



# 2016-2017 Student Handbook

**GULF COAST STATE COLLEGE**

5230 W. HWY 98

PANAMA CITY, FL 32401

[www.gulfcoast.edu](http://www.gulfcoast.edu)

Dear Gulf Coast State College Student:

It is with extreme pride that I welcome you to the Gulf Coast family! As a Gulf Coast family member, you can be assured that we are committed to making your postsecondary educational experience one of discovery that will lead you to recognize your full academic potential.

The Gulf Coast State College Student Handbook provides critical information for all students, serves as a resource for student policy and procedural activities, and contains the contractual *Student Code of Conduct* and the *Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities* that are necessary for ensuring just and fair delivery of all curricular and extra-curricular services.

We are dedicated to answering the needs of our students and to investing our energies into what is truly in our students' best interests. We genuinely care about our students as individuals and believe that the path to success is through compassionate understanding of who our students are. Gulf Coast State College will always be the community's college. We are honored by that distinction and work to ensure that the Gulf Coast family will always be a source of pride for the entire Emerald Coast.

I encourage you to become engaged in your education by considering innovative alternatives to new challenges that we will face in the future.



Please know that Student Affairs personnel are committed to student success and that we are here to assist you in your postsecondary pursuits. I wish you the best in the coming year!

“We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.” –  
Albert Einstein

*M. Melissa Lavender, Ed.D.*

M. Melissa Lavender, Ed.D.

Vice President, Student Affairs

### *INTRODUCTION:*

Gulf Coast State College serves the residents of Bay, Gulf, and Franklin counties educational needs. The Student Handbook provides an overview of helpful tips and information that will guide you through your academic goals and career development. Please refer to the GCSC General Catalog for specific information and academic requirements. The college reserves the right to make changes in policies, regulations, and procedures according to the GCSC Manual of Policy and amendments made by the GCSC Board of Trustees.

### *College Vision Statement:*

Gulf Coast State College will deliver life-changing learning opportunities and will join as a full partner in dynamic cultural and economic development of the region.

### *College Mission:*

Gulf Coast State College holds students and community of central importance. The college provides many opportunities for learning and offers a range of programs and services to help students become well-educated, productive citizens. The college is equally dedicated to collaborating with the community to help create or improve economic well-being and to offer the space of the college for social dialog, events of art and culture, and other moments that enhance our quality of life.

### *Equal Opportunity:*

Gulf Coast State College is an equal opportunity and equal access institution, which does not discriminate with respect to race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, or marital status. The college's equity coordinator will address questions and concerns, and can be reached at GCSC's Human Resources Office, 5230 W. Hwy 98, Panama City, Florida 32401, (850) 872-3894.

*\*Business & Technology \* Health Science \* Language & Literature\*Mathematics \* Natural Sciences \*  
Public Safety \* Social Science \* Visual & Performing Arts \*Wellness & Athletics\**

**Mascot:** The Commodore

**School Colors:** Blue & Gold

Student Handbook Produced by the Office of Student Government

(850) 873-3598 or FAX (850) 767-8080 [www.gulfcoast.edu](http://www.gulfcoast.edu)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<i>INTRODUCTION:</i> .....	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>
I. GETTING INTO COLLEGE.....	7
ADMISSIONS CHECK LIST.....	7
GENERAL CATALOG TERMS.....	7
CLASSIFICATION & COURSE LOAD.....	8
RECORDS & TRANSCRIPTS.....	9
STUDENT ID NUMBER .....	11
WITHDRAWALS .....	11
STUDENT “RIGHT TO KNOW” ACT.....	11
II. ACADEMIC ADVISING .....	12
STAY ON TRACK.....	12
COOPERATIVE EDUCATION .....	13
COUNSELING SERVICES .....	13
SUBSTANCE ABUSE:.....	13
DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES .....	14
SERVICE DOG OWNER RESPONSIBILITIES:.....	15
E-LEARNING/DISTANCE EDUCATION.....	15
DUAL ENROLLMENT .....	15
PLACEMENT TESTING .....	16
TRADITIONAL PLACEMENT.....	16
FLEXIBLE PLACEMENT .....	16
TRIO.....	16
MILITARY & VETERAN SERVICES .....	17
III. REGISTRATION & FEES .....	18
FINANCIAL AID (GRANTS, WORKSTUDY, SCHOLARSHIPS, & LOANS):.....	18
PAY4PRINT.....	18
REGISTRATION CHECKLIST .....	18
FEE PAYMENT & DEADLINES .....	18
TUITION REFUND POLICY .....	19
APPLYING FOR GRADUATION.....	20
GRADUATION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.....	20

IV. IMPORTANT COLLEGE POLICIES.....	23
ACADEMIC INFORMATION:.....	23
CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY .....	23
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS.....	23
CHANGE OF MAJOR POLICY.....	23
COURSE REPEAT POLICY .....	24
GRADING POLICY .....	24
HONORS PROGRAM.....	24
ACADEMIC STANDING .....	24
APPEALS COMMITTEE (NON-ACADEMIC).....	25
RECORDING STUDENT WRITTEN COMPLAINTS .....	26
STUDENT ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE .....	26
FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES.....	30
AIDS POLICY.....	33
ANIMALS ON CAMPUS POLICY .....	33
CHILDREN ON CAMPUS POLICY.....	33
DRUG-FREE CAMPUS POLICY .....	33
SMOKE-FREE CAMPUS POLICY .....	34
MANDATORY DRUG SCREENING/TESTING AND DRUG EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR STUDENT	
ATHLETES: .....	34
EMERGENCY ACCIDENT PROCEDURE.....	34
EMERGENCY STEPS TO FOLLOW:.....	34
INSURANCE .....	35
REQUEST FOR STUDENT TRAVEL.....	35
STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT.....	36
SEARCH & SEIZURES .....	45
VULNERABLE PERSON ACT .....	45
V. STUDENT SERVICES:.....	52
BOOKSTORE.....	52
CABIN CREEK FOOD SERVICES.....	52
CULINARY ARTS JOHN HOLLY DINING ROOM .....	52
DENTAL CLINIC .....	52
HOUSING .....	53
INTERNET, E-MAIL, & COMPUTERS.....	53
MYGCSC.....	53
PASSWORD UNLOCK/RESET .....	53
MOBILE APP .....	53
LIBRARY .....	53
LOST & FOUND .....	54
LOCKERS FOR STUDENTS.....	54
MAIL & MESSAGES.....	54
PARKING & CAMPUS SECURITY.....	55
CRIME STATISTICS .....	56
WKGC RADIO STATION.....	58

VI. STUDENT GOVERNMENT .....	59
ACTIVITY HOUR .....	59
ATHLETIC EVENTS.....	59
BRAIN BOWL .....	60
CLUBS & STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS .....	60
SECRET SOCIETIES, FRATERNITIES & SORORITIES .....	63
FITNESS FACILITIES .....	63
POSTERS & SIGNAGE:.....	64
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (SGA) .....	64
STUDENT GOVERNMENT & PARTICIPATION.....	65
STUDENT POLITICAL RALLIES.....	65
TRI-COLLEGE COMMITTEE .....	65
VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS .....	66

## I. GETTING INTO COLLEGE

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### ADMISSIONS CHECK LIST

Before enrolling in GCSC courses, all students must provide the following information to the Office of Enrollment Services, Tyndall A.F.B. Office, or the Gulf Franklin Center. For specific forms or information, see the 2014-2015 General Catalog or call 747-3200.

- 1 - Admission's Application
- 2 - Transcript Request
- 3 - College Placement Test
- 4 - Academic Advising
- 5 - Register on campus or on-line at [www.gulfcoast.edu](http://www.gulfcoast.edu) and click on myGCSC
- 6 - Financial Aid, Scholarships, Veterans Benefits
- 7 - Registration & Fee Payment

### GENERAL CATALOG TERMS

**Academic Advising:** Academic advising is required for all first-time students prior to registration. A first-time student will meet with an academic adviser who will introduce the student to the college, discuss the college's expectations of the student and approve the student's first semester courses. After the initial advising session the student will be assigned a primary adviser who will be the student's contact for the remainder of his or her academic career at Gulf Coast.

**Bachelor of Applied Science (B.A.S):** The B.A.S degree is a baccalaureate degree designed to prepare students to enhance and/or advance their career. B.A.S. programs provide baccalaureate degree completion opportunities for students from a variety of educational backgrounds but primarily those with A.S. degree or their equivalent.

**Associate of Arts (A.A.):** The A.A. degree is the transfer degree necessary for easy admission to a Florida university. The degree requires a total of 60 credit hours: 36 hours of general education credit and 24 hours of elective credit. Although a student may follow a *Transfer Track* for a specific university major, the A.A. diploma does not designate a major at the associate level.

**Associate of Science (A.S.):** These *Workforce Degrees* provide the basis for credentials that are necessary for immediate employment. These degrees reflect specific majors and vary in total number of credit hours required for the degree. All A.S. degrees require general education courses as well as courses designed for skill achievement. Most A.S. degrees do not transfer to a university; however, the general education courses that are part of the degree will transfer as well as some other courses in the degree. For assistance, please seek the advice of an academic adviser.

**Credit Hour:** A measurement for determining the amount of college credit for a course based on the number of hours, per week, for the 15 weeks you attend the course.

**Elective:** A class not specified in your major, but one you may take for interest or fun. Courses may not apply to your hours required for an A.A. degree. Always check with your advisor before registering for an elective.

**Full-time Student:** 12 or more hours/semester.

**General Education Requirements:** Specific courses from the areas of fine arts/humanities, natural science/mathematics, social/behavioral science. The A.A. degree requires 36 hours of general education; A.S. degrees require 15 to 18 hours of general education.

**Major:** A specific course of study leading to an A.S. degree. A.A. degrees do not identify a *Major* but a *Transfer Track* that reflects the Florida common prerequisites for a specific major for the baccalaureate degree.

**Non-Degree Seeking Student:** Students who may be enrolled in credit courses, but do not plan to seek a degree. Non-degree seeking students are not eligible to use financial aid or VA benefits.

**College Placement Test (CPT):** Degree seeking students must take a placement test in English, math, and reading to determine their skill-level in each area for appropriate placement (P.E.R.T.).

