

# South Georgia State College



## Student Handbook

Updated May 1, 2021  
South Georgia State College  
Student Handbook

## VISION

South Georgia State College will be a regional leader in offering an array of academic programs delivered by talented faculty and reinforced by a skilled support staff. This will attract, prepare and graduate student who will accomplish their career goals and lead the region to economic success.

## MISSION

South Georgia State College embraces the traditional values of Higher Education as set forth by the University System of Georgia – Integrity, Excellence, Accountability and Respect. To accomplish its vision, SGSC also identifies the following LEAD core values:

**Leadership** – acting to achieve shared goals around core values.

**Engagement** – facilitating close interaction between students, faculty, staff and community partners.

**Affordability** – emphasizing efficiency and effectiveness to provide a quality education and to achieve an affordable degree.

**Diversity** – creating a collegial environment comprised of people of diverse backgrounds.

## ACCREDITATIONS

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

## SCHOOL OF NURSING

Georgia Board of Nursing

The South Georgia State College School of Nursing continues full approval for the ASN and RN-BSN programs

Georgia Board of Nursing

237 Coliseum Drive

Macon, GA 31217-3858

478-207-1640

Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)

South Georgia State College's School of Nursing ASN and RN-BSN programs are accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN).

Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)

3343 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 850

Atlanta, GA 30326

404-975-5000

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## INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

This handbook is for informational purposes only.

# ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

## ACADEMIC SUPPORT CENTER

Mission: SGSC has established Academic Success on each campus to provide services in the form of peer tutoring, supplemental materials, and programs that address all aspects of learning to support students' matriculation, continued enrollment, personal and professional development, and career preparation.

The Douglas campus offers an Academic Success Center in Powell Hall, room 216 and a STEM Center in Stubbs Hall, room 125. In the Dye Building of the Waycross campus, Academic Success offers an Academic Success Center in suite 148 and a STEM Center in room 141. Academic Success attempts to provide hours of operation that work around students' academic schedules. For more information, visit: <http://www.sgsc.edu/current-students/academicsupport.cms>

For students in need of a assistance outside of operating hours, through a partnership with tutor.com, Academic Success offers free, 24/7 online tutoring that connects students one-to-one with a live tutor. This tutoring service can be accessed from any internet-enabled computer by signing into [GeorgiaView](#). For more information visit: <http://www.sgsc.edu/current-students/tutor.com.cms>.

All tutoring is free to SGSC students currently enrolled. Students visiting the centers must sign in and out every time they receive tutoring or utilize resources.

## APPEAL OF A GRADE

Students who think that they have been graded unfairly must appeal the grade at issue in writing within 30 days after the last day of the final examination period for the semester in which the grade was assigned. Students should consult the College Catalog <http://www.sgsc.edu/academics/college-catalog.cms> for questions concerning academic policies and regulations.

## CORRECTION OF EDUCATION RECORDS

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

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

## **DISCLOSURE OF EDUCATION RECORDS**

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

- To College officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the educational records. A College official is a) A person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff position; b) the Chancellor of the University System of Georgia and his staff; or c) a person employed by or under contract to South Georgia State College to perform a special task, such as an attorney or auditor. A College official has a legitimate educational interest if the official is a) performing a task that is specified in his or her position description or by contract

agreement; b) performing a task related to a student's education; c) performing a task related to the discipline of a student; d) providing a service or benefit relating to the student or the student's family, such as health care, counseling, job placement, or financial aid.

- To certain officials of the U.S. Department of Education, the Comptroller General, and state and local education authorities, in connection with certain state or federally supported education programs.
- To comply with student's application for or receipt of financial aid, as necessary to determine the eligibility, amount, or conditions of the financial aid, or to enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.
- To comply with state law requiring disclosure that was adopted before November 19, 1974.
- To organizations conducting certain studies on behalf of SGSC.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their functions.
- To parents of an eligible student who claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- To appropriate parties during a health or safety emergency.

## **ENTRY PROGRAMS AT AMERICUS AND VALDOSTA**

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

## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT**

South Georgia State College informs students of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. This act, as amended, stipulates that any student, regardless of age, who is or has been in attendance at an institution of postsecondary education, has the right to inspect and review his or her educational records within a reasonable period of time (not to exceed 45 days) after making a request for such review. In addition, this act was designed to protect the privacy of

educational records and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data through informal and formal hearings. Students also have the right to file complaints with The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office (FERPA) concerning alleged failures by the institution to comply with the act. South Georgia State College is in full compliance with the provisions of that legislation.

## DIRECTORY INFORMATION

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

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

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

## GRADUATION

The primary source of information about academic rules and requirements for graduation is the SGSC Catalog. You may access through the following link: <http://www.sgsc.edu/academics/college-catalog.cms> Refer to that resource and confer regularly with your advisor. Each student is responsible for complying with the academic regulations stated in the catalog.

## INTELLECTUAL DIVERSITY AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The University System of Georgia and South Georgia State College subscribe to the American Council on Education's statement of Academic Rights and Responsibilities. This statement includes important provisions about intellectual diversity and academic freedom. In addition to links on the SGSC website, copies of this statement are available in the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Office of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs. Failure

on the part of faculty and staff to honor the commitment to intellectual diversity and academic freedom is a legitimate reason for a student to file a grievance. These excerpts from the American Council on Education's statement of Academic Rights and Responsibilities offer specific expectations of classroom behavior for faculty and students:

- Colleges and universities should welcome intellectual pluralism and the free exchange of ideas. Such a commitment will inevitably encourage debate over complex and difficult issues about which individuals will disagree. Such discussions should be held in an environment characterized by openness, tolerance and civility.
- Academic decisions including grades should be based solely on considerations that are intellectually relevant to the subject matter under consideration. Neither students nor faculty should be disadvantaged or evaluated on the basis of their political opinions.
- Any member of the campus community who believes he or she has been treated unfairly on academic matters must have access to a clear institutional process by which his or her grievance can be addressed.
- The validity of academic ideas, theories, arguments and views should be measured against the intellectual standards of relevant academic and professional disciplines. Application of these intellectual standards does not mean that all ideas have equal merit. The responsibility to judge the merits of competing academic ideas rests with colleges and universities and is determined by reference to the standards of the academic profession as established by the community of scholars at each institution.

## **LIBRARY SERVICES**

The William S. Smith Library and the Waycross campus Library are the learning resources centers for South Georgia State College, blending traditional and electronic library resources and services to support the educational programs of the College. The Libraries play a crucial role in students' college life whether they are used for research class work, independent study, or personal enjoyment. The [SGSC Libraries website](#) provides 24/7 access to its resources and services. First among these resources is the online [GILFind@SGSC catalog](#), from which students can retrieve materials in print, media, and electronic formats, including direct links to over 200,000 e-Books and e-Videos. If the needed resources are not available at the SGSC libraries, SGSC students also have access to library materials from all University System of Georgia libraries through a process called GIL Express Request. SGSC students may search for other USG library materials by changing the search scope in the [GILFind@SGSC catalog](#) drop-down box to the "The University System of Georgia", log in to their My Library account, and then self-request delivery of circulating books to SGSC's Smith Library or the Waycross campus Library. This process is in addition to the traditional library-mediated Interlibrary Loan service. Another gateway to library resources is through GILILEO. GALILEO includes thousands of periodicals and scholarly journals

(over 2000 titles full-text), encyclopedias, audio files, images, videos, business directories, and government publications. Remote access to [GALILEO](#) is available to SGSC students with SGSC's GALILEO password obtained through the [My Library Account](#) feature of the [GILFind@SGSC catalog](#). Students also have access to one-on-one bibliographic instruction, information literacy instruction, and research assistance upon request. The [SGSC Libraries website](#) provides more detailed information about resources, services, and policies of the Library. Comfortable accommodations are provided for use of the facility and physical collections with seating for collaborative and individual learning, study carrels, study tables, and small group study rooms. Networked computer workstations are located throughout the facility, and students may print to two library printers through their WEPA printing accounts. A microform reader-printer and photocopier equipment are also available. Library hours will vary during exams, semester breaks, holidays, and summer terms. Changes in scheduled library hours are posted at the Library and on the Library's website. The SGSC ID Card, which serves as the student's library card, is required to check out materials from the South Georgia State College libraries and other USG libraries. The ID Card barcode is the identification number for the "My Library Account" through which students access SGSC's current GALILEO password, renew library materials, and request materials from other USG libraries for GIL Express delivery.

