Students have the right to a safe environment to support the pursuit of their educational and personal goals. Students also have the right to provide feedback to university faculty, staff, and administrators through informal and formal processes as outlined in this handbook (i.e., grievances, complaints, appeal processes).

Students will:

- Treat students, faculty, and staff of the university with fairness and respect;
- Honestly represent themselves;
- Respect university property and the activities conducted at university facilities, or university-sponsored events;
- Respect the property of others; and
- Uphold university policies and all applicable laws.

The University will:

- Treat students of the university with fairness and respect;
- Afford students procedural due process before taking disciplinary actions;
- Communicate policies and procedures to students; and
- Uphold university policies and all applicable laws.

### B. Student Records (FERPA)

As required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, as amended, GSU maintains individual student records to provide educational, vocational, and personal services to the student. The Access to Student Educational Records policy provides the confidentiality of student education records as established under FERPA, establishes the right of students to inspect and review their education records, and provides guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data.

The University must limit access to student information to those with a legitimate educational interest as defined by law and university policy, and to ensure that data is stored securely to prevent unauthorized access. Specific details for how the University complies with FERPA can be found in the Access to Student Educational Records Policy (Policy 12) at [www.govst.edu/policies](http://www.govst.edu/policies). Questions regarding FERPA should be directed to the Registrar's Office.

### C. Civility Statement

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As outlined in its Mission Statement, “Governors State University is committed to offering an exceptional and accessible education that prepares students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to succeed in a global society.” The faculty, staff, and students of Governors State University, as members of the university community, can expect to be treated with respect and consideration and are expected to treat others similarly.

All members of the community must treat other members with civility and respect while recognizing that disagreement and informed debate are valued in an academic community. Demeaning, intimidating, threatening, or violent behavior, either in verbal or written form, that affects the ability to learn, teach, or work in the university community are unacceptable and violate Governors State University’s standards for civility and respect.

Individuals covered by this statement include all members of the Governors State University community (faculty, staff, and students). Contractors and vendors of Governors State University, as well as visitors to the campus, are also expected to comply with the requirements of this statement.

### **Responsibility to Act**

A member of the community who is involved in or is a witness of behavior on campus that imposes imminent danger to people or property should immediately contact the Department of Public Safety (DPS). In non-emergency situations that do not involve imminent danger, contact a supervisor, division/department chair, dean, the Department of Human Resources, the Office of the Provost, or the Office of the Dean of Students for advice on the proper course of action, or to make a complaint.

Red Campus Phones	Direct line to DPS
Yellow Campus Phones	Red button provides a direct line to DPS
Campus Phones (Emergency)	Dial 911
(Non-Emergency)	Dial 4900
Non-Emergency (Non-campus Phones)	Dial 708.534.4900
Office of the Dean of Students	Dial 708.235.7595
Human Resources	Dial 708.534.4100

### **Violation of the Civility Statement**

A university community member who has violated the statement may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including separation from the university, consistent with established disciplinary procedures. Non-compliant behavior by contractors, vendors, or visitors may lead to removal from the campus, at the discretion of Governors State University.

## **D. Campus Safety Information (Clery Act)**

Establishing and maintaining a safe and secure environment for our staff, students, and visitors is of primary importance to Governors State University. The Clery Act (Student Right to Know and Campus Security Act of 1990) is a federal mandate that requires that all current students and employees receive information on policies and procedures involving campus security, the reporting of criminal activity or other emergencies, and the enforcement authority of security personnel.

As part of our commitment to campus safety and in compliance with the Clery Act, a hardcopy of the Campus Security Report is available in the Department of Public Safety (DPS), located in C1375, and is also published on the Campus Right to Know website:

[www.govst.edu/Campus\\_Life/Campus\\_Safety/Campus\\_Right\\_to\\_Know/](http://www.govst.edu/Campus_Life/Campus_Safety/Campus_Right_to_Know/).

## **E. Emergency Management and Notifications**

The Emergency Management Plan outlines strategies to protect the life and safety of university students, faculty, and staff, and to preserve university property and assets in the event of an emergency. The Emergency Management website [www.govst.edu/emergency](http://www.govst.edu/emergency) is a resource for information on how to prepare for emergencies and the Safety Booklet [www.govst.edu/take-action/](http://www.govst.edu/take-action/) details how to “Take Action” in the event of campus emergencies, including but not limited to, fire, weather-related emergencies, and acts of violence.

Governors State University notifies the campus community upon the confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of students or staff occurring on any campus. GSU Alerts sends notifications regarding emergencies to students via cellular and landline phones, email, social media, and more. Students should update their contact information in their myGSU portal to ensure receipt of emergency notifications.

Emergency information and planning resources are available here [www.govst.edu/emergency](http://www.govst.edu/emergency).

### **Missing Residential Student Notification**

Governors State University strives to offer the safest learning environment for all members of the campus community. The *Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008* requires all institutions of higher education to establish a missing student notification policy for students that reside in on-campus housing. The Act requires such institutions to ensure that on-campus residential students have a process for which they can register confidential contact person information as well as procedures for implementation of this policy. For more detailed information, please refer to the University Housing Handbook ([www.govst.edu/housinghandbook](http://www.govst.edu/housinghandbook)) or visit [www.govst.edu/housing](http://www.govst.edu/housing).

## **E. Concealed Carry**

The Concealed Carry policy was developed in response to the Illinois Firearms Concealed Carry Act, 43 ILCS 66, which prohibits anyone from knowingly bringing a firearm onto property owned or controlled by an institution of higher education. The Act also authorizes GSU to restrict persons from carrying concealed firearms onto campus property, including university vehicles, to regulate student, employee, or visitor misconduct or violations of regulations, and to establish regulations for the storage and maintenance of firearms on university property.

The policy expands the restriction of firearms and includes weapons that shoot a projectile, are explosive, or are designed or traditionally used to inflict harm, and includes threatening, intimidating, or bullying actions in the restricted activities. It also places restrictions on the movement and storage of firearms or weapons in privately owned vehicles on university property. For more information, please see the Concealed Carry policy (<https://www.govst.edu/campus-safety/>) or contact the Department of Public Safety in C1375 or at 708.534.4900.

## F. Title IX and Prevention of Sex Discrimination

### Notice of Nondiscrimination

Governors State University (GSU) does not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or gender expression or identity; and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by state and federal law (including Title IX and its regulations), including in admissions and employment.

GSU is committed to maintaining a community in which students, faculty, and staff can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of all forms of unlawful sex discrimination and retaliation. Such misconduct violates the dignity of the individual and the integrity of GSU as an institution of higher learning and, thus, will not be tolerated.

Title IX is the comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity. Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to GSU's Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both.

### Title IX Coordinator

The GSU Title IX Coordinator is:

**Kaitlyn Anne Wild**

**Director of Compliance & Title IX Coordinator**

1 University Parkway (G328)

University Park, IL 60484

Phone: 708.534.4846

Email: [titleixofficer@govst.edu](mailto:titleixofficer@govst.edu)

GSU also has two Deputy Title IX Coordinators:

**Damon Sloan**

**Executive Dir. of Community Standards & Student Advocacy,**

**Deputy Title IX Coordinator**

1 University Parkway (C1312)

University Park, IL 60484

Phone: 708.235.2228

Email: [dsloan@govst.edu](mailto:dsloan@govst.edu)

**Peter Rockey**

**Executive Dir. of Employee and Labor Relations,**

**Deputy Title IX Coordinator**

1 University Parkway (C1361)

University Park, IL 60484

Phone: 708.235.7468

Email: [prockey@govst.edu](mailto:prockey@govst.edu)

## **Nondiscrimination Policy and Grievance Procedures**

GSU's Anti-Sex Discrimination (Title IX) Policy (Policy 78) and Title IX Grievance Procedures, Title IX Reporting Procedures, and Title IX Response Procedures can all be found on GSU's Title IX webpage: <https://www.govst.edu/TitleIX/>. Policy 78 prohibits all forms of sex discrimination, including all discrimination: on the basis of an individual's actual or perceived sex, gender identity or expression, and/or sexual orientation; on the basis of sex stereotypes and sex characteristics; and on the basis of pregnancy or related conditions. Policy 78 also prohibits all forms of sex-based harassment, including: quid pro quo harassment; hostile environment harassment; sexual violence (such as sexual assault); dating/domestic violence; and stalking.

Please see Policy 78 and the Title IX Procedures for more information and definitions.

## **GSU's Commitment**

Consistent with our legal responsibilities and institutional values, GSU is committed to taking all appropriate steps to eliminate sex discrimination and sex-based harassment, prevent their recurrence, and address their effects. GSU encourages all members of our community to participate in the process of creating a safe, welcoming and respectful environment on campus.

## **Reporting Sex Discrimination and Sex-Based Harassment**

If you experience sex discrimination or sex-based harassment, or you know someone else at GSU who has, we encourage you to report it to the Title IX Coordinator so that we can help create a university community free of any such conduct.

Please see the Title IX Reporting Procedures and the GSU Title IX "Report Sex Discrimination" webpage (<https://www.govst.edu/report-sex-discrimination/>) for information on the available options for making a report.