**Registration:** Each semester students choose which classes they would like to take and complete the course selection after consulting with their academic adviser and/or their *Transfer Track* or academic major.

**Semester:** The length of a course equal to 16 weeks offered twice a year, fall and spring. Summer B and C are six- week terms.

**Special Student:** Students enrolled in credit courses but are not seeking a college degree are special students and are not eligible for financial aid.

**Transcript:** A cumulative record of all your college credits. To request official transcripts, contact the Office of Enrollment Services.

**Transfer Track:** The prescribed courses that lead to the A.A. degree and include the Florida common course prerequisites for a specific major at the university.

**Tuition:** Total cost of your courses can be determined by multiplying the number of course credits x current fee per hour rate plus any la or e-learning fees. Without prompt payment of fees, you will automatically be dropped from class rolls. If you register and decide not to attend, complete the appropriate drop/add forms.

## **CLASSIFICATION & COURSE LOAD**

Freshmen are classified as completing fewer than 30 credit hours, regardless of the number of semesters attended. Sophomores are classified as completing 30 or more credit hours. Juniors are classified as completing 60 or more credit hours and are enrolled in a Bachelor's level program. Seniors are classified as completing 90 or more credit hours and are enrolled in a Bachelor's level program. A full-time enrollment minimum is 12 hours each semester. A part-time student is enrolled less than 12 hours. Summer full-time course load is 6 hours per term (not the case for financial aid or VA benefits).



It is encouraged that students plan their school schedule and work schedule prior to the semester. The following is a good rule of thumb for planning school and work schedules:

<u>Academic Load</u>	<u>Work Hours</u>
12 hours	20 hours/week
9 hours	30 hours/week
6 hours	40 hours/week

## **RECORDS & TRANSCRIPTS**

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

The Family Educational rights and Privacy Act affords students certain rights with respect to their educational records. These rights include:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day Gulf Coast State College receives a request for access. Students would submit to the Registrar's Office written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Registrar will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the Registrar's Office the student shall be advised of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes is inaccurate. Students may ask Gulf Coast State College to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the Registrar, clearly identify the part of the records they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If Gulf Coast State College decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the student shall be notified of the decision and advised as to his or her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by Gulf Coast State College in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff position (including law enforcement personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom Gulf Coast State College has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, collection agent, degree conferral & transcript processing agent, document managing agent, and placement sites for internship or similar student work/study opportunities); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks; consultants, volunteers or other outside

parties to who Gulf Coast State College has outsourced institutional services or functions that it would otherwise use employees to perform. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education records in order fulfill his or her professional responsibility. As allowed with FERPA guidelines, Gulf Coast State College may disclose education records without consent to officials of another school, upon request, in which a student seeks or intends to enroll

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Gulf Coast State College to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202-4605.

At its discretion, Gulf Coast State College may provide Directory Information in accordance with the provisions of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. Directory Information is defined as that information which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Designated Directory Information at Gulf Coast State College includes the following:

- Student's name
- Date of birth
- Major Field of study
- Enrollment status
- Participation in recognized activities and sports
- Weight, height and photograph of athletic team members
- Dates of attendance
- Degrees, awards, and previous schools attended

Students may withhold Directory Information by notifying the registrar in writing; please note that such withholding requests are binding for all information to all parties other than for those exceptions allowed under the Act. Students should consider all aspects of a Directory Hold prior to filing such a request. In an emergency, FERPA permits school officials to disclose without student consent education records, including personally identifiable information from those records, to protect the health or safety of students or other individuals. At such times, records and information may be released to appropriate parties such as law enforcement officials, public health officials, and trained medical personnel. See 34 CFR S 99.31(a) (10) and S 99.36. This exception to FERPA's general consent rule is limited to the period of the emergency and generally does not allow for a blanket release of personally identifiable information from a student's education records. In addition, the Department interprets FERPA to

permit institutions to disclose information from education records to parents if a health or safety emergency involves their son or daughter.

### **STUDENT ID NUMBER**

All GCSC students are issued a unique Student Identification (ID) number once the application for admissions is processed. The Student Identification (ID) number is found on the Welcome letter that is sent via e-mail and a hard copy is mailed to your home address. All college transactions will require the student to provide their ID number.

### **WITHDRAWALS**

Two withdrawals are permitted per credit course. After that, a grade will be assigned. Please be concerned about withdrawals. When admitting students into certain programs, universities may calculate withdrawals as grades. It is your responsibility to verify the effects of enrollment and/or withdrawal upon your financial assistance (financial aid, scholarships, grants, VA etc.). There are two kinds of withdrawals---student and administrative.

**Student Withdrawal** - Students wishing to withdraw must complete a withdrawal form and submit the form to the Office of Enrollment Services before the scheduled withdrawal deadline as published in the college catalog. Student withdrawals initiated prior to the scheduled withdrawal deadline will be recorded as a grade of "W." The withdrawal deadline for an off-term or condensed term is one week after midterm.

**Administrative Withdrawal** – A faculty member may withdraw a student up to the published withdrawal deadline for violation of the class attendance policy, in which case the student will receive a grade of "W". Administrative withdrawals initiated after the published withdrawal deadline will be recorded as either "W" or "F" depending on the student's progress in the class and the instructor's grading policies. The withdrawal deadline for an off-term, distance education or condensed semester is midterm for the course or the date of the second examination, whichever occurs first.

### **STUDENT "RIGHT TO KNOW" ACT**

The federal law states that an institution shall annually make available campus crime statistics, completion or graduation rate of full-time, first-time, degree seeking students to prospective or entering students, and graduation completion rate of student athletes on athletic aid to prospective student athletes.

## II. ACADEMIC ADVISING

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The mission of Gulf Coast State College's academic advising program is to engage all students in dynamic academic and career planning. The advising program has been developed that enables students to partner with experts in the academic fields related to student's field of study or career choice. All students must consult with an academic adviser prior to registering for first semester classes.

Every first time student at Gulf Coast State College will meet with a Master Adviser who will assist the student in the transition to college and aid in scheduling the student's first semester courses. Master Advisers will assign a Primary Adviser for each student based upon the student's chosen field of study.

During the student's first semester of classes, the student will schedule a meeting with the Primary Adviser to map out the student's educational plan. The student's assigned Primary Adviser will continue to work with the student throughout the student's academic career at Gulf Coast.

The Advising Center is located on the 1st floor of the Student Union West building in room 80.

### **STAY ON TRACK**

Section 1009.286, Florida Statutes, establishes an "excess hour" surcharge for a student seeking a baccalaureate degree at a state university. It is critical that transfer to a state university should identify a major or "transfer program" early and be advised of admission requirements for that program, including the approved common pre-requisites. Course withdrawals and/or repeats, as well as enrollment in courses non-essential to the intended major, may contribute to a potential excess hours surcharge. Students, including those entering Florida colleges, are aware of the potential for additional course fees. "Excess hours" are defined as hours that go beyond 120% of the hours required for a baccalaureate degree program. For example, if the length of the program is 120 credit hours, the student may be subject to an excess hour surcharge for any credits attempted beyond 144 credit hours (120 x 120%). All students whose educational plan may include earning a bachelor's degree should make every effort to enroll in and successfully complete those courses that are required for their intended major on their first attempt. Florida college students intending to transfer to a state university should identify a major or "transfer program" early and be advised of admission requirements for that program, including the approved common prerequisites. Course withdrawals and/or repeats, as well as enrollment on courses non-essential to the intended major, may contribute to a potential excess hours charge.

All degree-seeking students should understand that taking courses that are not part of their stated major may have an adverse effect on their education. Gulf Coast State College is dedicated to assisting students to progress through their chosen educational paths in an effective and efficient manner.

We at Gulf Coast State College believe that it is in each student's best interest to "Stay on Track" and complete the courses that are prescribed for the intended degree. There are specific programs where taking courses outside of the intended major is penalized.

1. Financial Aid – Pell Grants are intended to only pay for courses in a student's major or are prerequisites for the program. (College preparatory courses are considered prerequisite courses.)
2. Veteran's Affairs – VA requirements are similar to those of Pell Grants. Courses that are not in the student's major or are not prerequisites are not covered by VA. (College preparatory courses may not be considered prerequisite courses.)

To learn more, visit our website at [http://www.gulfcoast.edu/students/stay\\_on\\_track.htm](http://www.gulfcoast.edu/students/stay_on_track.htm).

### **COOPERATIVE EDUCATION**

Cooperative Education is an opportunity for students to earn academic elective college credit through employment, interning, or volunteering combined with course assignments utilizing Canvas. A maximum of six hours of COOP may be applied toward an A.A. degree. Call 872-3874 for more information or visit the Cooperative Education web page: <http://www.gulfcoast.edu/current-students/coop/index.html>.

### **COUNSELING SERVICES**

The Counseling Center is located on the first floor office in Student Union-East. Counseling services are available for students who need help with academic success; personal concerns, and/or referral services. Care is taken to assure the confidentiality of contacts between counselors and students. Call 769.1551 ext. 2829 or on-line <http://www.gulfcoast.edu/current-students/counseling-center/index.html>

### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE:**

GCSC encourages students who believe they may have a problem with alcohol or other drugs to seek assistance in Counseling Services. Contact is confidential and includes non-judgmental support and referral to appropriate community services. For more information, call 769-1551, Ext. 2829. Ext. 4861.

## **DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES**

Within the Student Affairs Division, Disabilities Support Services (DSS) helps to create a fair and inclusive learning environment through specific educational accommodations and support services guided by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. We are here to assist you in your education, career and personal achievements/goals with equal access to all programs using both on-campus and off-campus resources. In addition, we advocate for you in order to lift educational barriers while empowering and embracing differences by exploring new awareness campaigns and trainings for the GCSC population. If you believe you have a disability or to find out if you qualify for services, please contact Disability Support Services in SU-East, Room 60.