## **TRANSCRIPTS**

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

# STUDENT AFFAIRS

## COUNSELING CENTER

South Georgia State College's Counseling Program is designed to help students excel toward their academic goals by providing short-term counseling services for personal problems, stress, adjustment to college, depression, and time management. Off campus referrals will be made for those students with needs outside of the realm of what short-term counseling can provide. Students may self-refer by completing a Counselor Referral form on the SGSC website <http://www.sgsc.edu/current-students/welcome.cms> or from the Counselor's Office. Students in need of counseling services may contact SGSC's Counselor, Dr. Joseph Holloway, 912-260-4438 or 912-449-7593, joseph.holloway@sgsc.edu.

## ALCOHOL AND DRUG PREVENTION PROGRAM

South Georgia State College's alcohol and drug prevention program is designed to promote personal health and success in college. The College conducts a biennial review to ensure compliance with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act. Consistent with federal and state laws, South Georgia State College is a drug-free workplace. Students receive alcohol and drug information through campus publications and during college orientation programs and campus activities. Related issues are actively explored through courses including health, psychology, sociology, nursing, and criminal justice. Alcohol and drug counseling referrals are available to all SGSC students. Information regarding local, state, or federal laws related to alcohol and drug violations and penalties is published in the South Georgia State College Public Safety Information booklet. This booklet contains Student's Right to Know/Annual Security Report. The booklet is online at: <http://www.sgsc.edu/departments/weapons%20on%20campus.cms>

## DISABILITY SERVICES

All students with a documented disability or students that suspect they have a disability are strongly encouraged to register with the Disability Services Office at the time of making application. Students must self-identify in order to pursue academic accommodations. System accommodations require approval from the Regents Center for Learning Disorders. Upon approval, students are responsible for requesting the Disability Services Coordinator's assistance in working with the faculty to devise reasonable classroom accommodations based on the recommendations from RCLD. Students with questions and/or needs relating to disability

services may contact: Disability Services Coordinator, 912-260-4435, [annette.nation@sgsc.edu](mailto:annette.nation@sgsc.edu). For more information, visit: <http://www.sgsc.edu/current-students/disabilityservicesmain.cms>

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

Students should first meet with the ODS Coordinator and attempt to resolve the problem informally. It is anticipated that most questions will be resolved in this way. However, situations unresolved at the ODS Coordinator's level may be appealed to the Dean of Students (DOS). The DOS will meet with the student in an attempt to resolve the complaint. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the DOS, the DOS will assist the student in appealing to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs (VPASA). The VPASA will meet with the student in an attempt to resolve the complaint. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the VPASA, the student will be referred to the ADA Compliance Office, the President and ultimately to the Board of Regents.

## CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

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

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

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

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

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

**CULTURAL EXCHANGE CLUB:** This group is comprised of students from diverse cultural, geographic, and linguistic backgrounds working together to foster diversity throughout the surrounding region. The club is a platform for sharing friendship and knowledge among individuals from all countries looking toward increasing awareness and sensitivity. CEC promotes

a global perspective and advocates the need to break down barriers that hinder cross-cultural interaction and growth.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**PALMETTO Annual Staff:** This group produces the college annual.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### PROCEDURE FOR STUDENT ORGANIZATION RECOGNITION

An organization seeking recognition must submit the following information to the Coordinator of Student Engagement:

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

#### **CAMPUS DISPLAYS/PROPERTY DAMAGE**

Displays, including but not limited to posters, notices, or banners, which litter the campus or damage the property of the College or of other persons, that are obscene, or which materially interfere with the regular and orderly operation of the College, are prohibited. Unauthorized or malicious damage to the property of the College or other persons or entities resulting from organization activities is prohibited and the student organization shall be responsible for all damages.

#### **CLUB INFORMATION REQUIRED BY STUDENT LIFE**

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

Advisors and presidents must submit a Fall Semester Report and End of the Year Report at the appropriate times if they want to be considered for student activity fee allocation. Other forms required by college policy and procedure (Scheduling Facilities Form, Request for Absence,

Vehicle Usage Form, Requisition Form, Request for Fund Raising Form) must be routed through the Office. Advisors may pick up blank copies of the forms at the Office of Campus Life.

## **DISORDERLY CONDUCT/LAW VIOLATIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONS OR CLUBS**

Organization or club activities which encourage or precipitate riots or other disturbances which materially interfere with the regular and orderly operation of the College are prohibited. No organization shall commit, encourage, condone, or contribute to violations of College statutes and regulations, the policies of the Board of Regents, or laws of Georgia or the United States. The possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages or illegal substances on college property or at events sponsored or supervised by the College (including off-campus College student organization functions) is prohibited.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT ACTIVITY FUNDS**

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

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

The Dean of Students will then review the requests. The Dean of Students will bring the requests to the Student Activity Fee Budget Committee (SAFBC). According to University System of Georgia policy, at least 50% of the membership of the SAFC will consist of currently enrolled students. After approval, the student activity budget will then be sent to the Board of Regents' for final approval. Any organization's student activity allotment may be revised any time throughout the year depending upon campus enrollment or other extenuating circumstances.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP/OFFICER STATUS**

Active membership in student organizations shall be confined to regularly enrolled students enrolled in three or more term hours. A student must maintain a 2.00 cumulative grade point average or higher to be eligible to serve as an officer of a student organization (although some clubs and organizations may have higher standards).

## **FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY**

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

## **FORMING A NEW STUDENT ORGANIZATION**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Submit a tentative constitution and Application for New Student Organizations to the Campus Life Office. The Coordinator of Student Engagement will review the constitution. If there is doubt, the Coordinator of Student Engagement will forward the document to Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will contact the ad hoc Constitution Review Committee and arrange a meeting between the committee and temporary club chairperson. The Constitution Review Committee shall consist of the Dean of Students as chairperson, the President of the Student Government Association and two members of the faculty as appointed by the college President from a list of five names submitted by the Dean of Students. A presentation of oral and documentary evidence may be requested. A recording and transcript of the hearing shall be made and preserved for use in appeals and reviews. Recognition shall be granted only to those organizations whose purpose and proposed activities are clearly related to the educational goals and mission of the college. Recognition shall be denied if the evidence presented shows that the proposed organization has substantial likelihood of interfering with any of the following: The regular and orderly operation

of the college. The requirements of appropriate discipline within the campus activities. The academic pursuits of teaching, learning and other campus activities. The laws of public policies of the State of Georgia and the United States. The statutes and regulations of the college and policies of the Board of Regents. If the Dean of Students or the committee disapproves recognition, the organization may appeal the decision to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, who shall review the same and affirm, reverse, or modify the decision. Should the Dean of Students or the Constitution Review Committee not approve the constitution due to irregularities, it will be sent back to the organization's temporary chairperson for further work.

## **FUNDRAISING FOR STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

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

## **GOOD STANDING FOR CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

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

- A. The secretary must keep minutes of each meeting and distribute a copy to the advisor. It is also encouraged, but not required, to distribute the minutes to the organizational membership and to the Office of Campus Life.
- B. The treasurer of the organization is responsible for keeping accurate records of all receipts and expenditures. The organization must adhere to the proper college fiscal procedures.
- C. Organization activities must be cleared and approved by the Office of Campus Life and the Office of Advancement. Forms should be submitted at least five working days prior to the scheduled event. Events must be approved before promotion.

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

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

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

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

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

## **POSTING POLICY**

All publicity and promotional material for on and off-campus events and activities, including but not limited to: posters, notices, and banners must be approved by the Coordinator of Student Engagement. Publicity also must carry the Office of Campus Life approval stamp before being posted. All publicity and promotional material must carry the name of the sponsoring organization or individual responsible for the event or activity. Signs and flyers should not contain lewd or offensive words, symbols, or pictures.

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

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

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

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

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

signs/posters/advertisements and the student organization/individual may be restricted from further postings.