## **Confidential Resources**

Most GSU employees, unless specifically exempted, must immediately report allegations or disclosures of sex discrimination and sex-based harassment to the Title IX Coordinator. *If you wish to speak confidentially with someone without a report being made, you may contact the resources below:*

### **Counseling & Wellness Center**

Employees here are exempted from having to make reports to the Title IX Coordinator. The CWC provides free, confidential counseling services for GSU students.

**Campus Location:** A1120

**Phone:** 708.235.7334

**Email:** [studentcounseling@govst.edu](mailto:studentcounseling@govst.edu)

**Webpage:** <http://www.govst.edu/counseling-and-wellness/>

### **YWCA South Suburban Center**

They provide Confidential Advisor services to GSU students and employees affected by sexual violence. The crisis hotline provides free, confidential crisis intervention and referral services.

**Location:** 320 West 202nd St., Chicago Heights, IL 60411

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**Crisis Hotline (Available 24/7):** 888.293.2080

**Phone:** 708.754.0486

**Website:** [www.ywcachicago.org](http://www.ywcachicago.org)

### **Additional Information**

Please see GSU's Title IX webpage ([www.govst.edu/titleix](http://www.govst.edu/titleix)) and Title IX Reporting Procedures for information on emergency assistance and medical care and on- and off-campus resources available to those affected by sex-based harassment.

### **Sexual Violence Awareness and Education**

In addition to Title IX, Governors State University also complies with Illinois Preventing Sexual Violence in Higher Education Act, 110 ILCS 155, which requires that the institution adopt a comprehensive policy concerning sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking consistent with governing federal and state law. Accordingly, as a student, you may be asked to participate in education and outreach related to the prevention of sexual violence. Under Policy 78, students are required to participate in an annual training program related to sexual assault awareness and prevention to ensure compliance with state and federal law and to help create a welcoming and respectful campus community.

#### *Advocating for Sexual Assault Prevention (ASAP)*

ASAP is a team of faculty, staff, and students committed to creating a campus culture that promotes sexual and relationship health through education and training on the prevention of sexual violence.

### **Pregnancy and Related Conditions**

GSU does not discriminate in its education program or activities against any student based on the student's current, potential, or past: (1) pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or lactation; (2) medical conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or lactation; or (3) recovery from pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, lactation, or related medical conditions (collectively, "pregnancy and/or related conditions").

The University's Title IX Coordinator can coordinate specific actions to prevent discrimination on the basis of pregnancy and/or related conditions and ensure a student's equal access to the University's education program or activity. The Title IX Coordinator's contact information is:

**Kaitlyn Anne Wild**

**Director of Compliance & Title IX Coordinator**

1 University Parkway (G328)

University Park, IL 60484

Phone: 708.534.4846

Email: [titleixofficer@govst.edu](mailto:titleixofficer@govst.edu)

Please see GSU's Title IX "Pregnancy and Related Conditions" webpage (<https://www.govst.edu/titleix-pregnancy/>) for additional information.

## F. Demonstration and Public Protest Policy

Consistent with principles of academic freedom and academic responsibility outlined in the Governors State University Board of Trustees Governing Policies, the purpose of the Demonstration and Public Protest Policy is to provide necessary resources to support the exercise of constitutional rights provided by the First Amendment. Additionally, the policy is intended to provide for the safety of all persons and property associated with the planned or spontaneous act of demonstration or protest.

To secure assistance in planning and obtaining university facilities and to protect the rights of all members of the university community, groups are encouraged to register demonstrations with the University Events office at least two business days before the event. The University permits demonstrations, marches and non-university affiliated speakers without prior registration provided no sound amplification equipment is utilized and members of the university community not participating in the demonstration may proceed with their normal activities.

The *Demonstration and Public Protest Policy* is available at <https://www.govst.edu/policies/>.

## G. Campus Bulletin Board Posting Procedures

Prior approval by the Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs is required to post materials on Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs and University Housing bulletin boards. Request for posting flyers should be made online through Jaguar Connection ([www.govst.edu/jaguarconnection](http://www.govst.edu/jaguarconnection)) and 14 copies of the approved flyer should be submitted to the Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs (A2100) for posting.

Types of material which may be posted include, but are not limited to: event notices of activities offered by the Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs, events and activities sponsored by recognized student clubs and organizations, events, and activities offered by GovState or their associates (e.g., Dining Services, Follett Bookstore), non-profit events and activities of interest to Governors State University students, and direct service items considered on a case-by-case basis.

## H. Smoke-Free / Tobacco-Free Campus

Per (110 ILCS 64/) the Smoke-Free Campus Act, as of July 1, 2015, Governors State University prohibits smoking and the use of tobacco products indoors and outdoors on campus property, including parking lots and in parked cars. Littering the remains of tobacco products or any other related waste product on campus property is further prohibited.

The purpose of the Smoke-Free/Tobacco-Free Campus Policy is to provide a healthy environment that promotes and encourages the health, well-being, and safety of students, faculty, staff, and visitors at Governors State University by minimizing the negative effects of secondhand smoke, to improve safety, and to encourage a more sustainable environment. For more information, please review the *GSU Smoke-Free/Tobacco-Free Policy* at [www.govst.edu/smokefree](http://www.govst.edu/smokefree).

## I. Access Services for Students with Disabilities (ASSD)

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Governors State University must provide reasonable accommodations to qualified students with a disability.

ASSD provides academic assistance to students and works closely with faculty to facilitate access in the learning environment. ASSD provides students with temporary or permanent disabilities, reasonable accommodations, and services in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

ASSD assists in creating an accessible environment of educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities. Legally mandated access and accommodations are available to all qualified students who self-identify with ASSD. Students must provide documentation by a qualified professional that can verify the functional impact of the disability as well as recommendations for appropriate accommodations.

The information provided by students is voluntary and confidential. For more information and/or to arrange for accommodations, please contact ASSD at:

Campus Location: B1215, inside the Student Success Commons

Email: [assd@govst.edu](mailto:assd@govst.edu)

Website: <http://www.govst.edu/disability-services/>

Phone: 708.235.3968

## **J. Mental Health Contact**

Under the Student Optional Disclosure of Private Mental Health Act (110 ILCS 74/), students may designate an individual over the age of 18 to receive disclosures of certain private mental health information. Disclosure of a student's mental health information to a designated person may be made if a physician, clinical psychologist, or qualified examiner (i.e., clinical social worker) employed by the university determines that a student poses a clear danger to themselves or others. If you wish to designate a person that would receive certain private mental health information, please complete the Student Optional Disclosure of Mental Health Contact Information Form on the myGSU portal. For more information, visit <https://www.govst.edu/wellness/>

## **K. Alcohol and Other Drugs**

The health and well-being of GSU students, faculty, and staff are critical components of the overall health of our university community. Consequently, Governors State University seeks to maintain a campus environment that is free from the illegal use of alcohol and other drugs. Consistent with its mission as a public institution of higher education, the university is committed to educating the students, faculty, and staff on the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse, and to establishing standards of conduct that maintain a campus environment in which such abuse is prohibited. These standards are following the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and the Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Act of 1989.

In compliance with the DFSCA, the Counseling and Wellness Center authors a biennial report of institutional policies and practices that includes the effectiveness and the consistency of the enforcement of sanctions. The biennial report is published each Fall in even-numbered years and focuses on the previous two academic years (i.e., 2018-19 and 2019-20).

GSU students should comply with local, state, and federal laws related to the use of drugs, alcohol, and crimes of violence. The Student Code of Conduct details expectations for students' behavior regarding alcohol and drugs as well as possible sanctions for violations of these policies, which include disciplinary sanctions and educational programs.

### **Recreational Cannabis**

Recreational cannabis, while legal in Illinois, is not legal under federal law. Possession, use, manufacture, distribution, or sale of any controlled substance, including cannabis, or drug paraphernalia is prohibited on university property and at any university-sponsored activity. There are no medical exemptions regarding cannabis use on campus.

### **Health Risks**

The abuse or illegal use of alcohol and the illegal use of controlled substances can seriously injure the health of employees and students, adversely impair the performance of their duties and their academic achievements, and endanger the safety and well-being of fellow employees, students, and others. Substance abuse may involve not only controlled substances and illegal drugs but also alcohol and other substances that pose a health risk. When drugs are combined, their negative effects on the mind and body are often multiplied beyond the effects of the same drugs taken singly, which can be deadly.

### **Support Services**

The Counseling & Wellness Center offers counseling and substance use assessments to help students evaluate their alcohol and substance use in a confidential, non-judgmental setting. These assessments give students a structured opportunity to understand their own risk levels, consider potential changes, and reduce the likelihood of future problems. If needed, students can be referred to community treatment programs for a more comprehensive assessment and treatment. Additionally, students have access to online screening tools for alcohol and substance use, behavioral health, and mental well-being, allowing them to anonymously evaluate these areas and receive immediate feedback for informed decision-making. To access the Mindwise and eCheckup-to-Go screening tools, visit <https://www.govst.edu/livingwell@gsu/>.

Certain incidents involving alcohol, drugs, or violence may be reported to public safety.