DSS Phone number: 850-747-3243

DSS Email: DSS@gulfcoast.edu

Location: Student Union East, Room 60

### **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Reasonable accommodations are appropriate adjustments to programs, policies and practices that make aspects of the College experience accessible and provide equal opportunities to Gulf Coast State College students with disabilities. An equal opportunity means a chance to attain the same level of performance or to enjoy equal benefits and privileges as are available to a similarly situated student without disabilities. There is no cost involved in providing reasonable accommodations, including auxiliary aids and services (for example, sign language interpreters, note-taking support, text conversion to alternative accessible formats, etc.). To determine reasonable accommodations, DSS may seek information from appropriate College personnel regarding essential standards for courses, programs, services, activities and facilities. The Coordinator makes the final determinations of reasonable accommodations in collaboration with the student and faculty as warranted. Reasonable accommodations are determined by examining:

- Environmental barriers limiting curricular, facility or program access
- Whether or not the access to the course, program, service, activity or facility is available without an accommodation
- The range of possible accommodations that might remove the barriers
- Whether or not essential elements of the course, program, service, activity or facility are altered by the accommodations.

### **OTHER SERVICES:**

In addition to assisting students with access on the GCSC campus, we also provide one-on-one tutoring in core curriculum courses, workshops on the “how to’s” of College life, peer mentors, and referral services.

### **COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS:**

GCSC has developed and implemented policies and procedures for providing reasonable course substitutions for eligible students with disabilities. Students eligible for substitutions are those who have documented disabilities. Documentation must substantiate that the disability can be reasonably expected to prevent the student from meeting requirements for admission to an institution, to a program of study, entry to upper-division, or graduation.

#### **SERVICE DOG OWNER RESPONSIBILITIES:**

GCSC acknowledges the rights of students, faculty, and visitors to utilize service animals as appropriate for disabilities with the following considerations applied:

1. The service animal must be maintained in good health, well groomed, clean, and free of fleas, ticks, and other pests. All vaccination records must be kept current.
2. The service animal may not be allowed to bark, jump, or exhibit aggressive behaviors.
3. Service animals must be kept under control and may not be allowed to run loose in buildings or on campus property.
4. The owner of the service dog is responsible for watering the animal. Owners assume all responsibility for cleaning up after the animal.

GCSC authorizes those animals that are considered service animals (dogs/miniature horses) which perform a task or work for an individual with a disability. Comfort/Emotional Support Animals are **not** considered "service animals" and are therefore **not** permitted on campus. For additional information on the GCSC Service Animal policy, please contact Disability Support Services.

#### **E-LEARNING/DISTANCE EDUCATION**

Gulf Coast State College has one of the largest distance learning programs in the state. Courses and programs offered in this format are referred to as "E-Learning" at GCSC. They are designed for students who are unable to attend traditional (face-to-face) classes due to work, family, and/or geographical distance, or simply prefer the distance mode of delivery through online education. These offerings allow students to achieve knowledge and skills via interaction with their instructors, fellow students, selected media, and course content. E-Learning at GCSC includes hybrid (blended) courses, where students meet face-to-face periodically and do portions of the course-work online. Online course activities and content are delivered using web-based technologies such as "two-way interactive video", streaming media, threaded discussions, and a wide variety of solutions to engage learners. Detailed information about our online programs and courses can be found on the E-Learning web page (visit <http://www.gulfcoast.edu> and click on the Academics tab, then "E-Learning"). There, you will find current "Fall E – Learning Course Outlines" (this will change each semester), containing detailed descriptions, and basic examination information. Students who are self-disciplined, self-motivated, and active learners usually succeed within the independent study program. To see if E-Learning programs and classes are right for you, click "Online Degree" and explore the programs located there. For more information use the "E – Learning Advising Specialist" link to access our dedicated E-Learning Advisor, or call 850-769-1551 x3268. Exciting opportunities await you through GCSC's E-Learning!

#### **DUAL ENROLLMENT**

The State of Florida permits students to receive both high school and college credit for approved courses that meet college level competencies. Dual enrolled students must meet college placement test requirements, fulfill college prerequisites, meet eligibility criteria defined by local school board as agreed upon the college, and submit written permission from the high school principal and/or counselor. Students may select dual enrollment in approved courses during school hours, after school hours, and during the summer term. Grades are recorded on the college and high school transcripts. Dual enrollment credit cannot be received for college preparatory, orientation, or physical education

courses. Dual enrollment students are exempt from the payment of registration, tuition and laboratory fees. For information, call (850) 747-3207.

### **PLACEMENT TESTING**

If you are a first-time-in-college degree-seeking student entering a college credit program, you are required to take some form of basic placement testing in English, reading and mathematics. You may meet this requirement in several ways:

ACT or SAT scores may be used for placement provided that the scores are less than two years old and they meet state-mandated minimum score levels, [Test Score Worksheet](#).

If ACT or SAT scores are lower than the state-mandated minimum scores, you may take the College Placement Test (CPT), which is also called the Postsecondary Readiness Test (PERT).

If you transfer college-level mathematics credit and/or college-level English composition credit to Gulf Coast State College, you have completed the testing requirement in that specific discipline and must test only in the area(s) in which you are deficient. If you are a transfer student, you must have your transcripts evaluated by the Transcript Coordinator to determine if you are required to take any of the tests. College-level English composition credit supersedes the need for placement in reading.

### **TRADITIONAL PLACEMENT**

If you entered the 9th grade in a Florida public school prior to 2003–2004, graduated from a non-public Florida high school or earned the GED, you qualify for Traditional Placement in English, reading and mathematics. Traditional Placement requires that you submit active scores on a college placement test (CPT/PERT, SAT or ACT) to Gulf Coast State College in order to assist academic advisors in determining your readiness for college-level English, reading and mathematics.

### **FLEXIBLE PLACEMENT**

If you entered the 9th grade in a Florida public school in 2003–2004 or later and earned a standard Florida high school diploma from a Florida public high school or are serving as active-duty members of the United States Armed Services, you qualify for Flexible Placement. Flexible Placement indicates that you are not required to be tested or to enroll in developmental education. You may opt into developmental education if you deem it appropriate after consulting with your academic advisor.

### **TRIO**

Located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Student Union West, this program provides academic support for students testing in two or more college preparatory classes on the college placement tests. Eligibility for the program is based on federal guidelines serving first generation college students, low-income, and disabled students. Once certified for the program, students remain eligible for services throughout their tenure at GCSC. Support includes one on one and group tutoring in English and math by professional learning managers. Additional academic support is provided through individual and group counseling activities that focus on study-skills development, career exploration, and other strategies for achieving success in college. Visit on-line or call 873-3526.



## **MILITARY & VETERAN SERVICES**

At Gulf Coast State College, we want to help you sort through the mire of your military education benefits so you get the education you deserve. Whether you are active military and need help processing your tuition assistance (TA benefits), a new veteran coming back to school on the GI bill, or a military spouse or dependent, Military and Veteran Services is here to help. GCSC is certified by the state-approved agency for training qualified individuals, a member of Service members Opportunity Colleges (SOC), 2017 Military Friendly® School.

Partner, My Spouse Career Advancement Accounts (MyCAA), General Education Mobile (GEM) program school, providing online courses for the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF), and an approved provider of general education classes for the Community College of the Air Force on the Tyndall Air Force Base. Applicants who expect to attend college under veteran's benefits must consult with the veteran's services office at the college to ensure proper documentation is obtained. VA students are responsible for reporting all changes of status so that changes may be reported to the Veterans Administration without delays. Contact information: 769-1551, ext. 3210 Panama City Campus, or ext. 2910 for Tyndall, or visit our website: <http://www.gulfcoast.edu/current-students/military-veterans-services/index.html> The Military & Veteran Services offices, and Resource Center are located on the 1st floor of the SUE building.

### III. REGISTRATION & FEES

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#### **FINANCIAL AID (GRANTS, WORKSTUDY, SCHOLARSHIPS, & LOANS):**

Financial aid is any grant, scholarship, part-time employment opportunity or student loan that helps you pay for your educational related expenses (e.g. tuition, fees, and books). Financial aid may be provided by federal, state, institutional and/or private agencies.

The Financial Aid office at Gulf Coast State College serves students by providing information and access to financial aid programs. We are committed to high-quality customer service and continually strive to improve the accurate processing of financial aid to students in a fair, consistent and efficient manner.

Please visit <http://www.gulfcoast.edu/tuition-aid/financial-aid>, call (850)872-3845 or email [FA@GulfCoast.edu](mailto:FA@GulfCoast.edu) for more information on the financial aid opportunities that are available at Gulf Coast State College.

#### **PAY4PRINT**

A Pay4Print system is installed in all computer labs and in the library. Your username is the first part of your GCSC e-mail address and can be found by accessing Lighthouse. Your password is your myGCSC password. Adding funds may be done online using PayPal or through one of the Pay4Print kiosks located in the library, outside the bookstore, or at each of the remote campuses. Money added by student shows as real balance on the student account. Some courses have a lab fee that may load credit to your account and show up as a free balance; any unused amount in the free balance is removed at the end of the course.

#### **REGISTRATION CHECKLIST**

- ✓ Register on-line using your Lighthouse account.
- ✓ Previous GCSC Students, take advantage of early registration each semester to students who have previously attended GCSC. If you are eligible, register for classes on-line, via Lighthouse. Go to [www.gulfcoast.edu](http://www.gulfcoast.edu) for more information.
- ✓ Review catalog's college calendar for registration schedules, fee payment, and drop/add deadlines.
- ✓ If you need to see an academic adviser, go to the Academic Advising Center located in Student Union West, room 80.
- ✓ Address changes can be submitted to Admission and Records or visit [www.gulfcoast.edu](http://www.gulfcoast.edu) and click on myGCSC Login.

#### **FEE PAYMENT & DEADLINES**

Registration is not officially complete until all fees are paid in full by the deadline in the college calendar. Students are responsible for all fees for courses not dropped by the student during the refund period. Check your bill on Lighthouse to review the balance due. Fees may be paid online via Lighthouse, in the

Business Office, Bookstore, and off-campus sites. GCSC accepts cash, personal checks, Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express. Call 872-3879

### **TUITION REFUND POLICY**

Students are responsible for all fees for courses not dropped by the student during the published drop/add period. Refunds result from 1) classes dropped by the student by the end of the published scheduled drop/add period for each term; 2) classes dropped prior to the first day of class for courses that do not begin during the scheduled drop/add period; and 3) for classes that are canceled by the college. A refund of fees paid will be given if the proper procedures are followed. Refund checks are mailed within two weeks after the end of the published drop/add period each term.