## **REVIEW AND ENFORCEMENT OF REGULATIONS**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Withdrawal - Forced closing of the club/organization.

Final Review Powers of the College President

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

## **SCHEDULING CAMPUS ACTIVITIES**

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

- A. Approval for the activity must be obtained from the organization's advisor and the Office of Campus Life. No event is to be scheduled during final exams.
- B. Campus facilities, including space needed for meetings, must be reserved through the External Affairs (912-260-4269). If refreshments are required, contact ABL Management at 912-720-4825.
- C. Events should be scheduled at least two weeks in advance.
- D. Chaperones and security must be provided for each activity, with a two-week prior notice. College rules/regulations governing students, staff, and guests are applicable to all activities.
- E. After-hours access to campus buildings for meetings, rehearsals, and other events requires the presence of an advisor or another faculty or staff member.
- F. The sponsoring organization and the individuals in attendance will be held accountable for the conduct of all those attending the event. Failure to follow the above procedures can result in postponement or cancellation of the event. Any activity which, in the judgment of the advisor and/or administration, does not adhere to South Georgia College standards is subject to immediate termination.

## **SOCIAL FUNCTIONS**

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

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

## Procedure

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

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

## **SPECIAL EVENTS**

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

## **STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**

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

## STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

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

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

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

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

Student publications shall not contain material which is obscene or defamatory (defined by the Code of Georgia #26-2101), or which may create a substantial likelihood of material interference with the regular and orderly operation of the College. No student publication or portion thereof shall be printed without the assistance of the publication's faculty advisor, who may request the assistance of the Student Services Committee in rendering a decision.

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

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

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STUDENTS

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

- right to a notice in writing of charges.
- right to admit the alleged violation, waive a hearing, and accept the College's action.
- right to admit the alleged violation but request a hearing.
- right to deny the alleged violation and request a hearing.
- right to remain silent.

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

## **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

Consistent with federal law and University System of Georgia policy, sexual misconduct of employees or students in the University System is prohibited and shall subject the offender to dismissal or other sanctions. Copies of the Sexual Harassment Policy are available online, <https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section6/C2655/>

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **4.6.5 Standards for Institutional Student Conduct Investigation and Disciplinary Proceedings**

**(This policy will take effect Fall Semester, 2020)**

This Policy establishes minimum procedural standards for investigations and resolutions of alleged student conduct violations, which each institution must incorporate into its respective student conduct policies. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure uniformity in the quality of investigations while providing for due process that affords fairness and equity in all student conduct investigations. This Policy is not intended to infringe or restrict rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution including free speech under the First Amendment, or the due process clauses of Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments.

These procedures apply to matters relating to student misconduct, except matters relating to academic dishonesty, which may be covered under separate institutional policies. Institutions shall inform students of their procedures governing student misconduct complaints and investigations. For the purposes of this Policy the term Complainant means an individual who is alleged to be a victim of conduct that would violate any Board or other applicable institution policy. The term Respondent means an individual who is alleged to have engaged in behavior that would violate any Board or other applicable institution policy. Other individuals who report information to an institution regarding alleged policy violations are deemed Reporters. Institutions may establish to what extent the procedures outlined in this Policy may apply to Reporters.

#### **4.6.5.1 Reports of Student Misconduct**

Institutions must provide clear notice to students and other campus community members as to how to file complaints of misconduct.

Complaints to the appropriate department and/or person(s) should include as much information as possible – such as: (1) the type of misconduct alleged; (2) the name and contact information of the individual(s) accused of misconduct; (3) the date(s), time(s), and place(s) of the misconduct; (4) the name(s) and contact information of any individual(s) with knowledge of the incident; (5) whether any tangible evidence has been preserved; and (6) whether a criminal complaint has been made.

Information from complaints may be shared as necessary to investigate and to resolve the alleged misconduct. Complaints shall be investigated and resolved as outlined below. The need to issue a broader warning to the community in compliance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (“Clery Act”) shall be assessed in compliance with federal law.

Where appropriate, Complainants may file a law enforcement report as well as an institutional report, but are not required to file both.

#### **Confidentiality:**

Where a Complainant (where applicable) requests that their identity be withheld or the allegation(s) not be investigated, the institution should consider whether or not such request(s) can be honored while still promoting a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for the institution and conducting an effective review of the allegations. The institution should inform the requesting party that the institution cannot guarantee confidentiality and that even granting requests for confidentiality shall not prevent the institution from reporting information or statistical data as required by law, including the Clery Act.

#### **Retaliation:**

Anyone who has made a report or complaint, provided information, assisted, participated or refused to participate in any investigation or resolution under applicable Board or institution policy shall not be subjected to retaliation. Anyone who believes they have been subjected to retaliation should immediately contact the appropriate department or individual(s) for that institution. Any person found to have engaged in retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action, pursuant to the institution’s policy.

#### **False Complaints/Statements:**

Individuals are prohibited from knowingly giving false statements to an institution official. Any person found to have knowingly submitted false complaints, accusations, or statements, including during a hearing, in violation of applicable Board or institution policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action (up to and including suspension or expulsion) and adjudicated pursuant to the institution’s policy.

#### **Amnesty:**

Students should be encouraged to come forward and report violations of the law and/or student code of conduct notwithstanding their choice to consume alcohol or drugs. Information reported by a student during the conduct process concerning their consumption of drugs or alcohol will not be voluntarily reported to law enforcement; nor will information that the individual provides be used against the individual for purposes of conduct violations.

Nevertheless, these students may be required to meet with staff members regarding the

incident and may be required to participate in appropriate educational program(s). The required participation in an educational program under this amnesty procedure will not be considered a sanction. Nothing in this amnesty procedure shall prevent a university staff member who is otherwise obligated by law (the Clery Act) to report information or statistical data as required.

#### **4.6.5.2 Process for Investigating and Resolving Disputed Reports**

##### **Jurisdiction:**

Each institution shall take necessary and appropriate action to protect the safety and well-being of its community. Accordingly, student conduct should be addressed when such acts occur on institution property, at institution-sponsored or affiliated events, or otherwise violate the institution's student conduct policies, regardless as to where such conduct occurs. If the student has admitted responsibility and has voluntarily decided to participate in the informal process, the procedures outlined in this section will not apply.

##### **Access to Advisors:**

The Respondent and Complainant (where applicable), as parties to these proceedings, shall have the right to have an advisor (who may or may not be an attorney) of the party's choosing, and at their own expense, for the express purpose of providing advice and counsel. The advisor may be present during meetings and proceedings during the investigatory and/or resolution process at which his or her advisee is present. The advisor may advise their advisee in any manner, including providing questions, suggestions, and guidance on responses to any questions posed to the advisee, but shall not participate directly during the investigation or hearing process.

##### **Initial Evaluation of Student Conduct Reports:**

Regardless of how an institution becomes aware of alleged misconduct, the institution shall ensure a prompt, fair, and impartial review and resolution of complaints alleging student misconduct. Where a report of student misconduct has been made to the appropriate department and/or person, the institution shall review the complaint to determine whether the allegation(s) describes conduct in violation of the institution's policies and/or code of conduct. If the reported conduct would not be a violation of the institution's policies and/or code of conduct, even if true, then the report should be dismissed. Otherwise, a prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation, and review shall be conducted into each complaint received to determine whether charges against the Respondent should be brought.

Any report that involves allegation(s) of conduct that could lead to the suspension or expulsion of the Respondent(s) in an initial violation must be promptly reported to the System Director of Equity & Investigations ("System Director") by the institution. The System Director will work with the institution to determine whether any interim measure(s) are necessary, to assign an investigator and may collaboratively supervise the investigation with the appropriate institution professional (e.g., the Title IX Coordinator, Dean of Students). If an allegation is not initially identified as one that could lead to suspension or expulsion of the Respondent(s), but facts arise during the course of the investigation that would require notice to the System Director, then the institution shall report that case to the System Director or their designee prior to proceeding.