## **L. Medical Amnesty (Good Samaritan)**

The health and safety of each student are important to GSU. The Office of the Dean of Students recognizes that potential disciplinary action may deter students from seeking medical assistance for another student or themselves. As a university, we support and encourage all students to reach out for assistance in the case of a medical emergency or when they see others in need.

Under the Medical Amnesty practice, students are encouraged to be active bystanders and respond to potentially risky circumstances (such as alcohol or drug intoxication) without consequence from the university. A student who makes an effort to obtain medical assistance will not face formal disciplinary action for possession or use of alcohol (under 21) or other drugs so long as there are no other violations

of the Student Code of Conduct. A student may still be required to meet with the Office of the Dean of Students to discuss the incident.

Behavior that violates local, state, and/or federal laws are still subject to criminal charges.

For medical assistance, contact the Department of Public Safety (DPS) at 708.534.4900 or dial 911. All students who reach out for assistance must self-identify so that the university can recognize your amnesty.

## **M. Religious Observances**

Governors State University will not discriminate against students for observing religious holidays and will reasonably accommodate the religious observances of individual students regarding admission, class attendance, as well as the scheduling of examinations and academic work requirements. It is the responsibility of the student to notify (in writing) the GSU administrator/faculty member involved at least three class periods in advance of the date of the religious observance. Accommodations considered unreasonable are those which would necessitate the modification of academic standards or create an undue hardship on the University or its staff. If students feel they have been discriminated against, a student may file a grievance following the procedures outline in the Student Grievance Policy (Policy 5). *Reasonable Accommodation for Students' Religious Observances (Policy 38)* is available at [www.govst.edu/policies](http://www.govst.edu/policies).

## **N. Student Absence Notification to Faculty**

A student may request faculty notification for a documented absence of 3 or more days due to:

- Personal prolonged illness or injury;
- Life-threatening or serious illness or injury of an immediate family member;
- Death of an immediate family member;
- Emergency work as defined in the Volunteer Emergency Worker Job Protection Act\*;
- Compliance with a valid subpoena, jury duty, or other legal matters such as citizenship or naturalization processes;
- Significant and compelling circumstances beyond a student's control such as an act of nature that destroys a student's primary residence.

Absence notification is not provided in advance or during an absence and requests must be made within 10 business days after a student has returned to classes.

Absence notification is intended to provide faculty with verified information that they may use to determine whether or not to excuse the absence and/or permit late or make-up work. Absence notification neither guarantees that the absence will be excused nor ensures that late or make-up work will be permitted. This authority rests solely with individual instructors.

To make a request please go to: [www.govst.edu/studentabsence](http://www.govst.edu/studentabsence)

## **O. Emergency / Medical Leave of Absence**

A student may request an emergency or medical leave when extraordinary circumstances, such as a serious illness, injury, or hospitalization prevent the student from continuing classes. The severity or duration of the problem must be such that it would not be reasonable to expect the student to be able

to make up the missed work. The Emergency / Medical Leave process applies to both physical and mental health emergencies as well as military deployment. Students requesting leave for military deployment are required to contact Veterans Services.

An emergency or medical leave is “all or nothing” and it is not possible to receive leave from individual classes while remaining enrolled in other classes. A student may withdraw from courses before the published withdrawal date. After the published withdrawal date, students may submit a late withdrawal request to the <http://www.govst.edu/registrar> Registrar for withdrawal from single or multiple classes.

Options for students with medical concerns, including the emergency / medical leave process, are online at [www.govst.edu/emergencyleave](http://www.govst.edu/emergencyleave).

## P. Volunteer Emergency Worker

Consistent with the Volunteer Emergency Worker Higher Education Protection Act (110 ILCS 122), GSU will provide reasonable accommodations for any student who is absent from class due to the performance of their duties as a volunteer emergency worker. The Volunteer Emergency Worker Job Protection Act defines a volunteer emergency worker as a volunteer firefighter, emergency medical technician, ambulance driver or attendant, or other first responders.

If an absence is the result of a student’s documented performance of emergency volunteer work, an instructor must accommodate the absence within reason. A student who believes they were unreasonably denied this accommodation may seek redress through the Student Grievance Policy (Policy 5). The *Volunteer Emergency Worker Policy (Policy 67)* is available at [www.govst.edu/policies](http://www.govst.edu/policies).

## Q. Late Course Withdrawal

Students may withdraw from courses using their myGSU portal through the published withdrawal date per the Withdrawal Policy (6). If a student wishes to withdraw after the published date, they must submit a late withdrawal request to the Registrar ([www.govst.edu/withdrawing](http://www.govst.edu/withdrawing)) by the last day of the current term/semester. Students who are denied a late withdrawal may submit a written appeal to the Office of the Dean of Students as outlined below.

1. **Filing an Appeal:** To appeal, the student must submit a one-page written statement explaining why the request should have been approved and include any additional supporting documentation within five business days to the Office of the Dean of Students ([deanofstudents@govst.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@govst.edu)).
2. **Review of Appeal:** The Office of the Dean of Students will review the appeal information to make a decision. The designated individual responsible for reviewing the appeal will determine if a meeting with the student to discuss the appeal is necessary or if there is sufficient information provided within the written appeal to make a decision.
3. **Notice of Decision:** Students will be notified of the decision *within five business days of* submitting an appeal. If the appeal is approved, the associated departments may need *10*

*business days* to make changes to the student's account. The decision of the Office of the Dean of Students will be final and binding.

## R. Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI)

Students have the right to evaluate the effectiveness of the instruction they received using a university-wide Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI) process after each term. Information about the SEI process is online at <http://www.govst.edu/sei/>

## S. Complaints & Grievances

Complaint and grievance procedures have been established to foster open communication and ensure that Governors State University uses student feedback to continuously improve.

### Complaint vs. Grievance

A **complaint** is a general concern about an action, practice, or decision within the control or responsibility of the university. A student may submit a complaint to provide general feedback to improve the overall student experience. Typically, a student submitting a complaint does so for the university's continuous improvement and is not seeking a personal remedy or resolution. Complaints may be submitted anonymously.

A **grievance** is a matter to be formally investigated. A student may file a grievance if they believe there has been a university error that cannot be resolved informally or allegations of discrimination or harassment. Generally, a grievance will either be academic or non-academic:

- **Academic Grievances** include the issuance of final course grades, academic advising, and other academic-related matters. Academic grievances are managed by the respective College, Library, or Undergraduate Academic Advising Center.
- **Non-Academic Grievances** include, but are not limited to issues regarding registration, financial aid, and other non-academic related matters. Non-academic grievances are managed by the Office of the Dean of Students, except for the following:
  - Discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, citizenship, unfavorable discharge from military service, or veteran status, may be filed under the Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy (Policy 52).
  - Sexual Harassment under the Title IX & Anti-Sex Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy (Policy 78).
  - Decisions related to student conduct, emergency / medical leaves, late withdrawals, satisfactory academic progress, or any other process that grants a student the right to appeal must be filed following the appeal procedures outlined in the appropriate process.

Academic and non-academic grievance procedures are detailed below. “Days” refers to university business days (Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.) excluding holidays or other university closures unless otherwise stated (i.e., calendar days). In calculating timelines, the day a document is filed is “day zero.” The following day is “day one.” For more information, refer to the Student Grievance Policy (Policy 5, [www.govst.edu/policies](http://www.govst.edu/policies)) and Dean of Students’ website [www.govst.edu/studentcomplaints](http://www.govst.edu/studentcomplaints).

## Academic Grievance Procedure

### 1. Informal Resolution

- a. Before filing a written grievance, the student *must seek informal resolution of the issue* with the faculty member or administrator directly involved in the issue/incident of concern within 15 days of the occurrence of the issue.
- b. If, after reasonable efforts, a satisfactory solution is not reached, the student may file a written grievance with the appropriate division/department chair.

### 2. Filing a Grievance

- a. To file an academic grievance, the student must submit a written statement within 30 calendar days of the event to the division/department chair of the college in which the course or advising is offered. When the division/department chair is the teacher of record, the student must submit the grievance directly to the college dean.
- b. The grievance must state the reasons for the grievance and the remedy that is sought.

### 3. Request for Extension of Filing a Grievance

- a. The student may request a one-time extension of the 30-day time period in which a grievance must be filed.
- b. This request must be in writing to the division/department chairperson before the end of the 30 days with reasons and requested time for extension.

### 4. Determination of Grievances (*please check with your college dean for the most up-to-date information*). The division/department chair has seven days to determine if the grievance has substance.

- a. *Determination if the Grievance is an Issue of Substance*
  - i. If the grievance is determined to be an issue of substance, the division/department chair shall refer the grievance to the chair of the College Grievance Committee.
  - ii. The grievance chair shall attempt to find a mutually satisfying solution by working with both the student and the faculty/administrator involved within days of receiving the grievance.
  - iii. If the grievance chair is unable to mediate a satisfactory solution, they shall request in writing that the faculty/administrator involved submit a written response to the student's grievance.
  - iv. The response is to be received by the grievance chair within seven days of the request.
  - v. The grievance chair shall convene the Student Grievance Committee within ten days of receiving a written response from the faculty/administrator involved.
- b. *Determination Grievance is Not an Issue of Substance*
  - i. If the division/department chair decides that the grievance does not present an issue of substance, they shall notify the student in writing with reasons.