A drop is different from a withdrawal. A drop will result in the elimination of the class (es) from the transcript record. A dropped class does not affect the standards of academic progress; however it may affect the amount of financial aid awarded. A withdrawal will result in a letter grade of "W" in each class from which the student withdraws; withdrawals are included in the calculation of academic progress.

#### **Procedures for Requesting a Refund after the Drop/Add Period**

A student who discontinues enrollment after the published drop/add period may be granted a refund if proper procedures are followed. Procedures for requesting a refund are:

1. Secure a 100% drop with refund from the office of Student Affairs
2. Complete all required documentation
3. Submit request by the deadline (within six weeks of the end of the term requiring the drop)

One of the following conditions must be met and documented in order to receive a refund:

1. Written documentation of call to or enlistment in active military duty or change of military station.
2. Death of the student or member of student's immediate family (parent, spouse, child, sibling).
3. Illness of the student or of a dependent person of such severity or duration, as confirmed in writing by physician, that completion of the semester is precluded.
4. Documented administrative error by college.

Refund requests must have supporting documentation to be considered. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

### **APPLYING FOR GRADUATION**

You must apply for graduation even if you do not plan on participating in the ceremony.

#### **A.A. Degree**

Meet with the Graduation Specialist in the Office of Enrollment Services.

Complete the graduation application form and turn it in to the Graduation Specialist by the published deadline.

#### **A.S. Degree**

See advisor for a program evaluation. Your advisor will submit this electronically.

A.S. degrees cannot be completed without a program evaluation on file in the Enrollment Services Office.

Complete the graduation application form and turn it in to the Graduation Specialist by the published deadline.

#### **P.S.A.V. & Certificate Programs**

See advisor for a program evaluation. Your advisor will submit this electronically.

P.S.A.V. and Certificates cannot be completed without a program evaluation on file in the Enrollment Services Office.

Complete the graduation application form and turn it in to the Graduation Specialist by the published deadline.

#### **B.A.S & B.S.N (Bachelor) Degree**

See advisor for a program evaluation and graduation application. Your advisor will submit the program evaluation electronically.

B.A.S and B.S.N degrees cannot be completed without a program evaluation on file in the Enrollment Services Office.

Complete the graduation application form and turn it in to the Graduation Specialist by the published deadline.

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all requirements for graduation are met during the semester in which they indicate on the graduation application. Students who do not meet the requirements for graduation during the term indicated will be required to submit a new application. Degrees are awarded at the end of the fall, spring, and summer sessions.

### **GRADUATION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

#### **Where do I get a Graduation Application?**

You may pick up a Graduation Application in the Enrollment Services Office at the main campus or you can find them online here.

<http://www.gulfcoast.edu/current-students/graduation/applying.html>

### **What are the deadlines to apply for Graduation?**

The graduation deadlines can be found here.

<http://www.gulfcoast.edu/current-students/graduation/deadline.html>

### **Is there a fee to apply for Graduation?**

No, there is no fee to apply for Graduation.

### **How do I know if my Graduation Application has been processed?**

It may take several days for the Graduation Specialist to process your Graduation Application. You can check your status by logging into Lighthouse and looking at your unofficial transcripts.

PENDING- application has been approved and waiting on the end of term

SOUGHT –application has been received and a deficiency was discovered. An email will be sent to you if you are applying for an AA Degree. If you are applying for an AS Degree, Certificate, BAS or BSN Degree, the email will be sent to your advisor.

### **How do I know if I qualify for Graduation?**

Meet with the Graduation Specialist if you are applying for your AA Degree. See your Advisor if you are applying for your AS Degree, Certificate, BAS or BSN Degree.

### **When will I receive my Diploma?**

Diplomas are printed within 2 weeks of the end of term. The Graduation Specialist will email you at the email address that you put on your Graduation Application letting you know when and where the Diplomas will be available for pick up.

### **When is the Graduation Ceremony?**

We have one Graduation Ceremony each year at the end of the Spring Semester. Fall Graduates usually participate in the Ceremony in the spring following their Graduation. Summer Graduates usually participate in the Ceremony in the spring before their actual graduation. Please note that summer graduates who wish to participate in the Spring Ceremony must apply by the spring deadline. Participating in graduation does not mean that you have met all of your graduation requirements.

**Do I still need to apply for graduation if I am not participating in the ceremony?**

Yes, we must have a Graduation Application from you in order for you to graduate.

**If I have a hold on my account, can I still graduate?**

No, all financial obligations must be met before you can graduate.

**Can I graduate with a grade of "I"?**

No, you cannot have an incomplete grade. Please speak with your professor regarding any incomplete grades.

If you have questions, please contact:

Graduation Specialist

5230 West US Hwy 98

Panama City, FL 32401

T 850 769-1551 ext. 3110

[atrussell@gulfcost.edu](mailto:atrussell@gulfcost.edu)

## IV. IMPORTANT COLLEGE POLICIES

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### **ACADEMIC INFORMATION:**

#### **CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Regular class attendance and participation are significant factors that help to promote success in college. Students are expected to attend all class meetings of all courses for which they are registered.

You are expected to know the instructor's specific attendance policy, as stated in the syllabus for each course. In the event of absence, you should contact your instructor as soon as possible to indicate the reason and to inquire whether make-up work is possible. (Make-up work is offered solely at the discretion of your professor.)

If your absences in a class become excessive, as stated in the course syllabus, your professor may contact you, indicating that further absence may result in your withdrawal from the course. (See entry on Withdrawal in this catalog section.) Your professor can withdraw you from a course for excessive absences without your permission.

Instructors will monitor attendance at the beginning of each semester. If you are not in attendance during this period, you may be withdrawn from the course. You will be financially responsible for the course and a "W" will appear on your transcript. Withdrawal from a course may also have implications for financial aid.

#### **SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS**

In compliance with Florida Statue 119.071 (5), Gulf Coast State College (GCSC) issues this notification regarding the purpose of the collection and use of your Social Security Number (SSN). GCSC collects your Social Security Number for use in performance of the College's duties and responsibilities. To protect your identity, GCSC will secure your Social Security Number from unauthorized access. GCSC will never release your Social Security Number to unauthorized parties, and each student/employee at GCSC will be issued a unique student/employee identification number. Your unique ID number is used for all associated employment and educational purposes at GCSC including registration, access of your online records, etc. You are not required to disclose your Social Security Number in accordance with Public Law 930-579. However, the Social Security Number is required of all students seeking federal financial aid and must be provided in order to obtain the IRS deduction for college attendance. In addition, the Social Security Number is required for class or lab injuries when filing a Hartford Life & Accident Insurance Company Notice of Claim. The GCSC Student Identification Number is to be used for all transactions at the College. For more information, see the GCSC general catalog.

#### **CHANGE OF MAJOR POLICY**

Students may change their major for a current term through the initial drop/add deadline for the term. Any change of major initiated after the drop/add deadline will be processed and applied to the subsequent term.

### **COURSE REPEAT POLICY**

College credit courses and preparatory courses may only be attempted three times. On the third attempt, a 100% of the full cost of instruction (out of state tuition rate) will be charged. Students with major extenuating circumstances or financial hardships to pay the additional fees, may submit an appeal stating the circumstances to the Advising Center, or Counseling Center. For information about this policy, contact your advisor. Third attempts may effect financial aid eligibility, for more information contact the financial aid office.

### **GRADING POLICY**

Posting of mid-term grades is not mandatory but each instructor shall notify students of their current standing at midterm. Final grades are available the week after each term. Letter grades are assigned for all credit courses based on a ten point scale. A grade of "F" will be assigned to any student who discontinues class attendance or withdraws after the week following midterms if the student is failing class work. A grade of "I" is assigned to a student who fails to complete class work on schedule, and will be assigned at the discretion of the instructor. An incomplete grade will be changed to an "F" if the incomplete work is not completed within 30 calendar days from the end of the term. A change from credit to audit (no credit) is only permitted up to the drop/add deadline. The cost is the same for an audit as for a credit course.

### **HONORS PROGRAM**

The Gulf Coast Honors Program provides exceptional students a 16-hour core of general education courses designed to fit every A.A. program the college offers. Honors courses differ from traditional courses in instructional methods, class size, research opportunities, and student-professor interactions. Each course carries an "honors" designation on college transcripts. To graduate from the program, students must complete their A.A. and the Honors Program curriculum with an overall 3.5 GPA or higher. Program graduates will receive special recognition at graduation, the Honors Graduate seal on their diploma, and a permanent notation on their transcript. High school graduates having a 3.5 GPA and college students who have completed 15 hours of academic courses with a cumulative 3.5 GPA are eligible to apply to the program. Students who do not abide by the Honors Program code of conduct may be removed from the program regardless of GPA.

### **ACADEMIC STANDING**

To maintain satisfactory academic progress at Gulf Coast, a student must achieve a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0. This is considered Good Academic Standing.

**Academic Warning:** Students whose TERM GPA is below 2.0 will be placed on Academic Warning. To be removed from Academic Warning at the end of the following term, the student must achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0. Academic Warning is the college's notification that the student should seek assistance from the Advising Center or Counseling Center to assist in developing an education plan.



**Academic Probation:** Students whose CUMULATIVE GPA is calculated as described below will be placed on Academic Probation.

- 1-14 attempted credit hours and an earned GPA of 1.49 or lower
- 15-29 attempted credit hours and an earned GPA of 1.74 or lower
- 30 or more attempted credit hours and an earned GPA of 1.99 or lower

To be removed from Academic Probation, a student must achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0.

**Academic Suspension:** Students who have been placed on Academic Probation and have not earned a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 during their probation term, will be placed on Academic Suspension for the following term (Fall, Spring, Summer).

**Fall Term:** Students placed on Academic Suspension at the end of the fall term will be allowed to register for the proceeding semester. However, students on this designation will be allowed to register for a maximum of six credit hours.

**Spring Term:** Students placed on Academic Suspension at the end of the spring term will not be allowed to register for the upcoming terms. Students have the right to appeal an academic suspension by participating in an Academic Suspension Appeals Hearing.

**Summer Term:** Students placed on Academic Suspension at the end of the summer term will be allowed to register for the proceeding semester. However, students on this designation will be allowed to register for a maximum of six credit hours.