## **Interim Measures**

Interim measures may be implemented by the institution at any point after the institution becomes aware of the alleged student misconduct and should be designed to protect any student or other individual in the USG community. To the extent interim measures are imposed, they should minimize the burden on both the Complainant (where applicable) and the Respondent, where feasible. Interim measures may include, but are not limited to:

1. Change of housing assignment;
2. Issuance of a “no contact” directive;
3. Restrictions or bars to entering certain institution property;
4. Changes to academic or employment arrangements, schedules, or supervision;
5. Interim suspension; and
6. Other measures designed to promote the safety and well-being of the parties and the institution’s community.

An interim suspension should only occur where necessary to maintain safety and should be limited to those situations where the respondent poses a serious and immediate danger or threat to persons or property. In making such an assessment, the institution should consider the existence of a significant risk to the health or safety of the Complainant (where applicable) or the campus community; the nature, duration, and severity of the risk; the probability of potential injury; and whether less restrictive means can be used to significantly mitigate the risk.

Before an interim suspension is issued, the institution must make all reasonable efforts to give the Respondent the opportunity to be heard on whether the Respondent’s presence on campus poses a danger. If an interim suspension is issued, the terms of the suspension take effect immediately. The Respondent shall receive notice of the interim suspension and the opportunity to respond to the interim suspension.

Within three business days of receiving a challenge the institution will determine whether the interim suspension should continue.

## **Investigation**

Throughout any investigation and resolution proceedings, a party shall receive written notice of the alleged misconduct, shall be provided an opportunity to respond, and shall be allowed to remain silent or otherwise not participate in or during the investigation and resolution process without an adverse inference resulting. If a party chooses to remain silent or otherwise not participate in an investigation, the investigation may still proceed and policy charges may still result and be resolved. Timely and equal access to information that will be used during the investigation will be provided to the Complainant (where applicable) and Respondent.

Where the potential sanctions for the alleged misconduct may involve a suspension or expulsion (even if such sanctions were to be held “in abeyance,” such as probationary suspension or expulsion) the institution’s investigation and resolution procedures must provide the additional minimal safeguards outlined below.

1. The Complainant (where applicable) and Respondent shall be provided with written notice of the complaint/allegations, pending investigation, possible charges, possible sanctions, and available support services. The notice should also include the identity of any investigator(s) involved. Notice should be provided via institution email to the address on file.

2. Upon receipt of the written notice, the Respondent shall have at least three business days to respond in writing. In that response, the Respondent shall have the right to admit or to deny the allegations, and to set forth a defense with facts, witnesses, and supporting materials. A non-response will be considered a general denial of the alleged misconduct. Any Complainant (where applicable) shall also be provided three business days to respond to or to supplement the notice.
3. If the Respondent admits responsibility, the process may proceed to the sanctioning phase or may be informally resolved, if appropriate.
4. If at any point the investigator determines there is insufficient evidence to support a charge or to warrant further consideration of discipline, then the complaint should be dismissed.
5. An investigator shall conduct a thorough investigation and should retain written notes and/or obtain written or recorded statements from each interview. The investigator shall also keep a record of any party's proffered witnesses not interviewed, along with a brief, written explanation of why the witnesses were not interviewed.
6. The initial investigation report shall be provided to the Respondent and the Complainant (where applicable). This report should clearly indicate any resulting charges (or alternatively, a determination of no charges), as well as the facts and evidence in support thereof, witness statements, and possible sanctions. For purposes of this Policy, a charge is not a finding of responsibility, but indicates that there is sufficient evidence to warrant further consideration and adjudication.
7. The final investigation report should be provided to the misconduct panel or hearing officer for consideration in adjudicating the charges brought against the Respondent. A copy shall also be provided to the respondent and Complainant (where applicable) before any hearing. The investigator may testify as a witness regarding the investigation and findings, but shall otherwise have no part in the hearing process and shall not attempt to otherwise influence the proceedings outside of providing testimony during the hearing.

#### **Resolution/Hearing**

In no case shall a hearing to resolve charge(s) of student misconduct take place before the investigative report has been finalized.

Where the Respondent indicates that they contest the charges, the matter shall be set for a hearing and once the investigative report has been finalized and copies provided to the Respondent and Complainant (where applicable); however, the Complainant (where applicable) and Respondent may have the option of selecting informal resolution as a possible resolution in certain student misconduct cases where they mutually agree, except where deemed inappropriate by the Vice President for Student Affairs (or their designee) or the System Director.

Where a case is not resolved through informal resolution or informal resolution is not available due to the nature of the charges, the Respondent shall have the option of having the charges heard either by an administrator (Hearing Officer) or a Hearing Panel. If an administrative hearing is requested, the Respondent shall use their discretion to determine whether the case should be heard by a Hearing Panel. Notice of the date, time, and location of the hearing shall be provided to the Respondent and Complainant (where applicable) at least five business days prior to the hearing. Notice shall be provided via institution email where applicable. Hearings

shall be conducted in person or via conferencing technology as reasonably available.

Additionally, the following standards will apply to any such hearing:

The Respondent and Complainant (where applicable) shall have the right to present witnesses and evidence to the hearing officer or panel. Witness testimony, if provided, shall pertain to knowledge and facts directly associated with the case being heard. The Respondent and Complainant (where applicable) shall have the right to confront any witnesses, including the other party, by submitting written questions to the Hearing Officer or Hearing Panel for consideration. Advisors may actively assist in drafting questions. The Hearing Officer or Hearing Panel shall ask the questions as written and will limit questions only if they are unrelated to determining the veracity of the charge leveled against the Respondent(s). In any event, the Hearing Officer or Hearing Panel shall err on the side of asking all submitted questions and must document the reason for not asking any particular questions.

1. Where the Hearing Officer or Hearing Panel determines that a party or witness is unavailable and unable to be present due to extenuating circumstances, the Hearing Officer or Hearing Panel may establish special procedures for providing testimony from a separate location. In doing so, the Hearing Officer or Hearing Panel must determine whether there is a valid basis for the unavailability, ensure proper sequestration in a manner that ensures testimony has not been tainted, and make a determination that such an arrangement will not unfairly disadvantage any party. Should it be reasonably believed that a party or witness who is not physically present has presented tainted testimony, the Hearing Officer or Hearing Panel will disregard or discount the testimony.
2. Formal judicial rules of evidence do not apply to the investigatory or resolution process.
3. The standard of review shall be a preponderance of the evidence.
4. Institutions should maintain documentation of the proceedings, which may include written findings of fact, transcripts, audio recordings, and/or video recordings.
5. Following a hearing, both the Respondent and Complainant (where applicable) shall be simultaneously provided a written decision via institution email (where applicable) of the outcome and any resulting sanctions. The decision should include details on how to appeal, as outlined below. Additionally, the written decision must summarize the evidence relied on in support of the outcome and the rationale for the resulting sanction. The same form will be completed, regardless of whether the student opts for a hearing panel or an administrative proceeding.

#### **4.6.5.3 Reports of Sexual Misconduct**

##### **Initial Evaluation of Sexual Misconduct Reports:**

Upon notice of the alleged Sexual Misconduct the institution's Title IX Coordinator ("Coordinator") will assess whether a formal investigation, informal resolution, or dismissal would be appropriate. In making this determination, the Coordinator will assess whether the allegation(s), if true, would rise to the level of prohibited conduct, whether a Formal Complaint must be filed, whether an investigation is appropriate in light of the circumstances, whether the parties prefer an informal resolution, and whether any safety concerns exist for the campus community. The need to issue a broader warning to the community in compliance with the Clery Act shall be assessed in compliance with federal law.

**Confidentiality:**

Where a Complainant requests that their identity be withheld or the allegation(s) not be investigated, the Coordinator should consider whether or not such request(s) can be honored in a manner consistent with the institution's obligations to promote a safe and nondiscriminatory environment. The institution should inform the Complainant that the institution cannot guarantee confidentiality. Honoring a Complainant's request for confidentiality shall not prevent the institution from reporting information or statistical data as required by law, including the Clery Act.

**Retaliation:**

Anyone who has made a report or complaint, provided information, assisted, participated, or refused to participate in any manner in the Sexual Misconduct process, shall not be subjected to retaliation. Anyone who believes that they have been subjected to retaliation should immediately contact the Coordinator or their designee. Any person found to have engaged in retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

**False Complaints/Statements:**

Individuals are prohibited from knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information to a system or institution official. Any person found to have knowingly submitted false complaints, accusations, or statements, including during a hearing, shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action (up to and including suspension or expulsion) under the appropriate institutional process.