- ii. The student may appeal the division/department chair's decision of no substance to the dean/director in writing within ten days of receipt of the division/department chair's decision.
- iii. The decision of the dean/director shall be submitted in writing within ten days to the provost or designee, the grievance committee chairperson, and the student.
- iv. The student may appeal the dean/director's decision to the provost or designee in writing within ten days of receipt of the college dean/director's decision.
- v. The decision of the provost (or designee) shall be provided in writing within ten days and is final and binding.

### Non-Academic Grievance Procedure

#### 1. Informal Resolution

- a. The university encourages students to discuss their concerns with the appropriate office or campus administrator who has the authority to address their concerns.
- b. If, after reasonable efforts, a satisfactory solution is not reached, the student may file a grievance with the Office of the Dean of Students.
- c. Informal resolution is encouraged but does not extend any deadlines outlined below, except by mutual written consent – needs a period after consent

2. **Filing a Grievance** To file a grievance, the student must submit a written statement using the online form (<https://www.govst.edu/complaint>) within 30 calendar days of the date the student first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the grievance. The written grievance must state the reasons for the grievance and the remedy that is sought.

3. **Request for Extension of Filing a Grievance:** The student may request an extension of the 30-day time period in which a grievance must be filed. This request, with rationale, must be in writing to the Office of the Dean of Students before the end of the 30 days.

4. **Determination of Grievances:** Upon receipt of the grievance form, the Dean of Students or designee shall determine if the grievance has substance within 10 days.

- a. No Substance:

- i. If the Dean of Students or designee decides that the grievance does not have substance, they shall inform the student in writing with their rationale.
- ii. The student may appeal the Dean of Students or designee's decision to the provost or designee in writing within five days of the dean's decision. The decision of the provost or designee shall be provided in writing within ten days and is final and binding.

- b. Substance:

- i. If the Dean of Students or designee determines the grievance has substance, they shall inform the student in writing with their rationale and remedy.
- ii. If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome or remedy of the grievance, the student may appeal the Dean of Students or designee's decision to the provost or designee in writing within five days of the dean's decision.
- iii. The decision of the provost or designee shall be provided in writing within 10 days and is final and binding.

## SECTION THREE: STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

### A. Community Standards

The Community Standards program, coordinated by the Office of the Dean of Students, strives to promote a safe and secure environment while upholding the rights of all community members. The program promotes student learning and development as well as a campus culture of respect and responsibility. We encourage a community of acceptance and accountability by creating processes to resolve conflicts consistent with university policy.

Community Standards is responsible for administering the Student Code of Conduct (Policy 4), which is the primary policy used to outline the university's expectations for student behavior. Sections Four and Five detail the administrative procedures used to address student conduct and/or the conduct of registered student organizations.

The Office of the Dean of Students' Community Standards program has primary responsibility for resolving matters of non-academic student misconduct. Faculty and academic colleges have primary authority for resolving academic misconduct.

#### Goals of the Community Standards Process

- Foster a safe and secure environment.
- Support the university's educational mission with out-of-class educational opportunities that lead towards more mindful decision-making and reinforces concepts of personal accountability and healthy community membership.
- Maintain an educational system that provides students with the opportunity to learn about themselves, others, and about being a student in good standing at Governors State University.
- Promote the core values of civility, integrity, responsibility, and social justice.

#### Contact Information

Phone	708.235.2845
Email	<a href="mailto:communitystandards@govst.edu">communitystandards@govst.edu</a>
Location	C1310
Website	<a href="http://www.govst.edu/communitystandards">www.govst.edu/communitystandards</a>

### B. General Information

#### Violations of the Law

When students violate a university policy, they are subject to disciplinary action by the university whether or not the conduct violates the law. When a student is subject to allegations that may violate federal, state, and/or local laws, the university may simultaneously and independently investigate and address potential conduct code violations. The university conduct process shall proceed notwithstanding any criminal or civil complaint that may arise from the same incident.

## Other Disciplinary Procedures

The Office of the Dean of Students may work with other appropriate offices to address any conflicts associated with concurrent processes to address the same behavior. Students who are athletes, leaders, employees, or hold other relationships with the University, and whose behaviors violate the Student Code of Conduct, may also fall within the jurisdiction of another University policy or process associated with that relationship. Likewise, employees who enroll as students may be held accountable for behavior that falls under the Student Code of Conduct in addition to any action they may be subject to as an employee.

### Sexual Misconduct and Title IX

Allegations of sexual misconduct will be referred to the Title IX Coordinator for an initial assessment. Formal complaints alleging conduct that meets the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX will follow the grievance procedures outlined in Policy 78 and the corresponding procedure manual. All other allegations of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation based on an individual's actual or perceived sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation will be addressed through the Student Code of Conduct described in this handbook.

### Student Status and Registration Holds

A hold is an administrative notation on a student's account that prevents the student from registering for classes, dropping or adding courses, and/or obtaining transcripts. A hold may be placed on a student's account when a student has failed to complete a sanction by the deadline, failed to attend a required meeting with the Office of the Dean of Students, or was not currently enrolled when the alleged violation was reported.

A student charged with violating policies may not avoid the conduct process by withdrawing from courses and/or the university. Student conduct proceedings may continue as described in this handbook without the student's participation or a hold may be placed on the student's account.

### Prior Conduct or Criminal History

The University requires students to disclose criminal or disciplinary history on their application for admission and application for University Housing. The university does not use criminal or disciplinary history in admissions decisions but may restrict students from living in on-campus housing. Submitting false information on an application for admission or on-campus housing may result in cancellation of an admissions decision or housing assignment, and university disciplinary action.

### Guest Behavior

Students and their guests are expected to follow the rules and regulations defined in the Student Code of Conduct and University Housing Handbook. Students may be held responsible for the actions of their guests that violate the Student Code of Conduct, including restitution (payment) for property damage.

### Definitions

1. **University Premises** are buildings or grounds owned, leased, operated, controlled, or supervised by the university.

2. **University-Sponsored Activities** are all university-sponsored educational programs and services; extracurricular programs, events, or functions (including religious, service, leadership, social, recreational, and athletic) administered or coordinated through the university or one of its schools, departments, or approved organizations; as to each whether occurring on or off university premises.
3. **University Community** includes all persons associated with the university as students, employees, agents, trustees, volunteers, contractors (including employees or agents of contractors), or members of the public lawfully in attendance at a university activity or present on university premises.
4. **Student** is a person currently enrolled in a university course, program, or activity, including without limitation, all persons taking courses at the university, both full-time and part-time, pursuing undergraduate or graduate studies in any university school/college or program. For individuals who become subject to the conduct process while enrolled, their status shall continue until all proceedings have concluded. If an active or continuing student is not registered for classes at the time of the incident, a hold may be placed on the student's account to prevent course registration until the case is resolved.
5. **Respondent / Responding Student** is the individual who may have violated the university's Student Code of Conduct.
6. **Complainant / Reporter** is the individual who has reported or brought forth the alleged violation(s).
7. **Student Organization** is a group of persons who have complied with university requirements for recognition as established by the Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs.

## C. Policy

### Authority & Jurisdiction

The Student Code of Conduct is applicable to academic and non-academic misconduct both on- and off-campus, including university premises and university-sponsored activities, and through the use of any electronic media. Online postings such as blogs, web postings, chats, and social networking sites are in the public sphere and are not private. These postings can subject a student to allegations of misconduct if evidence of policy violations is posted online. All students and registered student organizations are expected to follow all relevant policies and procedures listed within the university policy directory and their respective program of study.

### Student Misconduct Policies

#### Non-Academic Misconduct

Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to:

1. **Alcohol:** Use, possession, manufacture, sale, or distribution of alcoholic beverages, except as expressly permitted by law and university regulations. Alcoholic beverages may not, under any circumstances, be used by, possessed by, or distributed to any person under 21 years of age. Public intoxication is also prohibited. *Additional regulations regarding the use or possession of alcohol in University Housing are published in the University Housing Handbook. Violations of the Residential Code of Conduct regarding alcohol, include but are not limited to:*
  - a. Persons under 21 being in the presence of alcohol;