Students have the right to appeal an academic suspension decision. In order to appeal the academic suspension decision the student must complete and submit the Academic Suspension Appeal Request for hearing form and participate in the Academic suspension Appeal Hearing.

In order for a student to return to Good Academic Standing, the student must achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.0.

#### **APPEALS COMMITTEE (NON-ACADEMIC)**

The Appeals Committee reviews non-academic issues; this includes but is not limited to requests for substitutions of graduation requirements for students with disabilities, and appeals of residency status and admissions denials.

## **RECORDING STUDENT WRITTEN COMPLAINTS**

### **Purpose:**

Written complaints from the constituents we serve, particularly when considered in the aggregate, help the college identify systemic problems and opportunities for improvement. This procedure outlines the steps Gulf Coast State College will follow to analyze written complaints submitted by students or members of the community.

### **Procedure:**

Student written complaints will be recorded on the appropriate forms. However, any written complaint, whether submitted as an email or in some other written form, will be accepted and acted upon as long as it contains the student's name, contact information and a general description of the problem. College administrators after a thorough review will forward all written complaints, along with resolutions/responses, to the Vice President of Student Affairs via the Internet/web-based form and will maintain a copy of all complaints received within their respective departments, divisions or units.

Annually (June 30), the Vice President of Student Affairs will conduct a thorough review to determine whether:

- Complaints are being fairly and properly addressed;
- Specific problems are occurring repeatedly and/or at multiple campuses and locations;
- Changes or adjustments can be made to eliminate specific problems;
- Repeated complaints indicate the need for review of a program or area.

The Vice President of Student Affairs will provide a report to the Vice President of Academic Affairs annually that summarizes student complaints and recommends corrective action where needed. If the vice presidents concur with the recommended corrective action, the recommendation(s) will be forwarded to the appropriate administrator(s) for implementation.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

1. Honest participation in academic endeavors fosters an environment in which optimal learning can take place and is consistent with the college's mission. Academic misconduct is destructive to the spirit of an educational environment and therefore will not be tolerated.

The following definitions will apply:

- a. "Cheating" includes but is not limited to use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests or examinations; dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems,

or carrying out other assignments; the acquisition without permission of tests or other academic materials belonging to a member of the College's faculty.

- b. "Plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.
  - c. The term "academic misconduct" includes any or all forms of cheating and plagiarism. In addition, academic misconduct may include the following:
    - Destroying, damaging or stealing another person's work or work materials including, but not limited to, lab experiments, computer programs/files, term papers, projects or copy of an examination.
    - Theft, damage or misuse of library resources; removing uncharged material from the library; defacing or damaging library materials; intentionally displacing or hoarding library materials within the library for one's unauthorized private use or any other abuse of reserved materials.
    - Theft, damage or misuse of computer resources including, but not limited to, computer accounts codes, passwords or facilities; damaging computer equipment or interfering with the operation of any computer system in the college.
2. Individual instructors or programs may provide students with additional academic integrity policy statements at the start of a semester.
  3. Sanctions for incidences of academic misconduct, depending on the severity of the incidence and/or its repetition, may range from receiving an F grade (or zero) for the test, assignment, or activity, to failure of the course, to suspension or dismissal from the program or the college.
  4. An instructor who believes that an incidence of academic misconduct has occurred will discuss it immediately with the student. If, in the judgment of the instructor, the student has committed an act of academic misconduct, or if the student admits that there has been misconduct, the instructor will assess the appropriate penalty.

5. Instances of admitted or proven academic misconduct should be reported in writing to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The purpose of this reporting is to track individuals who have repeated incidences. The Vice President of Academic Affairs reserves the right to pursue disciplinary action against a student if deemed necessary
6. Students who think they have been treated unfairly may invoke the Student Academic Grievance Procedure.

## **STUDENT ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

### **I. Introduction**

As a public higher education institution, Gulf Coast State College subscribes to the principles articulated in the Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students:

*Academic institutions exist for the transmission of knowledge, the pursuit of truth, the development of students, and the general well-being of society. Free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the attainment of these goals. As members of the academic community, students should be encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and engage in a sustained and independent search for the truth. Institutional procedures for achieving these purposes may vary from campus to campus, but the minimal standards of academic freedoms of students outlined below are essential to any community of scholars.*

*Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The freedom to learn depends upon the appropriate opportunities and conditions in the classroom, on the campus and in the larger community. Students should exercise their freedom with responsibility.*

*The professor in the classroom and in conference should encourage free discussion, inquiry, and expression.*

*Student performance should be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards.*

*Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.*

*Students should have protection through orderly procedures against prejudiced or capricious academic evaluation. At the same time, they are responsible for maintaining standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled.*

To protect the rights and freedoms of students and faculty members consistent with these principles, and to signal the College's commitment to the mutual obligation of respect and civility fundamental to an academic community, the College establishes the following procedures to provide for the orderly, fair, and prompt resolution of perceived student academic grievances. These procedures are established to ensure due process and the equitable treatment and protection of all parties involved. No adverse action shall be taken in response to an individual who registers an academic grievance.

## **II. Overview**

The term “academic grievance” as used here shall mean a complaint by a student of Gulf Coast State College against a faculty member or other representative of the College. An academic grievance may be filed on the grounds that the student is alleged to have suffered adverse academic consequences due to the fact that (1) the rights and freedoms of the student as described in the Joint Statement have been violated, or (2) that the academic policies of the College have been violated, misinterpreted, or inequitably applied.

Academic grievances may not be used to challenge college policies or procedures of general applicability. The procedures set forth below may be used only by a grievant who is enrolled as a GCSC student at the time of the grieved incident. The person initiating the grievance must be the alleged victim of unfair treatment; a grievance cannot be filed on behalf of another person.

When the student believes there are grounds for an academic grievance, these procedures shall be followed by all parties involved. The failure of any college personnel at any level to communicate a decision to a student grievant within the stated time limits shall permit the student to proceed to the next step in the process. Conversely, the failure of the student to appeal the grievance to the next step within the established time limits shall constitute a withdrawal of the grievance and shall bar further action.

In keeping with the intent and spirit of these statements, it is incumbent upon all parties involved to show respect, restraint, and responsibility in their efforts to resolve grievances and to participate in good faith during all meetings and conferences. In consideration for all parties involved, efforts should be made to resolve grievances and communicate decisions as expeditiously as possible.

This procedure is in no way intended to supplant or duplicate other grievance procedures available either to the student or the College representative(s) named in the grievance, or to prevent such individuals from pursuing other remedies as are provided by law. In instances where a student’s legal protections or other avenues for seeking remedies supersede those of the college, these initial informal procedures may be bypassed.

## **III. Initial Informal Procedures**

The student shall initiate the informal procedures within ten college working days after the student first perceives the alleged violation on which the grievance is based. (For the purposes of this policy, “college working days” are defined as weekdays during which regular credit classes are scheduled, as per the college calendar. For reasonable cause, the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) may extend this time requirement.)

At any point during the informal procedures, either of the principals may request the assistance of the Vice President of Student Affairs.

The informal procedures outlined as follows must be initiated prior to a formal grievance being filed:

- A. Whenever possible, the student shall meet with the faculty member whose actions are the object of the complaint to discuss the issue and attempt to resolve it satisfactorily.
- B. If the complaint has not been resolved in conference with the faculty member, or if the student cannot meet with the faculty member, the student will discuss the complaint with the faculty member's immediate supervisor / division chair, who will attempt to help resolve the complaint.
- C. If the student does not feel the problem has been resolved within a reasonable time after the conference with the division chair, the student may then initiate the formal academic grievance procedure.

## **FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

### **A. Statement of Grievance:**

Within twenty college working days after the student first perceives the alleged violation on which the grievance is based, the student will file a written statement of grievance in the Office of Academic Affairs. (For reasonable cause, the VPAA may extend this time requirement.)

The written grievance statement submitted by the student should include the following:

- A description of the action(s) which led to the grievance including the name of the instructor(s) or individuals involved, the course title and number if involving a classroom, and the time and place of the alleged grievance.
- A statement of how the decision or action is unfair and/or harmful to the grievant and a list of any policies or laws that have been violated, if known.
- A description of any written documents related to the grievance.
- A statement establishing that a good faith attempt at resolution through informal procedures has been made.
- A statement of action or remedy requested by the student to resolve the grievance.
- The grievance should be dated and signed by the student, and include current contact information including local telephone number, mailing address and email address.

The academic status of the student, pending the outcome of the grievance, shall be determined by the VPAA or his/her designee.

### **B. Notifications:**

Within five college working days of receipt of the statement of grievance by the Office of Academic Affairs, the VPAA will send written notification to the student who has initiated the process acknowledging receipt of the formal grievance. At the same time, the VPAA will also send written notification to the faculty member(s) named in the grievance indicating that a formal grievance process has been initiated, and provide a copy of the formal grievance statement. (To protect the rights and

privacy of other individuals who may be identified by the student complainant, the VPAA will retain the right to expunge the names of those individuals from the complaint.) Also within five college working days of receipt of the written grievance, the VPAA will inform the Academic Grievance Committee about the grievance and provide a copy of the statement to the committee chair.

### **C. Grievance Committee composition:**

The Academic Grievance Committee shall ordinarily be composed as follows:

- one full-time teaching faculty member to serve as committee chairperson, who has the responsibility of reporting the recommendation of the committee in writing to the VPAA.
- one full-time teaching faculty member from the academic division of the faculty member named in the grievance; if one is not available, a full-time teaching faculty member from a related discipline may be used.
- one full-time faculty member from a different academic division
- one full-time staff member from Student Support
- two student members

The VPAA (or designee) shall arrange for the selection of a meeting date. The student and the named faculty member (the principals) have the right to review the membership of the Committee before the hearing begins and to request the replacement of any one member of the Committee. Any additional request for the replacement of any other member of the Committee requires that either principal submit the reasons in writing to the VPAA. In the event that a member of the Committee perceives a conflict of interest in connection with a particular grievance, that individual may recuse himself or herself, and a substitute will be found by the VPAA.

The Committee will have twenty college working days from the date of receipt of the original written grievance to complete its investigation and deliberations. The final recommendation of the Committee is to be presented in writing to the VPAA within two college working days after the completion of its deliberations.