**Amnesty:**

Students should be encouraged to come forward and to report Sexual Misconduct notwithstanding their choice to consume alcohol or to use drugs. Information reported by a student during the Sexual Misconduct process concerning the consumption of drugs or alcohol will not be used against the particular student in a disciplinary proceeding or voluntarily reported to law enforcement; however, students may be provided with resources on drug and alcohol counseling and/or education, as appropriate. Nevertheless, these students may be required to meet with staff members regarding the incident and may be required to participate in appropriate educational program(s). The required participation in an educational program under this amnesty procedure will not be considered a sanction. Nothing in this amnesty provision shall prevent an institution staff member who is otherwise obligated by law (the Clery Act) to report information or statistical data as required.

**Jurisdiction:**

Each institution shall take necessary and appropriate action to promote the safety and well-being of its community. Accordingly, Sexual Misconduct should be addressed when such acts occur on institution property, at institution-sponsored or affiliated events, or otherwise violates the institution's student conduct policies, regardless as to where such conduct occurs.

**Access to Advisors:**

1. **For Formal Title IX Complaints:** Both the Complainant and the Respondent, as parties to the matter, shall have the opportunity to use an advisor (who may or may not be an attorney) of the party's choosing. The advisor may accompany the party to all meetings and may provide advice and counsel to their respective party throughout the Sexual Misconduct process, including providing questions, suggestions and guidance to the party, but may not actively participate in the process except to conduct cross-examination at the hearing as outlined in the

Resolution/Hearing section below. If a party chooses not to use an advisor during the investigation, the institution will provide an advisor for the purpose of conducting cross-examination on behalf of the relevant party. All communication during the Sexual Misconduct process will be between the institution and the party and not the advisor. The institution will copy the party's advisor prior to the finalization of the investigation report when the institution provides the parties the right to inspect and review directly related information gathered during the investigation. With the party's permission, the advisor may be copied on all communications.

2. **For Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct Complaints:** Both the Complainant and the Respondent, as parties to the matter, shall have the opportunity to use an advisor (who may or may not be an attorney) of the party's choosing at the party's own expense. The advisor may accompany the party to all meetings and may provide advice and counsel to their respective party throughout the Sexual Misconduct process but may not actively participate in the process. All communication during the Sexual Misconduct process will be between the institution and the party and not the advisor. With the party's permission, the advisor may be copied on all communications.

#### **Interim Measures:**

Interim measures may be implemented at any point after the institution becomes aware of an allegation of Sexual Misconduct and should be designed to protect any student or other individual in the USG community. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the recipient's educational environment, or deter Sexual Misconduct and retaliation. Interim measures must be implemented consistent with the provisions in applicable Board and institutional policies and procedures.

An interim suspension should only occur where necessary to promote safety and should be limited to those situations where the Respondent poses a serious and immediate danger or threat to persons or property. In making such an assessment, the institution should consider the existence of a significant risk to the health or safety of the Complainant or the campus community; the nature, duration, and severity of the risk; the probability of potential injury; and whether less restrictive means can be used to significantly mitigate the risk.

Before an interim suspension is issued, the institution must make reasonable efforts to give the Respondent the opportunity to be heard on whether the Respondent's presence on campus poses a danger. If an interim suspension is issued, the terms of the interim suspension take effect immediately. The Respondent shall receive notice of the interim suspension and the opportunity to respond to the interim suspension.

Within three business days of receiving a challenge the institution will determine whether the interim suspension should continue.

#### **4.6.5.4 Process for Investigating and Resolving Sexual Misconduct Reports Investigation**

Throughout any investigation and resolution proceeding, a party shall receive written notice of the alleged Sexual Misconduct, shall be provided an opportunity to respond, and shall be allowed the right to remain silent or otherwise not participate in or during the investigation and

resolution process without an adverse inference resulting. If a party chooses to remain silent or otherwise not participate in the investigation or resolution process, the investigation and resolution process may still proceed, and policy violations may result.

Until a final determination of responsibility, the Respondent is presumed to have not violated the Sexual Misconduct Policy. Prior to the finalization of the investigation report, timely and equal access to information directly related to the allegations that has been gathered during the investigation and may be used at the hearing will be provided to the Complainant, the Respondent, and a party's advisor (where applicable).

Formal judicial rules of evidence do not apply to the investigation process, additionally the standard of review throughout the Sexual Misconduct process is a preponderance of the evidence.

1. The parties shall be provided with written notice of the: report/allegations with sufficient details, pending investigation, possible charges, possible sanctions, available support services and interim measures, and other rights under applicable institutional policies. For the purposes of this provision sufficient details include the identities of the parties involved, if known, the conduct allegedly constituting Sexual Misconduct, and the date and location of the alleged incident, if known. This information will be supplemented as necessary with relevant evidence collected during the investigation. The notice should also include the identity of any investigator(s) involved. Notice should be provided via institution email to the party's institution email.
2. Upon receipt of the written notice, the parties shall have at least three business days to respond in writing. In that response, the Respondent shall have the right to admit or deny the allegations, and to set forth a defense with facts, witnesses, and supporting materials. A Complainant shall have the right to respond to and supplement the notice. Throughout the Sexual Misconduct process the Complainant and the Respondent shall have the right to present witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.
3. If the Respondent admits responsibility, the process may proceed to the sanctioning phase or may be informally resolved, if appropriate.
4. An investigator shall conduct a thorough investigation and should retain written notes and/or obtain written or recorded statements from each interview. The investigator shall also keep a record of any party's proffered witnesses not interviewed, along with a brief, written explanation of why the witnesses were not interviewed.
5. An investigator shall not access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional made in connection with the party's treatment unless the party has provided voluntary written consent. This also applies to information protected by recognized legal privilege.
6. The initial investigation report shall be provided to the Complainant, the Respondent, and a party's advisor (if applicable). This report should fairly summarize the relevant evidence gathered during the investigation and clearly indicate any resulting charges or alternatively, a determination of no charges. For purposes of this Policy, a charge is not a finding of responsibility.
7. The Complainant and the Respondent shall have at least 10 calendar days to review and respond in writing to the initial investigation report and directly related information gathered during the investigation. The investigator will review the Complainant's and the Respondent's

written responses, if any, to determine whether further investigation or changes to the investigation report are necessary.

8. The final investigation report should be provided to the Complainant, the Respondent, and a party's advisor, if applicable, at least 10 calendar days prior to the Hearing. The final investigation report should also be provided to all Hearing Panel members for consideration during the adjudication process.

### **Resolution/Hearing**

The Respondent and the Complainant, as parties to the matter, may have the option of selecting informal resolution as a possible resolution in certain cases where the parties agree, and it is deemed appropriate by the institution. Where a matter is not resolved through informal resolution a hearing shall be set. All Sexual Misconduct cases shall be heard by a panel of faculty and/or staff. All institutional participants in the Sexual Misconduct resolution process shall receive appropriate annual training as directed by the System Director or Coordinator and required by the Clery Act and Title IX.

In no case shall a hearing to resolve a Sexual Misconduct allegation take place before the investigation report has been finalized. The investigator may testify as a witness regarding the investigation and findings but shall otherwise have no part in the hearing process and shall not attempt to otherwise influence the proceedings outside of providing testimony during the hearing. All directly related evidence shall be available at the hearing for the parties and their advisors to reference during the hearing.

Relevant facts or evidence that were not known or knowable to the parties prior to the issuance of the final investigative report shall be admissible during the hearing. The institution will determine how the facts or evidence will be introduced. The admissibility of any facts or evidence known or knowable by the parties prior to the issuance of the final investigative report, and which were not submitted during the investigation, shall be determined by the institution in compliance with the obligation to provide both parties an equal opportunity to present and respond to witnesses and other evidence. Notice of the date, time, and location of the hearing as well as the selected hearing panel members shall be provided to the Complainant and the Respondent at least 10 calendar days prior to the hearing. Notice shall be provided via institution email to the parties' institution email. Parties may attend the hearing with their advisor.