- b. Persons under 21 possessing empty alcohol containers for storage or decorative purposes;
  - c. Exceeding quantity limits for persons 21 and older;
  - d. Common sources of alcohol (kegs, punch bowls) and drinking games.
2. **Assault:** Intentionally or recklessly causing physical harm, acts of violence, or other conduct that threatens or endangers the welfare of another individual.
3. **Contempt of the Conduct Process:** Interference or failure to comply with the university student conduct process, including failure to comply with disciplinary sanctions or falsification, failure to provide, destruction, or concealment of information.
4. **Controlled Substances (Drugs):** Use, possession, manufacture, sale, or distribution of illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia, including marijuana, heroin, narcotics, and other controlled substances, per state and federal law. Recreational and medical marijuana, while legal in Illinois, is not legal under federal law and is prohibited. Marijuana in any form, including but not limited to tinctures, edibles, and topicals is prohibited. Prescription and over-the-counter medication or other substances being used in a manner other than its intended purpose are also prohibited.
5. **Damage and Destruction:** Intentional, reckless, and/or unauthorized damage to or destruction of university property or the personal property of another person.
6. **Discrimination:** Any act, or failure to act, that is based upon an individual or group's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, religion, age, disability, citizenship, veteran status, or other protected characteristic that is sufficiently severe that it limits or denies the ability to participate in or benefit from the university's educational program or activities per the Harassment and Discrimination policy (52).
7. **Disorderly Conduct:** Causing, inciting, or participating in any demonstration, riot, or activity that presents a clear and present danger to self or others, causes physical harm to others, or results in damage or destruction of property, except as expressly permitted by the Demonstration and Public Protest policy.
8. **Disruptive Behavior:** Substantially interfering with the living, learning, or working environment of another individual or university operations including obstruction of teaching, research, administration, other university activities, and/or other authorized non-university activities which occur on campus.
9. **Election Tampering:** Tampering with the election of any university-recognized student organization.
10. **Endangerment:** Acting in a way that interferes with the operation of any vital safety-providing service or equipment. Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to failure to comply with law enforcement, emergency medical, or fire services; tampering with fire extinguishers, alarms, or safety equipment; or failure to evacuate during an emergency.
11. **Failure to Comply:** Failure to comply with the reasonable directions of university officials or law enforcement officials acting in the performance of their duties.
12. **Falsification:** Dishonest acts or providing false or misleading information to any university official. Examples may include but are not limited to intentionally or knowingly entering false fire alarms, bomb threats, or other emergencies.

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- 13. Gambling:** Unauthorized gambling or wagering for money or property.
- 14. Harassment:** Any unwelcome conduct based on an individual or group's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, religion, age, disability, citizenship, veteran status, or other protected characteristic, under the Harassment and Discrimination policy (52).
- 15. Hazing:** Reckless or intentional acts that endanger the mental or physical health or safety of another person, or which destroys or removes public or private property, for initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or a condition for continued membership, in a group or organization.
- 16. Public Exposure:** Deliberately and publicly exposing one's intimate body parts, public urination, defecation, and public sex acts.
- 17. Retaliation:** Any intentional, adverse action taken against an individual for making a complaint, cooperating with an investigation, or participating in a conduct or grievance procedure. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, intimidation, coercion, harassment, making of threats, and any other adverse educational or employment action.
- 18. Sexual Misconduct:** Any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that is committed without consent, by force, or using intimidation, coercion, or manipulation. This includes, but is not limited to sexual harassment, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking, under Title IX and the Sexual Misconduct policy (78):
- a. **Sexual Harassment** Any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or any conduct of a sexual nature when:
    - i. Quid Pro Quo:
      1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, education, living environment, or participation in a GSU activity;
      2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for or a factor in such decisions affecting employment, education, living environment, or participation in a University activity.
    - ii. Hostile Environment:
      1. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's employment or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, offensive environment for that individual's working, educational, and/or living environment; or such conduct was so severe or pervasive that it altered the condition of employment or effectively denies a person equal access to the recipient's education program or activity.
  - b. **Sexual Assault**, defined as:
    - i. Sex Offenses, Forcible. Any sexual act directed against another person, without the consent of the Complainant, including instances in which the Complainant is incapable of giving consent.
    - ii. Forcible Rape: 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 Complainant.
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- iii. **Forcible Sodomy.** Oral or anal sexual intercourse with another person, forcibly, and/or against that person's will (non-consensually), or not forcibly or against the person's will in instances in which the Complainant is incapable of giving consent because of age or because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.
  - iv. **Sexual Assault with an Object.** The use of an object or instrument to penetrate, however slightly, the genital or anal opening of the body of another person, forcibly, and/or against that person's will (non-consensually), or not forcibly or against the person's will in instances in which the Complainant is incapable of giving consent because of age or because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.
  - v. **Forcible Fondling.** The touching of the private body parts of another person (buttocks, groin, breasts), for sexual gratification, forcibly, and/or against that person's will (non-consensually), or not forcibly or against the person's will in instances in which the Complainant is incapable of giving consent because of age or because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.
  - vi. **Sex Offenses, Non-forcible:**
    - 1. **Incest:**
      - a. Non-forcible sexual intercourse,
      - b. between persons who are related to each other,
      - c. within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by Illinois.
    - 2. **Statutory Rape:**
      - a. Non-forcible sexual intercourse,
      - b. with a person who is under the statutory age of consent of 17 years of age.
  - c. **Dating Violence.** Violence, based on sex, committed by a person, who is in or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the Complainant. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on the Complainant's statement and with consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. This definition of dating violence includes, but is not limited to, sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse. Dating violence does not include acts covered under the definition of domestic violence.
  - d. **Domestic Violence.** Violence, based on sex, committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the Complainant, by a person with whom the Complainant shares a child in common, or by a person who is cohabitating with, or has cohabitated with, the Complainant as a spouse or intimate partner, or by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the Complainant under the domestic or family violence laws of Illinois or by any other person against an adult or youth Complainant who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of Illinois.
  - e. **Stalking.** Engaging in a course of conduct, based on sex, directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for the person's safety, or the safety of others; or suffer emotional distress. For this definition, course of conduct means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts in which the Respondent directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means, follows,
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monitors, observes, surveils, or threatens a person, workplace, or school, engages in other conduct, or interferes with or damages a person's property or pet. A course of conduct may include contact via electronic communications. Reasonable person means a person in the Complainant's circumstances with the Complainant's knowledge of the respondent and the respondent's prior acts. Emotional distress means significant mental suffering, anxiety, or alarm.

- f. **Sexual Exploitation.** Taking advantage of the sexuality of another person, without consent, or in a manner that extends the bounds of consensual sexual activity without the knowledge of the other individual for any purpose, including sexual gratification, financial gain, personal benefit, or any other non-legitimate purpose. Examples of sexual exploitation include non-consensual video or audio-taping of sexual activity; going beyond the boundaries of consent (such as letting others hide in the closet to watch you having consensual sex); engaging in voyeurism; knowingly transmitting an STD or HIV to another person; exposing one's genitals in non-consensual circumstances, or inducing another to expose their genitals.
- g. **Aiding or Facilitating.** When an individual or group of individuals promote or encourage others to engage in Prohibited Conduct in violation of the Title IX / Anti-Sexual Misconduct Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy.
- h. **Retaliation**, defined as:
  - i. GSU or any member of the GSU community taking materially adverse action by intimidating, threatening, coercing, harassing, or discriminating against any individual to interfere with any right or privilege secured by law or policy, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this policy and procedure.
  - ii. GSU or another person may not intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual to interfere with any right or privilege secured by law or policy or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing.
  - iii. Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for policy violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, to interfere with any right or privilege secured by Title IX constitutes retaliation.
  - iv. The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment does not constitute retaliation.
  - v. Charging an individual with a policy violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance proceeding under this policy and procedure does not constitute retaliation, provided that a determination regarding responsibility, alone, is not sufficient to conclude that any party has made a materially false statement in bad faith.

**19. Smoking:** Smoking, use of tobacco products, or carrying any kind of lighted smoking materials on campus property.

- 20. Theft:** Attempted or actual theft of university property or the personal property of another person.
- 21. Threatening Behavior:** Written or verbal threats or implied threats (intimidation) that causes a reasonable expectation of injury to the health or safety of any person or damage to any property.
- 22. Unauthorized Entry:** Misuse of access privileges to university premises or unauthorized entry to or use of university facilities, including trespassing, propping, or unauthorized use of alarmed doors.
- 23. Unauthorized Recording:** Any actual or attempted unauthorized use of electronic or other devices to make an audio, video, or photographic recording of any person without their prior knowledge or their consent is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, recording when the person or persons being recorded have a reasonable expectation of privacy (i.e. restroom, locker room, residential room); when such recording is likely to cause injury or distress; or when a recording is shared without the consent of those that were recorded.
- 24. Unauthorized Use:** Unauthorized possession, use, duplication, or other abuse of university trademark, materials, equipment, or documents, including, but not limited to keys, identification cards, computer technology, and other property.
- 25. Violation of Other University Policy:** Violation of other published university policies or rules, including all University Housing policies.
- 26. Violation of the Law:** Violation of any federal, state, or local law.
- 27. Weapons:** Illegal or unauthorized possession of firearms, explosives, other weapons, or dangerous substances on university premises or the use of any item, even if legally possessed, in a manner that harms, threatens, or causes fear to others.

### Academic Misconduct

Instances of academic misconduct are delineated in Academic Honesty (24) and Fair Use of Copyrighted Works for Education and Research (62) policies. The Dean of Students will maintain records and process alleged student violation(s) of these policies as delineated in Academic Honesty (Policy 24) and Student Conduct (Policy 4). Individual instructors, department/division chairs, and/or college deans may request that the Office of the Dean of Students retain copies of academic misconduct cases for record keeping purposes only.

## SECTION FOUR: STUDENT CONDUCT PROCEDURES

### A. Reporting Student Misconduct

The Office of the Dean of Students encourages Any member of the university community who possesses information about alleged misconduct and is acting in good faith may submit a written report to the Office of the Dean of Students. Reports should be submitted as soon as possible following an incident to ensure timely response. A report is the written record of the information brought forth regarding the alleged violations(s) of the Student Code of Conduct.