### **D. Grievance Hearing:**

The Academic Grievance Committee shall ordinarily conduct a hearing for the purpose of rendering a decision about the grievance. To this end, written and oral statements may be initiated and/or solicited from the principals in the grievance, and/or from other observers who can provide pertinent information about the matter. Both principals must be present for these proceedings. Both principals have the right to the presence of an advocate of their choice at the hearing. The Director of Student Services will assist any student who wishes to secure an advocate for this purpose. The advocates will not be attorneys or act in the capacity of attorneys. The principals may consult freely with their advocates, but their advocates will not be permitted to speak during these proceedings or to participate

directly in any other way unless invited to do so by the Chair of the Committee. Both principals and their advocates have the right to review all written documents pertaining to the grievance. Principals will be accorded equal time for statements and rebuttals.

A transcript of all testimony at the hearing in the form of a tape recording is required and will be available to the student and faculty member upon written request to the VPAA.

Both principals may request that the testimony of witnesses be heard. Requests for such witnesses must be made in writing in advance of any hearing scheduled by the Academic Grievance Committee and must be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs no later than five college working days following the date of written notification to the student and faculty member acknowledging the initiation of a formal grievance procedure. Requests for witnesses must include the complete name of all witnesses, a description of the relationship of the witness to the individual making the request, and a summary of the expected testimony each witness will provide. The Academic Grievance Committee will retain the right to limit the number of witnesses.

In the event that either a witness or the faculty member / college representative who is the subject of the grievance does not appear at the meeting(s) called by the Academic Grievance Committee, or will not provide information or documents as requested, the recommendation of the Committee will be made on the basis of the information available to them.

When voting on an Academic Grievance, only committee members may be present. All members of the Academic Grievance Committee will participate in the vote. A simple majority is all that is required for the committee's recommendation to be forwarded to the VPAA.

The Academic Grievance Committee may decide to accept the arguments of the grievance, in which case they will recommend in writing to the VPAA appropriate action to be taken concerning the grievance. The Committee may also decide to not accept the arguments of the grievance, which they will so recommend in writing to the VPAA.

As noted above, the Academic Grievance Committee will have completed its work within twenty college working days of the receipt of the original written grievance. (For reasonable cause, the VPAA may extend this time requirement for as many as ten additional college working days.) The Chairperson of the Academic Grievance Committee will submit to the VPAA a written recommendation concerning the appropriate disposition of the grievance, as well as all supporting materials.

#### **E. Recommendations and Decision:**

The VPAA will review the recommendation of the Committee. If the VPAA finds the recommendation and the proceedings complete, reasonable, and just, the VPAA will declare the Committee's recommendation binding upon both principals. If there is some cause to question the recommendation or the proceedings of the Committee, the VPAA will send his or her statements of concern, in writing, back to the Committee for further deliberation and resolution. The Committee will promptly submit its response in writing to the VPAA, who will make the final decision regarding the academic grievance.

The final decision and supporting rationale shall be communicated in writing by the VPAA within five working days of the committee's recommendation (which may be extended for due cause) to the



principals, the appropriate division chair, and the chairperson of the committee. This written decision constitutes the final step in the resolution of the grievance within the institution.

After receiving the final decision, either principal shall have the right to file a statement with the VPAA to be included in the record of the proceedings.

#### **AIDS POLICY**

It is the policy of Gulf Coast State College to balance the rights of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) victims with regard to education and employment against the rights of the students and college employees to an environment in which they are protected from contracting the disease. The college will be flexible in its response to incidents of the disease on campus, evaluating each occurrence in light of its general policy and with the latest information available. A college committee consisting of appropriate representatives will be responsible for acting upon and administering the college policy on AIDS in specific cases. An HIV infected student or college employee will have the same rights and privileges as others. The committee meets on "as needed" basis to consider individual occurrences of the disease recommending appropriate action.

#### **ANIMALS ON CAMPUS POLICY**

The college acknowledges the right of students, staff, and visitors to a safe and healthy environment while on the campus and at college sponsored functions. In the interest of maintaining such an environment, animals are not permitted on college property or at college sponsored functions. Exception: Use of Service Animals: Dogs certified to assist persons with disabilities are exempt from the college's animal prohibition. The college maintains a list of service dog owner responsibilities related to grooming, sanitation, and control of the animal (Section II, pg. 9-10). When use of a certified service animal imposes a documented danger or health hazard to others, the service animal will not be used and college's equity coordinator and/or coordinator of disability support services will mediate. Call 872-3834

#### **CHILDREN ON CAMPUS POLICY**

Unaccompanied children are not allowed on college property unless the child is enrolled in a course or program at the college. In accordance with this, students are not allowed to bring children into the classroom. A student who brings a child to a class meeting will be asked to leave the class and an absence will be recorded. Campus personnel will immediately contact the appropriate local authorities for any unaccompanied children on campus.

#### **DRUG-FREE CAMPUS POLICY**

In compliance with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989, GCSC prohibits the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by all students and employees. The Act enforces sanctions, including those applicable under local, state, and federal law, for the suspension, expulsion, termination of employment, and referral for prosecution, which may result in arrest, appropriate fines, and imprisonment.

### **SMOKE-FREE CAMPUS POLICY**

The use, distribution, or sale of tobacco, including any smoking device, or carrying of any lighted smoking instrument, or electronic smoking-simulated instrument, in GCSC buildings or on GCSC premises is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to all GCSC sidewalks, parking lots, landscaped areas, recreational areas and buildings on any GCSC property and in GCSC owned, rented, or leased vehicles, and at events on GCSC premises.

The inhaling, exhaling, burning, or carrying of any lighted smoking material, including cigarettes, cigars, pipes, or electronic cigarettes is prohibited on college property. The use of other tobacco products, such as smokeless or chewing tobacco, is also prohibited on college property.

Smoking materials must be extinguished prior to entering upon any GCSC property without exception. All tobacco products in use must be disposed of appropriately prior to entering upon any GCSC property, which includes exiting a vehicle. Improper disposal includes:

1. Spitting smokeless tobacco product;
2. Littering (i.e. discarded cigarette butts, throwing or disposing of cigarette butts out of windows, leaving spit container);
3. Anything that creates a fire hazard.

The Trolley Stop Area is considered campus easement with right of way for Bay Trolley Riders and the tobacco free/smoke free policy will not be enforced at Trolley Stop.

### **MANDATORY DRUG SCREENING/TESTING AND DRUG EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR STUDENT ATHLETES:**

All student athletes will be required to attend annual education sessions involving the promotion of healthy lifestyle choices. Student athletes will be required to undergo drug screening/testing by a state certified facility. Use of illegal drugs may result in the loss of the student's athletic scholarship and/or participation in the athletic program. Refer to the GCSC Manual of Policy 7.038 or the Athlete Handbook.

### **EMERGENCY ACCIDENT PROCEDURE**

Students involved in or witnessing an accident on campus should inform the nearest college employee, who will in turn complete an accident/Incident Report and forward to Human Resources. If medical attention is required, an ambulance will be called. The college assumes no liability for medical or ambulance expenses. Human Resources will forward Accident/Incident Report to the Risk Management Coordinator for processing.

### **EMERGENCY STEPS TO FOLLOW:**

1. Have someone stay with the person in distress.

2. Call 911 if needed. If call is made from a GCSC phone the operator will be automatically notified. If 911 is called from a personal phone, contact the operator.
3. Provide your name, location and the name of person in distress to the operator.
4. College operator will direct an ambulance & college officials to the location of the person in distress.

#### **INSURANCE**

The college has no accident or medical insurance available for students. If a student is not covered under a personal or family policy, the college recommends that students purchase a policy from the agent of their choice.

#### **REQUEST FOR STUDENT TRAVEL**

Students traveling in a college vehicle or representing the college for official business must complete a GCSC Student Travel Form and Absence from Class Form when necessary. The employee traveling with the student must submit all paperwork at least two weeks prior to departure with pre-approval signatures from the sponsor, Coordinator of Student Leadership, and Vice President Student Affairs. It should be understood that all students attending the activity must abide by the Student Code of Conduct during the entire travel schedule. Students under 18 enrolled at GCSC must obtain parental consent before departure on a student travel assignment. Instructional fieldtrips should be approved through the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Any questions about travel or required paperwork, call 872-3864.

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

Gulf Coast State College has established regulations governing student conduct that are considered necessary to preserve and maintain an environment conducive to learning, to ensure the safety and welfare of members of the College community, to encourage students in the development and practice of good citizenship and self-discipline, and to protect property and equipment of the College. The Student Code of Conduct is published in the Student Handbook. Each student, by registration, assumes the responsibility to become familiar with and to abide by College regulations and acceptable standards of conduct. Students who fail to observe college regulations or to maintain acceptable standards of personal conduct on the campus or at College sponsored functions or facilities are subject to disciplinary action.

### **I: STUDENT CODE AUTHORITY**

- A.** Gulf Coast State College has developed procedures for the administration of the student conduct system and procedural rules for the conduct of Student disciplinary Hearings. The Vice President of Student Affairs shall have original jurisdiction over all cases involving an alleged violation of the Student Code of Conduct established by the district Board of Trustees.
- B.** Decisions made by the Vice President of Student Affairs shall be final, pending the appeal process set forth in Section III, paragraph five.

### **II: PROSCRIBED CONDUCT**

#### **A. Jurisdiction of the College Student Code of Conduct**

The College Student Code of Conduct is in effect on College premises, on properties owned by Gulf Coast State College and at functions sponsored by or participated in by the College regardless of the locations.

If a student is formally charged with a felony, or with a delinquent act which would be a felony if committed by an adult, for an incident which allegedly occurred on property other than College premises, or a function sponsored by or participated in by the College regardless of location, and if that incident is determined to have an adverse impact on the educational program, discipline, or safety and welfare of the College, then the College has the right to suspend the student pending final adjudication. If the student is adjudicated guilty, then the student may be recommended for expulsion through the normal expulsion procedure. With this exception, the College will not ordinarily impose sanctions on a student who is subject to criminal prosecution for off campus activity.

The Student Code of Conduct is published in the Student Handbook.

Each student shall be responsible for his/her conduct from the time of application for admission through the actual awarding of a degree, even though conduct may occur before classes begin

or after classes end for the term, as well as during the academic year and during periods between terms of actual enrollment. The student Code of Conduct shall apply to a student's conduct even if the student withdraws from school while a disciplinary matter is pending.