Hearings shall be conducted in-person or via video conferencing technology. Where the institution determines that a party or witness is unable to be present in person due to extenuating circumstances, the institution may establish special procedures to permit that individual to provide testimony from a separate location. In doing so, the institution must determine whether there is a valid basis for the individual's unavailability, require that the individual properly sequester in a manner that ensures testimony has not been tainted, and make a determination that such arrangement will not unfairly disadvantage any party. Should it be reasonably believed that the individual presented tainted testimony, the hearing panel will disregard or discount the testimony. Parties may also request to provide testimony in a separate room from the opposing party, so long as no party is unfairly disadvantaged, and they have the opportunity to view the testimony remotely and submit follow-up questions.

At all times participants in the hearing process, including parties, a party's advisor, and institution officials, are expected to act in a manner that promotes dignity and decorum

throughout the hearing. Participants are expected to be respectful to others and follow procedural formalities outlined by this Policy and the institution. The institution reserves the right to remove any participant from the hearing environment if the participant refuses to adhere to the institution's established rules of decorum.

Each institution shall maintain documentation of the investigation and resolution process, which may include written findings of fact, transcripts, audio recordings, and/or video recordings. Any documentation shall be maintained for seven years.

Additionally, the following standards will apply to Title IX and Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct hearings respectively:

#### **A. Title IX Hearings**

1. Where a party or a witness is unavailable, unable, or otherwise unwilling to participate in the hearing, including being subject to cross-examination, the hearing panel shall not rely on statements of that party or witness in reaching its determination regarding responsibility. The hearing panel shall not draw an adverse inference against the party or witness based solely on their absence from the hearing or refusal to subject to cross-examination.
2. The parties shall have the right to present witnesses and evidence at the hearing.
3. The parties shall have the right to confront any witness, including the other party, by having their advisor ask relevant questions directly to the witness. The Hearing Officer shall limit questions raised by the advisor when they are irrelevant to determining the veracity of the allegations against the Respondent(s). In any such event, the Hearing Officer shall err on the side of permitting all the raised questions and must document the reason for not permitting any particular questions to be raised.
4. Questions and evidence about the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior, shall be deemed irrelevant, unless such questions and evidence are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the alleged conduct or consent between the parties during the alleged incident.
5. The hearing panel shall not access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional made in connection with the party's treatment unless the party has provided voluntary written consent. This also applies to information protected by recognized legal privilege.
6. Formal judicial rules of evidence do not apply to the resolution process and the standard of evidence shall be a preponderance of the evidence.
7. Following a hearing, the parties shall be simultaneously provided a written decision via institution email of the hearing outcome and any resulting sanctions or administrative actions. The decision must include the allegations, procedural steps taken through the investigation and resolution process, findings of facts supporting the determination(s), determination(s) regarding responsibility, and the evidence relied upon and rationale for any sanction or other administrative action. The institution shall also notify the parties of their right to appeal as outlined below.

#### **B. Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct Hearings**

1. The parties shall have the right to present witnesses and evidence at the hearing. Witness testimony, if provided, shall pertain to knowledge and facts directly associated with the case being heard.

2. The parties shall have the right to confront any witnesses, including the other party, by submitting written questions to the Hearing Officer for consideration. Advisors may actively assist in drafting questions. The Hearing Officer shall ask the questions as written and will limit questions only if they are irrelevant to determining the veracity of the allegations against the Respondent(s). In any such event, the Hearing Officer shall err on the side of asking all submitted questions and must document the reason for not asking any particular questions.
3. Questions and evidence about the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior, shall be deemed irrelevant, unless such questions and evidence are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the alleged conduct or consent between the parties during the alleged incident.
4. The hearing panel shall not access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional made in connection with the party's treatment unless the party has provided voluntary written consent. This also applies to information protected by recognized legal privilege.
5. Formal judicial rules of evidence do not apply to the resolution process and the standard of evidence shall be a preponderance of the evidence.
6. Following a hearing, the parties shall be simultaneously provided a written decision via institution email of the hearing outcome and any resulting sanctions or administrative actions. The decision must include the allegations, procedural steps taken through the investigation and resolution process, findings of facts supporting the determination(s), determination(s) regarding responsibility, and the evidence relied upon and rationale for any sanction or other administrative action. The institution shall also notify the parties of their right to appeal, as outlined below.

#### **4.6.5.5 Possible Sanctions**

In determining the severity of sanctions or corrective actions the following should be considered: the frequency, severity, and/or nature of the offense; history of past conduct; an offender's willingness to accept responsibility; previous institutional response to similar conduct; strength of the evidence; and the wellbeing of the university community. The institution will determine sanctions and issue notice of the same, as outlined above. The broad range of sanctions includes: expulsion; suspension for an identified time frame or until satisfaction of certain conditions or both; temporary or permanent separation of the parties (e.g., change in classes, reassignment of residence, no contact orders, limiting geography of where parties can go on campus) with additional sanctions for violating no-contact orders; required participation in sensitivity training/awareness education programs; required participation in alcohol and other drug awareness and abuse prevention programs; counseling or mentoring; volunteering/community service; loss of institutional privileges; delays in obtaining administrative services and benefits from the institution (e.g., holding transcripts, delaying registration, graduation, diplomas); additional academic requirements relating to scholarly work or research; financial restitution; or any other discretionary sanctions directly related to the violation or conduct.

For suspension and expulsion, the institution must articulate, in its written decision, the substantial evidence relied upon in determining that suspension or expulsion were appropriate.

For purposes of this Policy substantial evidence means evidence that a reasonable person might accept to support the conclusion.

#### **4.6.5.6 Appeals**

Appeals may be made in any cases where sanctions are issued, even when such sanctions are held “in abeyance,” such as probationary or expulsion. Where the sanction imposed includes a suspension or expulsion (even for one held in abeyance), the following appellate procedures must be provided.

The Respondent (and in cases involving sexual misconduct or other forms of discrimination and/or harassment, the Complainant) shall have the right to appeal the outcome on any of the following grounds: (1) to consider new information, sufficient to alter the decision, or other relevant facts not brought out in the original hearing (or appeal), because such information was not known or knowable to the person appealing during the time of the hearing (or appeal); (2) to allege a procedural error within the hearing process that may have substantially impacted the fairness of the hearing (or appeal), including but not limited to whether any hearing questions were improperly excluded or whether the decision was tainted by a conflict of interest or bias by the Title IX Coordinator, Conduct Officer, investigator(s), decision makers(s); or (3) to allege that the finding was inconsistent with the weight of the information. The appeal must be made in writing, must set forth one or more of the bases outlined above, and must be submitted within five business days of the date of the final written decision. The appeal should be made to the institution’s President or their designee.

The appeal shall be a review of the record only, and no new meeting with the Respondent or any Complainant is required. The President or their designee may affirm the original finding and sanction, affirm the original finding but issue a new sanction of greater or lesser severity, remand the case back to any lower decision maker to correct a procedural or factual defect, or reverse or dismiss the case if there was a procedural or factual defect that cannot be remedied by remand. The President or their designee’s decision shall be simultaneously issued in writing to the parties within a reasonable time period. The President or their designee’s decision shall be the final decision of the institution.

Should the Respondent or Complainant (where applicable) wish to appeal the final institutional decision, they may request review by the Board of Regents in accordance with the Board of Regents’ Policy on Discretionary Review.

Appeals received after the designated deadlines above will not be considered unless the institution or Board of Regents has granted an extension prior to the deadline. If an appeal is not received by the deadline the last decision on the matter will become final.

#### **4.6.5.7 Recusal/Challenge for Bias**

Any party may challenge the participation of any institution official, employee or student panel member in the process on the grounds of personal bias by submitting a written statement to the institution’s designee setting forth the basis for the challenge. The designee shall not be the same individual responsible for investigating or adjudicating the conduct allegation. The written challenge should be submitted within a reasonable time after the individual knows or reasonably should have known of the existence of the bias. The institution’s designee will determine whether to sustain or deny the challenge and, if sustained, the replacement to be appointed.