#### Responsibility to Report Violations

Although other policies and procedures may exist to address student misconduct, the following matters must be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students for consideration of formal Student Conduct proceedings (either instead of or in addition to other applicable policies or procedures):

1. Behavior that poses an imminent risk to the safety of the student or any members of the university community, including but not limited to, threats or acts of violence;
2. Serious infractions of the Student Code of Conduct including, but not limited to: the destruction of property; possession of weapons; bomb threats; use, sale, or possession of controlled substances; or violations of local, state, or federal laws;
3. All incidents of alleged sexual misconduct, which include, but are not limited to, sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

#### Submitting a Report

Report alleged misconduct as soon as possible after the incident occurred. A report should describe what happened, the alleged violation(s) of the Student Code of Conduct, and identify the individuals involved in or witness the incident. Additional materials that support the alleged misconduct may be included (e.g., photos, written correspondence, copies of emails, and/or text messages). If the report does not contain adequate documentation, the Office of the Dean of students may contact you requesting additional information or clarification regarding the incident.

Type of Concern / Issue	Purpose	Web Form	Recipient
Non-academic Misconduct	Report potential violations of the Student Code of Conduct	<a href="http://www.govst.edu/conductIR">www.govst.edu/conductIR</a>	Office of the Dean of Students
Title IX / Sexual Misconduct*	Report sexual assault, harassment, dating/domestic violence, and stalking.	<a href="http://www.govst.edu/titleixreport">www.govst.edu/titleixreport</a>	Title IX Coordinator

In some instances, anonymous reporting is available but may limit the university's ability to take meaningful action. The Office of the Dean of Students reserves the right to initiate a case without a formal complaint and to investigate an anonymous report.

### False Reports

The University considers the intentional filing of a false report as a serious matter. It is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct to make an intentionally false report.

### Reviewing Reports

The Office of the Dean of Students reviews reports Monday – Friday between 8:30 – 5 p.m. when the university is open. A report may be processed in one of the following manners:

- A. Case Not Referred:** If there does not appear to be credible or sufficient information to suggest that a violation occurred, the report will not move forward through the formal Student Conduct process. The report and any information gathered will be kept to document that the situation was reviewed.
- B. Informal Response:** If the behavior described is concerning, but does not appear to be a violation or falls outside the jurisdiction of the Student Code of Conduct, there may still be an institutional response without the initiation of the formal Student Conduct process. For example, the student may be asked to meet with a staff member to discuss the incident or participate in a mediated conversation.
- C. Referral to Academic Colleges:** Reports alleging a violation related to academic honesty will be referred to the academic college.
- D. Community Standards Review:** Reports alleging a violation of non-academic conduct policies will be reviewed by Community Standards and referred for a conduct hearing.
- E. Referral to University Department:** Community Standards may determine that the case should be handled—instead of or in addition to Community Standards—by another office (e.g. University Housing, Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs).
- F. Referral to Title IX Coordinator for Investigation:** If the conduct described in the complaint suggests a possible violation of the Title IX and Sex Anti- Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy [www.govst.edu/titleix](http://www.govst.edu/titleix), the information will be submitted to the Title IX Coordinator for review.
- G. Request for a Delayed Process:** Requests for a delay related to the Student Conduct process must be submitted in writing to the Office of the Dean of Students and will be considered only in extraordinary circumstances.

### B. Notice to the Student

All communication regarding the conduct process will be sent to a student’s GSU student email account. Students are responsible for reading and responding to their university emails. If a conduct case is referred, the student will be notified of the alleged violations and student conduct procedures. In extenuating circumstances, notices may also be mailed to a student’s address as listed in their official records held by the Registrar or hand-delivered to the student on campus.

### C. Interim Measures

Interim measures may be put into place at any time after the initial reporting of alleged misconduct, before a conduct hearing, for reasons including, but not limited to:

1. To protect the health, welfare, or safety of a student or the university community;
2. To prevent or address a significant disruption to the educational process and/or the normal operations of the university; or

3. To provide legally mandated supportive measures under Title IX or court order.

Interim measures will not include termination of a student's status or be a finding of responsibility. A student's failure to abide by any interim measures may be considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Types of Interim Measures**

Interim measures may include, but are not limited to:

- A. Change of University Housing room assignment or removal/ban from University Housing;
- B. Change of dining/parking/transportation arrangements;
- C. Restrictions on participation in student organizations and student activities;
- D. Change in work schedules/assignments;
- E. Alteration of academic schedules;
- F. Withdrawal from/retake of a class without penalty;
- G. Limited access to university services;
- H. Restricted access to university buildings/facilities;
- I. No contact order;
- J. Hold on a student account.

### **Notification of Interim Measures**

If interim measures are necessary, the students affected by the measures will be provided with a written notice outlining the restrictions or changes that have been imposed. The interim measure notices will be sent to both parties and will specify the measures that have been put into place and the reason(s) for the action. Interim measures will vary depending upon the facts of each case.

## **D. Summary Suspension**

The Office of the Dean of Students may summarily suspend a student whose continued participation in a specific program or activity, or presence on campus, poses an immediate threat to the health or safety of others or significant disruption to normal campus operations. Summary suspensions are to respond to extraordinary situations where, in the judgment of the Dean of Students, the prescribed Student Conduct process is not appropriate or cannot be applied in a timely enough manner.

A summary suspension may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Restriction from some or all university premises, including University Housing;
2. Loss of privilege to participate in classes, either in person or electronically/virtually;
3. Loss of privilege to participate in some or all university-related activities;
4. Registration hold;
5. Graduation hold (if a student is on the graduation list or scheduled to graduate within the semester of the suspension); and/or
6. Notification of suspension to an academic program.

### **Notification of Summary Suspension**

The student will be notified of the summary suspension status by official GSU student email, telephone, and/or in person. The notification will include an explanation for the imposition of the summary

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suspension and outline the restriction(s) imposed on the student during their suspension. After the issuance of the summary suspension notice, the Office of the Dean of Students will inform all appropriate campus administrative units of the imposition of the summary suspension. Failure to abide by the terms of the summary suspension may result in additional disciplinary action. A student who questions the summary suspension may submit a written request for a hearing before the Dean of Students to review the summary suspension.

## E. Conduct Hearings

Student(s) who have allegedly violated the Student Code of Conduct will have the opportunity to participate in a conduct hearing to discuss the alleged violations and respond to the charges. The conduct process is not a criminal or judicial trial/practice. The hearing process is designed to educate students and hold them accountable for their conduct and decision-making.

During the academic year, cases are typically assigned to a hearing officer or the Student Conduct Committee (SCC). Exceptions include, but are not limited to:

- Periods when the committee is not in session (e.g., academic break periods, summer term, university break periods, periods at the start of each semester before the convening of the committee);
- Cases that require a special need for confidentiality (e.g., sexual harassment).

### Administrative Conduct Hearing

An administrative conduct hearing is a conversation between a student and an administrative hearing officer for low-level violations / first offenses of university and residential policy. Generally, incidents occurring within University Housing will be heard by the Residence Hall Director, Assistant Residence Hall Director, or the Director/Assistant Director of University Housing (this includes non-resident students who violate policy within University Housing) and incidents occurring outside university housing will be heard by the Director of Community Standards.

### Administrative Conduct Hearing Format

#### A. *Student attends the hearing:*

1. The student may ask questions about the process;
2. The hearing officer will review the facts of the incident report, as well as any other relevant case information received;
3. The student may respond to the information by providing their perspectives on the incident and alleged policy violations;
4. The student may present information and/or witnesses relevant to the charges;
5. The hearing officer may ask questions of the student and witnesses;
6. The student may accept or deny responsibility for the alleged policy violation(s);
7. The hearing officer will determine whether the respondent is responsible for the alleged policy violation(s) and, if responsible, will consider appropriate sanction(s);
8. After the hearing, Community Standards will inform the students of the hearing officer's decision in writing.

#### B. *Student does not attend the hearing.*

1. If the student chooses not to meet with the hearing officer by the given deadline, the hearing officer may proceed with the determination of responsibility and if responsible, impose any sanction(s) without input from the student.

2. At the hearing officer's discretion, the student may be offered a second opportunity to schedule a hearing if the student has not previously participated in a conduct process and the decision has not been communicated in writing.

### **Student Conduct Committee**

A Student Conduct Committee hearing is a formal conversation between a student and a committee of faculty, staff, and students who have been trained to hear serious / repeat offenses of university and residential policies. The conduct committee hearing process provides the student with an opportunity to:

- Review the available case information, including the alleged violations;
- Share their perspective on what happened, including presenting witnesses and relevant evidence; and/or
- Describe the effects the incident has had on the student and others, both negative (harm caused) and positive (lessons learned).

**Student Conduct Committee Hearings:** Hearing proceedings will follow the format described below. The hearing is not conducted as a civil or criminal proceeding and consequently, strict rules of evidence do not apply. At the discretion of the members, changes may be made to the hearing format to accommodate special circumstances. The Committee/Hearing Chair is responsible for asking all relevant questions, making decisions based on the materials and information provided, and imposing sanctions where appropriate. The Hearing Chair/Student Conduct Committee determines the relevance of any information, materials, or testimony, and may refuse to direct questions to the parties/witness and/or refuse to accept information, materials, or testimony it considers immaterial or irrelevant.