**B. Infraction/Misconduct**

Any student found to have committed or to have attempted to commit the following misconduct is subject to the disciplinary sanctions outlined in Section IV:

**Alcohol/Drugs:** The student shall not knowingly possess, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, any other controlled or counterfeit substance defined in FS 893.03, or substitute for such, alcoholic beverage, inhalant or intoxicant, on the campus either before, during or after school hours or off the college grounds at a College activity, function or event. Also, a student shall not possess, have under his/her control, sell or deliver any device, or contrivance, instrument or paraphernalia containing the substance or substances described in this paragraph or any residue of such substance or devices intended for use or used in injecting, inhaling/inhalant/huffing, smoking, administering, or using any of the foregoing prescribed drugs, narcotics, or stimulants. Use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician for a specific student shall not be considered a violation of this rule.

**Arson:** Intentionally setting or attempting to set a fire.

**Bomb Threat:** Any communication which has the effect of threatening an explosion to do malicious, destructive or bodily harm to College property, at a College function or extra-curricular/co-curricular activity or to the person(s) in or on that property or attending that event.

**Bullying:** An aggressive behavior that is intended to cause distress or harm, exists in a relationship in which there is an imbalance of power or strength, and is repeated over time. Examples include but are not limited to: hitting, teasing, obscene gestures, rumors, getting someone else to bully, cyber-bullying.

**Burglary:** Entering or remaining in a structure or on a conveyance with the intent to commit an offense therein unless the premises are at the time open to the public or the person is licensed or invited to enter. See F.S. 810.02.

**Computer Fraud:** Accessing or breaking into documents that are unauthorized.

**Cyber Attack:** Introducing unwarranted programs or tools into network server.

**Disorderly or Disruptive Conduct:** Creation of disorder at any College property, College sponsored or related event, or on any College sponsored transportation.

**Extortion:** The willful or malicious threat of harm, injury or violence to a person, property or reputation of another with the intent to obtain money, information, services or items of material worth.

**False Fire Alarm:** The willful and/or malicious activation of a fire alarm system or the willful and/or malicious reporting of a false fire.

**False and Misleading Information:** Providing false, misleading or invalid statements, making false accusations, and/or withholding valid information.

**Felony Transfer:** Suspension proceedings against any enrolled student who is formally charged with a felony or with a delinquent act which would be a felony if committed by an adult, for an incident which allegedly occurred on property other than College property if that incident is shown to have an adverse impact on the education program, discipline or welfare of the College or College Community.

**Fighting:** Physical contact between two or more individuals where the participation is not mutual or equal, or a weapon is used, or in which injury that requires immediate first aid or subsequent medical attention occurs.

**Force or Violence against College Employee:** Use of force or violence upon or against any employee of the College.

**Gross Insubordination or Open Defiance:** Willful refusal to submit to or comply with authority; exhibiting contempt or open resistance to a direct order.

**Harassment:** Any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal, or physical conduct directed against a student.

**Hazing:** Any action or situation that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for purposes including, but not limited to, initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in a group or organization.

**Inciting, Leading or participating in a Major Student Disorder:** The willful act of inciting, leading or participating in a disruption or disturbance which interferes with the educational process or which can result in damage or destruction to public or private property, or cause personal injury to participants and others.

**Intentional Damage of College Property/Personal Property:** Destruction or defacing of College/personal property.

**Misrepresentation of College-Sanctioned Practices:** Any use of the College's name or likeness without written permission is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, use of the Gulf Coast State College name to create websites, social media pages, and secret organizations.

**Other More Serious Miscellaneous Conduct:** Conduct which is not listed as a specific infraction but which results in more serious injury, damage to property, or other serious harm.

**Sexual Battery:** Any sexual act directed against a person, forcibly or against the person's will, or not forcibly against the person's will where the victim is not capable of giving consent because of his or her youth or because of temporary or permanent incapacity.

**Sexual Harassment:** Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other inappropriate oral, written or physical contact of sexual nature when such conduct substantially interferes with a student's academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive College environment, Sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to the following: verbal harassment or abuse, pressure for sexual activity, repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications, unwelcome or inappropriate touching, suggestive or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats.

**Sexual Offenses:** Exposing or exhibiting one's private areas in public in a vulgar or indecent manner. Intentionally touching in a lewd or lascivious manner in clothed private areas of another.

**Theft:** The taking of property of another without permission of the owner.

**Trespassing:** Entering upon or remaining on any property, a structure or conveyance without being authorized, licensed or invited to do so and being warned by the owner or owner's agent or by notice pursuant to Florida Statute §810.09, or, in the case of entry upon or remaining on College grounds or buildings, not having legitimate business on the campus or authorization, license or invitation to be there or being under suspension, alternative placement or expulsion.

**Unauthorized Use of Other Person's Name or Signature:** Using the name, identifying number or symbol or signature of another person of any purpose without that person's authorization or permission with the intention of deceiving a College employee or under circumstances which could be reasonably calculated to deceive the employee.

**Vandalism:** Intentional damage to or destruction of College property causing substantial damage.

**Victimization/Extortion or Threats/Intimidation of a More Serious Nature:** A person who willfully, maliciously, and repeatedly follows and/or harasses with intent to place that person in reasonable fear of death or bodily injury.

**Weapons:** Except as allowed by law, possession of any weapon defined by Sections 790.001(4),(6),(13), Florida Statutes, is not permitted on any College campus or at any College function, or in any College sponsored transportation.

**Disobedience to Officials:** Failure to comply with directions of any college official (whether the request is by mail, email, telephone, or in person) when that official has identified himself or herself and is acting within the course and scope of their duties. Cooperation includes, but is not limited to, responding to requests for conferences on matters pertaining to the student at the college and/or presentation of college identification.

**Fee Payment:** Failure to pay fees, deferred fees, traffic penalties, library penalties, student loans, and other financial obligations to the college will be handled as an administrative procedure with the appropriate department initiating a hold on the student's records through the office of enrollment services. Students who present bad checks (insufficient fund checks) will be referred for record holds and/or other disciplinary action.

**Trespass:** Unauthorized entry onto, or into, the property of others or the college. Property of others includes buildings, rooms, computers, computer accounts, and computer systems.



### **III: CHARGES OF STUDENT MISCONDUCT – DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Any member of the College community may report charges of student conduct violation to the Vice President of Student Affairs. The charge of misconduct by a member of the College community should be submitted in writing and should specify the misconduct and describe circumstances, evidence, witnesses, and any other information relevant to the acts of misconduct. The report should be submitted within ten (10) college working days after the alleged violation occurred. (For the purposes of this policy, “college working days” are defined as weekdays during which regular credit classes are scheduled, as per the college calendar. For reasonable cause, the Vice President of Student Affairs may extend this time requirement.)

At any point during the procedures, any of the principals may request the assistance of a GCSC employed counselor.

Within five (5) college working days of receipt of the alleged violation, the Vice President of Student Affairs will schedule an initial conference with the Accused Student(s) where the Accused Student(s) will be informed of the allegation of misconduct and the range of disciplinary action against the student(s) that may be imposed. The student(s) will be interviewed and given an opportunity to refute the allegations, make any statements, or provide any evidence or mitigating circumstances.

The Vice President of Student Affairs will investigate the allegations and within five (5) college working days of the initial conference, render a decision and impose any reasonable disciplinary action necessary against the student. Upon dispensation of disciplinary action, the disciplinary proceedings will terminate, subject to any terms of the agreement.

The Accused Student may appeal the Vice President of Student Affairs’ disciplinary decision and request a Disciplinary Hearing. This request for a Disciplinary Hearing must be made in writing and delivered to the Vice President of Student Affairs within five (5) college working days after the disciplinary decision is rendered. The student may continue to attend classes and College activities during at the discretion of the Vice President of Student Affairs during the appeal process.

#### **Discipline Committee**

The Discipline Committee is a standing committee composed of thirteen members:

(7) Faculty members and administrators appointed by the GCSC President.

(4) Students appointed by SGA

Vice President of Student Affairs (Ex- officio)

Vice President of Academic Affairs (Chair)

If regular members cannot be present for a hearing, alternates may replace them. The Committee Chair will preside at the Disciplinary Hearing and establish organizational or operational procedures necessary to conduct the hearing. The Chair may rule on all questions before the Discipline Committee and may limit repetitious testimony and exclude immaterial or irrelevant evidence. Strict rules of evidence shall not be applied.

### **Discipline Committee Responsibilities**

The Accused Student has a right to a fair and impartial hearing before the Discipline Committee on any charge of violating rules of student conduct. Failure of the Accused Student to cooperate with hearing procedures shall not prevent the Discipline Committee from making its findings of fact, conclusions, and recommendations. Failure by the Accused Student to cooperate may be taken into consideration by the Discipline Committee in recommending appropriate disciplinary action. The Accused Student shall be entitled to hear and examine evidence against him/her and be informed of the identity of its source and shall be entitled to present evidence or witnesses in his/her own behalf. Only those matters presented at the hearing in the presence of the accused will be considered by the Discipline Committee in determining whether there is sufficient evidence to believe the Accused Student violated the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Disciplinary Hearing Process**

The Accused Student(s) shall be notified in writing, by registered mail, of the time and date of the Disciplinary Hearing. The letter will set the hearing date and time, not less than five (5) or more than 15 college working days after the Accused Student(s) has been notified. Maximum time limits for scheduling hearings may be extended at the discretion of the Vice President of Student Affairs. All charges of misconduct will be presented to the Accused Student in writing.

The Accused Student will be informed that he/she may submit evidence, produce witnesses, testify, view all evidence, and hear the testimony of adverse witnesses. The Complainant and the Accused Student have the right to be assisted by any advisor they choose, at their own expense. The advisor may be an attorney. The College may also be assisted by an advisor at its discretion. The Complainant and/or the Accused Student are responsible for presenting his or her own case and, therefore, advisors are not permitted to speak or participate directly in any hearing before the Discipline Committee.