# **COLLEGE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

SGSC subscribes to the University System of Georgia's initiative on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Also known as "mediation," ADR aims to resolve disputes between two persons without a formal grievance procedure or legal action. The goal of such a resolution is to satisfy the needs of both parties in a non-threatening manner in an atmosphere where both sides are expressed and possible solutions to the dispute are developed by the disputants themselves. To arrive at a win-win solution that will satisfy both parties, a certified mediator facilitates the expressions of concern, identifies issues for negotiation, and helps the parties work toward an agreement that can satisfy their needs. This process works very well for most disputes that do not involve criminal activity or academic grades. Further, the positions of the disputants are of minimal concern. Therefore, disputes between student and faculty member, faculty and staff, student and student, and faculty/staff and administration can be reasonably settled through mediation. For information on Alternative Dispute Resolution (mediation), please contact Academic Affairs at 912-260-4201. Refer to this Handbook for the grade appeal process.

## **CAMPUS SOLICITATION**

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

## **CAMPUS VISITORS**

The South Georgia State College campus, buildings, and facilities are designated for the use of the students, faculty, and staff of the College. Guests of students, faculty, and staff are welcome on the campus and are subject to all campus regulations while visiting the College. Loiterers or visitors whose conduct is in any way detrimental to the safety of students, faculty, and staff and/or operation of the College shall be asked to leave. Also, individuals who refuse to identify themselves to a College faculty or staff member, including public safety officers, shall be asked to leave the campus. Persons who refuse to respond to this request and/or who return to the campus after having been instructed to leave shall be in violation of state law and shall be subject to arrest.

## **CHILDREN ON CAMPUS**

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

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

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

## **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

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

## **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION POLICY**

Parades, student rallies, and other gatherings must follow the Freedom of Expression Policy (see Appendix B).

## **RISK MANAGEMENT/ASSUMPTION OF RISK**

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

## **SMOKING POLICY**

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

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

More information on the USG adopted policy is available at this link: <https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section6/C2663>

## **STUDENT EQUITY CONCERNS**

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

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

## **STUDENT VOTING PRIVILEGES**

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

## **TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES POLICIES FOR STUDENTS**

SGSC Acceptable Use Policy- [http://www.sgsc.edu/skins/userfiles/files/appropriate\\_use\\_policy.pdf](http://www.sgsc.edu/skins/userfiles/files/appropriate_use_policy.pdf)

## **WRITTEN STUDENT COMPLAINTS**

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

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## ATHLETICS

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

## CAMPUS ALERT SYSTEM

Blackboard Connect® communication has been selected to deliver time-sensitive notifications to students and staff. This service provides campus leaders and security professionals the ability to reach students and staff members with information and updates during unforeseen events or emergencies, within minutes, through phone calls, e-mails and/or text messages, whether they are in their dorms, sitting in front of their computers, or on their way to class. Notifying students immediately is crucial in time-sensitive situations, such as a severe storm or campus closure. It is important for students to enter their contact information into the Blackboard Connect database. The more methods SGSC has to contact individuals, the better the odds are of spreading timely information and updates and keeping everyone safe. Contact information included in the Blackboard Connect service will only be used for campus notifications and will not be made available to any other service. To sign up for Blackboard Connect, visit <http://www.sgsc.edu/departments/emergency%20notification%20systems.cms>.

## CAMPUS BOOKSTORE

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

## CAMPUS RECREATION

The Student Government Association sponsors events throughout the term for student co-curricular enjoyment. These activities utilize student activity fees and are often free to the student. Events include such activities as concerts, trips, family activities, and intramurals. The College swimming pool is used both for recreation and physical education programs for regularly enrolled students. Specific rules governing conduct at the swimming pool and a swimming schedule are posted in the vicinity of the pool. Contact the Athletic Department at 912-260-4217

for more information on reserving the facility. Tennis courts are located on the east side of campus, and students may play golf on the community golf course at a discounted rate.

## **FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS**

Students interested in receiving assistance from any of the federal assistance programs must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). In addition, students must complete the SGSC Institutional Data Sheet for Financial Aid. More information regarding the Financial Aid and Scholarships at SGSC is available on the SGSC website: <http://www.sgsc.edu/current-students/financial-aid-scholarships.cms>

## **FOOD SERVICES**

South Georgia State College has an agreement with ABL to provide food services on the SGSC-Douglas campus, and Light Vending provides services for our vending machines. ABL works with groups planning events that feature food and beverages. Residential students are required to participate in a meal plan each term. Commuting students may purchase a commuter meal plan, with cash or by creating a food services account balance which is recorded on the ID card. The ID card is classified as a financial transaction card and is governed by Georgia law (see South Georgia State College Public Safety Information bulletin) and College regulations. Amounts can be added to the ID card's DBA Flex account using the Blackboard reverse ATM in the Clower Center, and the ID card may be used in the food services areas in the Dining Hall, the Tiger Depot and the Clower Center. Food services accounts are issued in conjunction with the SGSC ID, which is validated by the Cashier's Office. Food services hours are posted in the Dining Hall. For assistance or more information, please contact the Cashier's Office at 912-260-4239 or ABL, located in the SGSC Dining Hall, at 912-720-4825, [abl.management@sgsc.edu](mailto:abl.management@sgsc.edu).

## **FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS**

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

The SGSC Office of External Affairs serves as the liaison between the college and the Foundations and assists with the awarding of annual scholarships. For further details on the Foundations or other Foundation-sponsored programs, please contact the Office of External Affairs via email at [externalaffairs@sgsc.edu](mailto:externalaffairs@sgsc.edu) or by phone at 912-260-4269 (Douglas campus) or 912-449-7510 (Waycross campus).

## **IDENTIFICATION CARDS**

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

## **INTRAMURALS**

Team sports vary from term to term. Offerings include volleyball, flag football, basketball and softball. Students are not allowed to solicit sponsorship for intramural activities off campus. For additional information concerning intramural rules, please contact the Campus Life Student Engagement staff on the Douglas Campus, 912-260-4433 or Waycross Campus, 912-449-7599.

## **JOB PLACEMENT**

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

## **ORIENTATION**

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

## RESIDENCE LIFE

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

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

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

## STUDENT EMAIL

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

## STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE AND HEALTH FEE

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

## VEHICLE REGISTRATION

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

## **VETERANS AFFAIRS**

The Department of Veterans Affairs offers a wide range of educational benefits to eligible recipients. For more information about these benefits, detailed eligibility criteria and general background material on VA programs, please visit the Department of Veterans Affairs website <http://benefits.va.gov/gibill/> or the VA Certifying Official's office located in Engram Hall. The VA Certifying Official verifies enrollment status and program compliance, and the Veterans Administration administers the benefits.

## Appendix A

### South Georgia State College Student Government Association Constitution

#### Preamble

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

#### Article I – STUDENT BODY MEMBERSHIP

##### Section 1: Composition

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

##### Section 2: Privileges

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

##### Section 3: Name of Organization

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

#### Article II - AUTHORITIES AND POWERS

##### Section 1: Authority

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

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

## Section 2: Function

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Section 3: Administrative Structure

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

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

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

#### Section 4: Ultimate Authority

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

### Article III – ORGANIZATION

#### Section 1: Multi-Campus Structure

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

#### Section 2: Membership

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

### Article IV - QUALIFICATIONS

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

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

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

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

Paragraph D: The candidate must have a minimum of six (6) semester credit hours each semester at South Georgia State College throughout the term of office with the exception of the summer

and/or graduation semester. Faculty, staff, and administrative staff are not eligible for membership of SGA.

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

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

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

## Section 2: Qualifications for Representative of the SGA

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

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

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

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

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

## Section 3: Term of Office

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

## Section 4: Assumption of Office

All newly elected officers and representatives elect shall serve ex-officio on the SGA from the point that the election is certified until the final day of the semester. The first scheduled meeting following elections shall be a joint meeting of the Current officers and representatives and newly elected officers and representatives. At the conclusion of this joint meeting, newly elected senators and officers will be sworn into their new office upon taking an Oath of Office,

administered by The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs or designee of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs the Oath is as follows:

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

#### Section 5: Removal from Office

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

Paragraph B: If any SGA Officer or SGA Representative loses his/her required grade-point average, while in office, he/she shall have one semester to raise his/her grades before he/she must forfeit his/her position. The student shall retain the right of judicial appeal as in paragraph A.