The Student Conduct Committee hearing will utilize the following format:

1. **Introduction/Review of Alleged Violations:** The Chair of the Student Conduct Committee will convene the hearing by requesting that all individuals present state their name and role. The Chair will then review the alleged violations of the Standards of Conduct.
2. **Opening Statements:** The complainant and respondent may each make a brief opening statement to provide the hearing committee with a summary of their positions relevant to the complaint and the materials/witnesses to be presented.
3. **Presentation of Evidence:** The complainant and respondent may present to the committee relevant information, materials, and witness testimony to support their position. Community Standards may call any witnesses or investigators to present relevant findings to the hearing committee. Witnesses may only be present at the hearing while providing their testimony.
4. **Questioning of Parties/Witnesses:** After each respective presentation, the hearing committee, complainant, and respondent will have the opportunity to ask questions. The Hearing Chair/Student Conduct Committee may recall any witnesses. Once all information, materials, and testimony have been presented, the hearing committee, complainant, and respondent are provided a final opportunity to ask additional questions or provide additional information to the Student Conduct Committee.
5. **Closing Statements:** The complainant and respondent may each make a closing statement. The closing statement should be a summary of the materials and information presented during the

hearing and any relevant information that the student would like to share with the hearing committee.

6. **Executive Session:** The hearing committee will excuse all participants and enter into an executive session during which the committee will assess the information presented as well as the credibility of the parties and witnesses. The hearing committee will decide (based on a simple majority vote): (a) whether or not, by a preponderance of the evidence, the respondent is responsible for the alleged violation(s) of the Student Code of Conduct, and, if so, (b) what sanctions are appropriate. Only after determining responsibility will the committee review and consider any previous sanctions imposed on the respondent. The review of any previous sanctions will include all disciplinary actions taken in any prior conduct proceedings. The deliberations of the executive committee are not recorded.

## F. Rights of Students in the Conduct Process

Students are given due process rights in compliance with the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The Fourteenth Amendment requires all public institutions of higher learning to afford students due process before taking disciplinary actions, including notifying students of allegations and providing an opportunity for the student to respond to the allegations.

Students charged with violations of the Student Code of Conduct are advised of their due process rights when they meet with the Office of the Dean of Students staff and designees, and throughout the process, they are entitled to the procedural rights listed below. All students should familiarize themselves with the following rights and procedures.

The hearing information and procedures apply to Disciplinary Conferences, Administrative Conduct Hearings, and Student Conduct Committee hearings unless otherwise noted. Please note that processes for sensitive cases such as Title IX / Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, or Retaliation cases differ from the list below, refer to the Title IX and Sex Anti- Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Policy (Policy 78), [www.govst.edu/titleix](http://www.govst.edu/titleix).

- A. **Notice of Charges:** The student will be given the opportunity, upon request, to read all written reports to be presented at the hearing regarding the circumstances and allegations of the case. (To protect the rights of others involved, presented documentation may be redacted.)
- B. **Respond to Charges:** It is presumed that a student charged with a violation of the Code is not responsible for such violations unless the student accepts responsibility or is found responsible following a hearing. Both the responding student(s) and the complainant(s) will be provided with an opportunity to meet with the hearing officer/committee to share information about the incident. Students have the right to question persons presenting information regarding the alleged incident. Contact between the responding and complainant parties may be limited to necessity.
- C. **Choosing Not to Participate:** Students are encouraged but not required to appear at a hearing or participate in the resolution of their charges. In this situation, the Office of the Dean of Students will proceed without the participation of the student.
- D. **Hearing Body:** For a Disciplinary Conference and Administrative Conduct Hearing, a hearing officer hears the case and determines the outcome. For a Student Conduct Committee Hearing, a quorum

consists of four voting members of the Student Conduct Committee from at least two groups (student, staff, and faculty).

- E. Incidents Involving Multiple Students/Separate Hearing:** When more than one student is involved in the same incident, the Office of the Dean of Students will determine the appropriate approach to resolution, balancing students' privacy rights with the university resources available to provide a timely and fair resolution.
  - 1. *Combined Hearings:* If a decision is made to combine the hearings of all the students involved in an incident, all parties (complainants and respondents) will be present for the reading of the charges, opening remarks, complainant's presentation of evidence and witness testimony, and closing statements.
  - 2. *Separate Statements:* If a combined hearing occurs, at the time the individual respondent presents their case, the other respondent(s) and their advisor and witnesses may be excused from the hearing unless otherwise agreed upon by the respondent(s) and the committee.
- F. Information about Conduct Process:** The student has the right to information about the conduct process and procedures and to have their questions answered about the process.
- G. Notification of Hearing Outcome:** Within seven business days following the conclusion of the hearing, a written decision will be sent to the respondent and all appropriate parties. Decision notices are sent to GSU student email and including information about the charge(s), sanction(s), and appeal processes. If there is no disciplinary action needed, the decision letter will communicate that no action is required from the student.
- H. Participants in Hearing:** All hearings are closed and not open to the public except for the following individuals: hearing officers or members of the Student Conduct Committee, the complainant(s), the respondent(s), advisors, witnesses, Office of the Dean of Students staff, and the Department of Public Safety. For student conduct committee hearings, the respondent may request that the hearing be open to members of the university community and this request must be approved by the committee and the Office of the Dean of Students.
- I. Personal Safety Considerations:** The student will be given reasonable accommodations for concerns related to personal safety, well-being, and/or fears of confrontation of persons involved with the case during the hearing process. In situations where reasonable fear for physical safety and/or retaliation exists, the Conduct Committee Hearing Chair reserves the right to take appropriate and reasonable measures to adjust the hearing format, including having police present and/or using technology to allow parties to participate in a manner that addresses the concerns while allowing the process to move forward.
- J. Privacy of Information:** Student conduct records are maintained following the GSU Student Records Policy (Policy 12), as well as applicable federal and state laws. All hearings, proceedings, and case information are considered confidential except to those who have a legitimate educational interest in them, or as permitted or required under FERPA, the Clery Act, or any other legal mandate.
- K. Reasonable Accommodation:** Any student with a disability involved in the conduct process has the right to request reasonable accommodations to ensure their full and equal participation. Students wishing to request reasonable accommodations should submit requests directly to Access Services for Students with Disabilities.

- L. Record of Hearing:** For a Student Conduct Committee Hearing, Community Standards will maintain a record of the hearing which may be in the form of a written summary of the proceedings and/or audio recording, if applicable.
- M. Remote Participation:** Any party, including the respondent, complainant, or any witness, may request to participate in a hearing remotely by way of telephone, videoconferencing, or other appropriate means provided the identity of the person participating remotely is known to all parties and all other guidelines and procedures described in this handbook are followed. Requests for remote participation will only be considered in extenuating circumstances and must be approved by the Office of the Dean of Students.
- N. Right to an Advisor:** Students have the right to an advisor to provide advice and or support to a student during the conduct process. The role of the advisor will be restricted to advising and supporting the student. Advisors are not permitted to speak on behalf of the student.
1. Students who wish to have an advisor participate must notify Community Standards in writing at least 48 hours in advance of the hearing.
  2. Advisors who do not comply with the above guidelines or otherwise interfere with the hearing process will not be permitted to participate in the hearing.
- O. Right to Submit Witnesses:** Students have the right to submit witnesses who directly observed an incident or have direct or indirect knowledge related to an incident. Witnesses should be able to speak knowledgeably about the incident and be able to provide relevant facts. Reliable witnesses are critical to the integrity and effectiveness of the process.
1. Students who wish to have witnesses participate must notify Community Standards in writing in advance of the hearing. Witnesses must be pre-approved by Community Standards and will receive an email notification with guidance on serving as a witness.
  2. Witnesses cannot participate solely to speak about an individual's character.
  3. The respondent, the complainant, and/or the Office of the Dean of Students may request relevant witnesses to participate in the process and limit the number of witnesses.
  4. The Office of the Dean of Students may request a written statement from the witness and/or a meeting with the witness before the hearing.
  5. Witnesses who do not comply with the above guidelines or otherwise interfere with the hearing process will not be permitted to participate in the hearing.
- P. Standard of Proof:** A preponderance of the evidence, or "more likely than not," standard is the official evidence standard of the Student Code of Conduct. In this context, the respondent will be found to be responsible for the alleged violations if the hearing officer/hearing committee concludes that it is more likely than not that, based on a careful review of all information presented, the respondent is responsible for the alleged behavior and these behaviors constitute a violation.
- Q. Statements and Evidence:** The hearing committee/hearing officer will make determinations based on all available information and materials. Failure of the respondent to be present or participate in the proceedings will not be seen as an admission of responsibility. Likewise, the failure of the complainant to participate in the proceedings will not be seen as evidence that favors the respondent.
- R. Timeliness of Conduct Process:** The University strives to complete the Student Conduct process, including the time for any hearings or appeal processes, within 60 calendar days. There are,

however, many factors that may affect the length of time needed to complete various portions of the resolution process fairly and equitably. Consequently, some matters will be resolved before the designated time frame, and some may require additional time.