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

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

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

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

## Article V - DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Section 1 - The President of the SGA shall:

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

Section 2: The Vice President shall:

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

Section 3: The Parliamentarian shall:

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

Section 4: The Secretary shall:

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

Section 5: The Treasurer shall:

- Attend SGA meetings and SGA retreat.

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

Section 6: Representatives shall:

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

## ARTICLE VI - MEETINGS

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

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

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

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

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

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

program, service, or to any administrator or faculty person because of the person's physical disability.

#### ARTICLE VII - COMMITTEES

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

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

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

#### ARTICLE VIII - ELECTIONS

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

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

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

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

Section 5: A candidates' forum shall be held on the third Thursday in February. Each candidate for officer or representative who has been certified by the Vice President of Academic and

Student Affairs or designee of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs shall be allowed four (4) minutes to address the student body

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS

Section 1: Proposal and Ratification of Amendments

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

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

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

#### ARTICLE X – RATIFICATION

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

#### Article XI – CONSTITUTIONAL SUPREMACY

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

Amended November 2012, Approved March 2013.

## Appendix B

### South Georgia State College Freedom of Expression Policy

#### **A. Purpose and Overview of Policy**

South Georgia State College (“SGSC”) is committed to protecting the rights set forth in the First Amendment, which provides for freedom of speech, freedom of expression, and the right to assemble peaceably. SGSC also recognizes its responsibility to provide a secure learning environment that allows individuals enrolled at or employed by SGSC (“members of the College community”) to express their views in ways that do not disrupt the operation of the College. This policy in no way prohibits members of the College community from engaging in conversations on campus and does not apply to College-sponsored activities, but rather only establishes a designated public forum on SGSC’s campus and sets forth requirements for the reservation and use of the Public Forum Area in the following limited circumstances: (1) members of the College community who plan an event with 25 or more persons; and, (2) individuals or groups who are not members of the College community who wish to speak on SGSC’s campus. By placing reasonable limitations on time, place, and manner of speech, SGSC does not take a position on the content or viewpoint of the expression, but allows for a diversity of viewpoints to be expressed in an academic setting.

#### **B. Designation of Public Forum on SGSC’s Campus**

To better facilitate the free exchange of ideas, SGSC has designated the following areas as “Public Forum Areas” on SGSC’s campuses:

- Douglas Campus – The grassy area between the Dining Hall and Tiger II
- Waycross Campus – The gazebo near the James M. Dye Student Services Building

These Public Forum Areas are generally available from 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, provided that the areas have not previously been reserved. Though reservations to use the Public Forum Area are only required as set forth in Section C and Section D below, the College recommends that all parties interested in using the Public Forum Area submit a completed Forum Reservation Request Form to the Dean of Students ([greg.tanner@sgsc.edu](mailto:greg.tanner@sgsc.edu)) or Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs ([robert.page@sgsc.edu](mailto:robert.page@sgsc.edu)), prior to use so that the College may minimize scheduling conflicts, accommodate all interested users, and provide for campus safety and security. Reservations will only be processed on days that SGSC’s Administrative Offices are open for business (“college business days”).

#### **C. Provisions for Members of the College Community**

Members of the College community who plan to engage in expressive activity on campus in a group that is expected to consist of 25 or more persons must submit a completed Forum Reservation Request Form to the Office of Campus Life two college business days prior to the scheduled activity and must receive approval in writing from a College official prior to engaging in such activity. Prior notice is required to ensure that there is sufficient space for the large group event, that necessary College resources are

available for crowd control and security, and that the academic and other operations of the College are not disrupted. The College official may grant a reservation for the Public Forum Area or another available area of campus, as requested by the applicant, and may only deny a reservation for the limited reasons set forth in the Section E below.

If an individual or small group of individuals within the College community, while engaging in spontaneous expression, attracts a group of 25 or more persons, then a representative from the group should provide the College with as much notice as circumstances reasonably permit. The College reserves the right to direct a group of 25 or more persons to the Public Forum Area or another available area of campus in order to ensure the safety of campus members, to provide for proper crowd control, and to limit disruption of the academic and other operations of the College. When relocating expression, the College official must not consider or impose restrictions based on the content or viewpoint of the expression.

#### **D. Provisions for Outside Speakers**

Individuals or groups of persons who are not enrolled at or employed by SGSC may only engage in expressive activity on SGSC's campuses in the Public Forum Areas and only after submitting a completed Forum Reservation Request Form to SGSC's Dean of Students at least two college business days prior to the scheduled speech and obtaining approval for such use in writing from a College official pursuant to the procedures set forth in Section E below. Organizers are encouraged to submit their requests as early in the planning stages of the event as possible. This provision does not apply to any classroom instruction or College-sponsored events.

#### **E. Procedures for Forum Reservation Requests and Appeals**

Completed Forum Reservation Request Forms should be submitted to SGSC's Dean of Students at least two college business days prior to the scheduled expression. Reservation scheduling will be coordinated by a College official who will grant reservations on a first-come, first-served basis. The College official will respond to all requests as soon as possible, but in no event more than one college business day after receipt of the reservation request, either authorizing the reservation and noting any special instructions, if applicable, or setting forth the reason for denial of the reservation.

The Dean of Students may only deny a reservation request for one of the following reasons:

1. The Forum Reservation Request Form is not fully completed;
2. The Forum Reservation Request Form contains a material falsehood or misrepresentation;
3. The Public Forum Areas have been previously reserved, in which case the College will designate another appropriate date, time, or location to accommodate the expression;
4. The use or activity intended by the applicant would conflict with or disturb previously planned programs organized and conducted by the College;
5. The Public Forum Areas are not large enough to accommodate the expected or actual number of persons engaging in large group expression, in which case the College must provide a reservation for the applicant at an alternate location that can safely accommodate the expression provided that the applicant is a member of the College community and that such a location exists on campus of the College;
6. The use or activity intended by the applicant would present a danger to the health or safety of the applicant, other members of the College community, or the public; or

7. The use or activity intended by the applicant is prohibited by law, SGSC policy, or Board of Regents policy.

When assessing a reservation request, the College official must not consider or impose restrictions on the expression based on the content or viewpoint of the expression.

Any denial of a reservation request may be appealed to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs in writing setting forth the reasons why the appeal should be granted. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs or his designee must respond to the appeal in writing within one college business day. The decision of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs or his or her designee is final.

## **F. General Provisions**

In addition to the requirements set forth above, all individuals expressing themselves on SGSC's campus must comply with the following provisions:

- Obstruction, disruption, or interference with classes, administrative functions, or other college activities or events is not permitted.
- No interference with the free flow of vehicular or pedestrian traffic is permitted.
- Expression must not block access to or exit from any office, classroom, laboratory, or building.
- It is not permissible to post materials on any walls, windows, doors, sidewalks, trees, light poles, etc., or on any other college equipment without prior approval.
- Care should be taken to ensure that College and personal property is not damaged or destroyed. Malicious or unwarranted damage to or destruction of property owned or operated by the College or students, faculty, staff, or visitors to the College is prohibited. Persons or organizations causing such damage may be held financially and/or legally responsible.
- Persons expressing themselves on campus are responsible for seeing that the area is left clean and in good repair and all structures, signs, and litter resulting from any expression must be removed following the expression. If not accomplished, persons or organizations responsible may be held financially responsible for cleanup costs.
- Any use of amplified sound, other than amplified sound used in connection with College-sponsored events, must only be intended to be heard in the immediate area of the expression in order to minimize academic disruption or disruption of other College operations.
- All individuals expressing themselves on campus must comply with state, federal, and local law; municipal ordinances; SGSC policies and regulations; Board of Regents policies

and regulations; and the above guidelines and must not engage in violence or incite others to engage in violence or commit illegal or dangerous acts.

Authorization of a speech, event, or demonstration is contingent upon compliance with the criteria listed above. Speakers and/or organizations failing to comply with the above policy may be asked to leave campus and/or College disciplinary action or judicial action may be pursued.

**Questions About SGSC's Freedom of Expression Policy**

Questions about this policy may be addressed to SGSC's Dean of Students at 912.260.4259 or [greg.tanner@sgsc.edu](mailto:greg.tanner@sgsc.edu).

Approved April 2017