## G. Outcomes / Sanctions

Sanctions are designed to promote the university's educational mission, the safety of the university community, and to deter students from behavior that violates the Standards of Conduct. Some behavior may be so harmful or disruptive to the university community or the educational process that it may require more severe sanctions. More than one sanction may be imposed in any one case.

The following factors are generally considered when determining sanctions for a particular case:

- The nature of the violation(s);
- Prior findings of responsibility and sanction(s);
- Mitigating circumstances surrounding the violation;
- The student's motivation(s) for engaging in the behavior;
- Impact of the behavior;
- Sanctions which have been imposed in similar cases in the past;
- The developmental and educational impact on the student; and
- The overall impact on the university community.

### Administrative Sanctions

- A. Warning:** A written warning or official notice that previous conduct was unacceptable and that future misconduct may result in more severe disciplinary action.
- B. Disciplinary Probation:** A specific period during which a student must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with university policy. Future violations of university policy while on disciplinary probation may result in more severe disciplinary action, including separation from the university. Students on probationary status may not be eligible for participation in student activities, intercollegiate athletics, awards, prizes, or scholarships when conduct acceptable to the university is a condition of such participation.
- C. Loss of Privilege:** The withdrawal of a university privilege including but not limited to the use of services, participation in a program, event, or activity for a specified period, or removal from an appointed position of authority.
- D. No Contact Order:** A no-contact order prohibits contact between specific individuals through any means or media including, but not limited to: in-person, phone, voicemail, text message, social media, instant messenger, e-mail, notes, cards, letters, flowers, or other gifts. This includes contact via any third party (family, friends, or acquaintances) on either party's behalf. The no-contact order also requires that the individuals will take reasonable measures to maintain a distance of 30 feet away from one another and will not threaten or retaliate against the other individual.
- E. Restitution:** Requires a student to pay for damages to, or misappropriation of, university property, or the property of visitors to, or members of, the university community. Such restitution may be charged to any student who alone, or through group conducted activities, organizes, or knowingly

participates in the events causing the damages or costs. Restitution may be imposed separately or in addition to any other sanction(s).

- F. **Loss of Recognized Student Organization/Club Status:** Loss of all privileges identified within the student club/organization protocols, for a specified period.

### University Housing Sanctions

- A. **Loss of Guest Privileges:** Revocation of a resident's ability to host guests or for a non-residential student to be a guest for a defined period.
- B. **Housing Reassignment:** Reassignment to a new room.
- C. **University Housing Probation:** University Housing probation is a specific period during which a student must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with university and housing policy. Failure to comply with the terms of probation or future violations while on probation may result in more severe disciplinary action, including removal from university housing.
- D. **University Housing Suspension:** Temporary separation of the student from university housing for a specific period, after which the student is eligible to return. Conditions for return may be specified.
- E. **University Housing Expulsion:** Permanent separation of the student from University Housing.

### Educational / Developmental Sanctions

- A. **Educational Activities:** Educational activities include programs and assignments designed to increase awareness and education about the impact of misconduct on self and community. This may include, but is not limited to, modules, assigned papers, mediation, community service, workshops, or meetings with appropriate university personnel.
- B. **Recommendation for Assessment:** A recommendation may be made for the student to seek assistance with anger/conflict, substance use, or other matters from trained professionals and/or service providers. An assessment is designed to assist students in examining emotions and behaviors such as anger, aggression, elevated interpersonal conflict, or substance use in a judgment-free and confidential environment. An assessment provides a structured opportunity to assess individual behavior and identify potential strategies to manage emotions/conflict or risk. Counseling and Wellness Center staff will report attendance to Community Standards but will keep the assessment content confidential.

### Elevated Sanctions

- A. **University Suspension:** Temporary separation of the student from the university for a specific period, after which the student is eligible to return. Conditions for return may be specified. Suspension excludes the student from registration, class attendance, and use of university facilities during the specified period.
- B. **University Dismissal:** Permanent separation of the student from the university. Dismissal excludes the student from registration, class attendance, and use of university facilities with no promise (implied or otherwise) that the student may return at a future time. Use of university facilities is prohibited without authorization from the Office of the Dean of Students.

A student who has been dismissed may be readmitted only by the action of the university president. A student who has been dismissed is not eligible for readmission sooner than one year from the

date of dismissal. Students must reapply which the student must reapply to be considered for admission. Readmission is not automatic or guaranteed.

### Financial Responsibility

A student who is suspended or dismissed from the university and/or from university housing due to misconduct is nonetheless responsible for all financial obligations to the university that they incurred.

### Transcript Notations

When a sanction of University Suspension is issued, a notation will be placed on the academic transcript for the duration of the suspension period. When a sanction of University Dismissal is imposed, the Dismissal sanction will remain as a permanent notation on the transcript.

### Parent/Guardian Notification

Parents, or designated guardians, will receive written notification when a student is found responsible for violating the Student Code of Conduct and/or engaging in the following behaviors:

- Alcohol Policy Violation
- Controlled Substances (Drugs) Policy Violation
- Firearms, Weapons, & Dangerous Substances Policy Violation
- Alcohol/Drug Citation Issued by University Police
- Medical/Intoxication Transport: The student received medical assistance due to incapacitation, suspected incapacitation, and/or self-injury.

This notification is supported by FERPA, which allows colleges and universities who receive federal funding to notify parents/guardians of dependent students when a student has been found responsible for violating university alcohol, drug, or weapons policies.

This notification occurs because of the significant health and safety risks and consequences associated with underage alcohol consumption, drug use, and weapons possession. Governors State University supports the idea that the student, their parents/guardians, and the university are engaged in a partnership in which each partner has the responsibility to promote a healthy and productive educational experience for the student.

### Sanction Submission

Educational sanctions may be submitted online at [www.govst.edu/sanctionssubmission](http://www.govst.edu/sanctionssubmission). Sanctions will be reviewed and marked complete if the stated guidelines have been met. Sanctions that do not meet the stated guidelines will be returned to the student for revision.

### Registration Holds for Overdue Sanctions

A hold may be placed on a student's account when a student has failed to complete a sanction by the deadline. A hold will not be removed until the student has completed their outstanding sanctions. Students who wish to have their hold temporarily removed to register for classes must contact the Office of the Dean of Students.

## H. Student Conduct Appeals

Students have the right to file a written request for an appeal of the findings of responsibility and/or the sanctions. The Office of the Dean of Students will review all appeal requests to determine if the student has demonstrated appropriate grounds for appeal. Appeals based solely on a student's disagreement with the outcome will be denied.

### Grounds for Appeal

Appeals must be based upon one or more of the following grounds:

1. **Procedural Error:** A procedural error that substantially affected the outcome of the hearing occurred.
2. **New Evidence:** New evidence sufficient to alter a decision and was not available at the time of the original hearing. Information will not be considered "new evidence" if the respondent or complainant did not attend the original hearing or voluntarily withheld information during the original hearing.
3. **Disproportionate Sanction(s):** The sanction(s) imposed are substantially disproportionate to the severity of the violation(s) for which the respondent was found responsible.

### Appeal Requests

#### Filing an Appeal

A student may file a request for an appeal no later than five business days after the decision letter. An appeal must include a one-page maximum statement explaining the grounds for the appeal and the desired outcome of the appeal request. Students may submit relevant supporting evidence and documentation. Appeals may be submitted online at [www.govst.edu/conductappeal](http://www.govst.edu/conductappeal).

#### Request for Extension

A student may request in writing (e-mail) a one-time extension to submit an appeal in extenuating circumstances such as a serious illness, injury, or other personal emergencies. Requests for an extension will be reviewed by the Dean of Students or designee. A delay in the student opening/receiving the e-mailed decision letter may not be grounds for requesting an extension or submitting a late appeal request.

#### Review of Appeal Request

After receiving an appeal request, Community Standards will review all materials submitted and decide whether or not the appeal request contains sufficient merit to grant an appeal hearing. Students will receive a written response to the appeal request within five business days.

1. If the appeal request is granted, Community Standards will notify all parties (i.e., the responding student, the complainant) and will schedule an appeal hearing.
2. If the appeal request is denied, Community Standards will notify the student of the decision along with the rationale for the denial.

### Appeal Hearings

Appeal hearings will seek to address if a case will need to be reheard, if imposed sanctions need to change, or if the original decision will be upheld. If granted, an appeal hearing will be scheduled within 10 business days of the student's appeal request. The appellate body for an administrative or committee

hearing is the Dean of Students or designee. Students who wish to appeal a decision by the Dean of Students must submit a written appeal to the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, following instructions in the decision letter. The decision of the Vice President is final and binding and there are no further options for appeal.

## **I. Student Conduct Records**

All official records of non-academic misconduct shall be maintained in the Office of the Dean of Students. Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, as amended, a student has the right to inspect and review their education records maintained by the institution. A student may grant any third party (e.g., parent, spouse, and/or sponsor) permission to access their education records or any portion thereof. To request records for personal inspection or third-party release, please use the electronic request forms published online: <https://www.govst.edu/thecode/>.