The Complainant, the Accused Student, and the Discipline Committee shall have opportunity of presenting witnesses, subject to cross-examination by the Discipline Committee. Pertinent records, exhibits, and written statements may be accepted as evidence for consideration at the discretion of the Chair. In hearings involving more than one Accused Student, the Chair may permit hearings concerning each Accused Student to be conducted separately. All witnesses and those to give testimony will remain outside the hearing room until called. A recording will be made of the Disciplinary Hearing. Records will be property of the College, but copies may be provided at the Accused Student's expense.

## **Conduct of Hearing**

The Vice President of Student Affairs will provide any introductory information, present charges against the Accused Student, and provide documents, statements, information, and evidence gathered during the investigation of the alleged misconduct.

The Accused Student will answer the charges and provide any opening statements, provide evidence, documents, or information for consideration by Discipline Committee.

If there are witnesses against the Accused Student, they will be called one at a time. Any member of the committee may question the witness. At the conclusion of the testimony, the witness will leave the hearing room.

If there are witnesses for the Accused Student, they will be called one at a time. Any member of the committee may question the witness. At the conclusion of testimony, the witness will leave the hearing room.

The Accused Student will be invited to make a final statement. The committee may question the Accused Student at this time.

### **Witnesses may be recalled by the committee.**

At the conclusion of all testimony, the Discipline Committee will convene in private to discuss all pertinent information and make a determination based on whether it is more likely than not that the Accused Student violated a college regulation. The determination of the committee shall be made by majority vote.

The Discipline Committee's final decision and supporting rationale shall be communicated in writing by the committee chair within five (5) college working days of the Disciplinary Hearing date. This written decision constitutes the final step in the resolution of the disciplinary action.

After receiving the final decision, the student or any principal shall have the right to file a statement with the Vice President of Student Affairs to be included in the record of the proceedings.

## **IV: DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS**

The following sanctions may be imposed upon any student found to have violated College regulations:

- a. Warning – A notice in writing to the student that the student is violating or has violated College regulations.
- b. Probation – A written reprimand for violation of specified regulations. Probation is for a designated period of time and includes the probability of further disciplinary sanctions if the

student is found to be in violation of further College regulations during the probationary period. Probation may include loss of privileges during the probationary period.

- c. Restitution – Compensation for loss, damage, or injury. This may take the form of appropriate service and/or monetary or material replacement.
- d. Suspension – Separation of the student from the College for a definite period of time, after which the student is eligible to return. Conditions for readmission may be specified.
- e. Expulsion – Permanent separation of the student from the College.

#### **V: INTERPRETATION AND REVISION**

Any question of interpretation or application of the Student Code of Conduct shall be referred to the Vice President of Student Affairs for a final determination. The Student Code of Conduct shall be reviewed every three (3) years under the direction of the Vice President of Student Affairs beginning in 2014.

#### **VI: DEFINITIONS**

- a. The term “Accused Student” means any student accused of violating the Student Code of Conduct.
- b. The term “Discipline Committee” refers to a standing committee representative of College employees and students selected by the President of the College to which a disciplinary action may be appealed.
- c. The term “College” refers to Gulf Coast State College.
- d. The term “College Premises” includes all land, buildings, facilities, and other property in the possession of or owned, used, or controlled by the College.
- e. The term “College Official” includes any person employed by the College performing assigned administrative or professional responsibilities.
- f. The term “Policy” refers to the written regulations of the College as found in, but not limited to, the Student Code of Conduct, the College’s Manual of Policy, the College’s Internal Management Memorandum, College web pages, the Student Handbook, a course syllabus, the Computer Usage Policy, and the College Catalog.

## **SEARCH & SEIZURES**

College officials reserve the right to search lockers or other college property when deemed necessary to uphold the basic responsibility of the college regarding discipline, safety, and maintenance of educational atmosphere. Contraband items will be confiscated and may be used as evidence in disciplinary cases. Briefcases, handbags, backpacks, and containers may be searched in the Library, in laboratories, in the Bookstore, and other places on campus where material/equipment is not secured.

## **VULNERABLE PERSON ACT**

The administration, faculty, staff, and student of Gulf Coast State College will adhere to §39.205 and §39.201 F.S., as amended by the Florida Legislature in 2012, which requires educational institutions to report known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or cases of neglect. To ensure compliance with this mandate, all college personnel must report any known or suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect, or abandonment to the Florida Department of Children and Family Services (“DCF”) and comply with this policy.

Employees are hereby notified that under revisions to Chapter 39.201 Florida Statutes, any individual who fails to report known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect, or prevents another from making such a report, regardless of where the event occurred or the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim, is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment for a term of up to 5 years and a fine not exceeding \$5,000.00.

Employees are also advised that, pursuant to Florida Statute 39.205, a Florida college system institution, state university, or nonpublic college whose administrators are made aware of known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect which occurred on college or university property or at an official event sponsored by the college or university, or who prevents the reporting of such child abuse, neglect, or abandonment may be subject to a fine of \$1 million.

This reporting requirement exists even if the employee or administration is aware that the incident has been reported by another individual or entity to DCF.

Failure to report in compliance with this policy may result in employee discipline, up to and including termination of employment. Where the alleged perpetrator is a student, the disciplinary process shall proceed in accordance with college policies and procedures.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

All staff employed by Gulf Coast State College is responsible for the care, safety, and protection of children. This responsibility extends to the identification and timely response to concerns regarding the possible physical, psychological, and emotional abuse, neglect, or abandonment of a child.

Administrators who knowingly and willfully, upon receiving information from faculty, staff, other institution employees, or students fail to report known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect committed on school property or during a school-sponsored event or function, or who knowingly and willfully prevent another person from doing so will have violated this law and college policy.

## **DEFINITIONS**

The definitions stated hereafter are defined as currently stated in Section 30.01, Florida Statutes. Such definitions shall be amended and modified by subsequent amendments to such Florida Statutes, without further amendment to this policy.

- 1) **Child abandonment** – situation in which the parent or legal custodian of a child or, in the absence of apparent or legal custodian, the caregiver, while being able, has made no significant contribution to the child’s care and maintenance or has failed to establish or maintain a substantial and positive relationship with the child, or both.
- 2) **Caregiver** – parent, legal custodian, permanent guardian, adult household member, or other person responsible for a child’s welfare as defined in 39.01(47) F.S.
- 3) **Child or youth** – any unmarried person under the age of 18 years who has not been emancipated by order of the court.
- 4) **Child abuse** – any willful act or threatened act that results in any physical, mental, or sexual abuse, injury, or harm that causes or is likely to cause the child’s physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired. Abuse of a child includes acts or omissions. Corporal discipline of a child by a parent or legal custodian for disciplinary purposes does not in itself constitute abuse when it does not result in harm to the child.
- 5) **Child neglect** –
  - a) A caregiver’s failure or omission to provide a child with the care, supervision, and services necessary to maintain the child’s physical and mental health, including, but not limited to food, nutrition, clothing, shelter, supervision, medicine, and medical services that a prudent person would consider essential for the well-being of the child.
  - b) A caregiver’s failure to make a reasonable effort to protect a child from abuse, neglect, or exploitation by another person.
  - c) Except as otherwise provided in this section, neglect of a child may be based on repeated conduct or on a single incident or omission that results in, or could reasonably be expected to result in, serious physical or mental injury or a substantial risk of death to a child.
- 6) **College Administrator** – president, vice president, and executive director.
- 7) **Juvenile sexual offender** – defined under Sec. 30.01(7)

## **F.S. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

Any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected, must report such knowledge or suspicion to the Florida Department of Children and Family Services via the toll free, anonymous hotline at 1-800-962-2873 or TDD: 1-800-453-5145. Reports that may not require immediate investigation may be reported via the DCF webpage. Employees witnessing an incident in which an immediate threat is posed to the child should call 911. All employees who make such report should document the filing of such report by writing down the date of the report to DCF and the name of the person taking the report or their employee identification number.

In addition to the reporting obligation to DCF, all employees who know, or have reasonable cause to suspect abuse, abandonment, or neglect should immediately contact one of the following college administrators: President of the College, Vice President, Academic Affairs; Vice President, Student Affairs; Vice President, Institutional Effectiveness & Strategic Planning or one of the executive directors and advise such college administrator of the employees reporting to DCF and provide such college administrator with a copy of the written documentation of such report submitted to DCF. The college administrator shall assist the initial reporting employee with completion of a Florida College System Risk Management Consortium Incident/Accident Report.

Upon receipt of the report from the employee, the college administrator shall convene a meeting with the President of the College, General Counsel, and the Executive Director of Marketing and Communications as soon as practicable. At this meeting, the attendees shall report the incident to the DCF via conference call and shall notify the report taker of all individuals present and making the report, as well as the date and time of all other reports known to have been made.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND SEXUAL**

Non- Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Reporting Procedures: Timeliness in reporting incidents of discrimination is essential for the protection of individual rights. For this reason, such incidents should be reported as soon as possible, but within 60 days of the occurrence.

The Executive Director of Human Resources has been designated to coordinate compliance with non-discrimination requirements and handle all claims alleging discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct and serves as the college's equity officer. This includes complaints alleging any action prohibited by the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of disability by Gulf Coast State College may file complaints pursuant to the following procedure. Inquiries may be made with the Executive Director of Human Resources at 850-872-3866, 5230 West U.S. Highway 98, Panama City, FL 32401.

All reported incidents will receive a prompt and equitable investigation and complainants will be ensured due process as applicable under State and Federal guidelines. The college will inform the complainant, in writing, of the outcome of the investigation and in the event the college is found at fault in a discriminatory investigation, corrective action will be taken to prohibit such discrimination in the future.

#### **1. STUDENT AND APPLICANT FOR ADMISSIONS REPORTING PROCEDURES**

- A. Students who believe they are victims of discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct may report the facts and circumstances to a college official or the Vice President of Student Affairs, as a first report of an incident. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome, he or she may report the complaint to the Executive Director of Human Resources. A copy of the initial report will be hand-delivered to the president within 2 working days.
- B. The initial report may be made either verbally or in writing. If verbal, the college official, other than the vice president, receiving the report will make a written record of the alleged incident. If the report is written, it must be signed. The college official, other than the vice president, who receives the student's initial report, will hand deliver the complaint to the Vice President of Student Affairs, as a first report of the incident. The aim of the first report of an incident is to ensure that the alleged harassing and/or discriminatory conduct ceases and that the matter is resolved on an informal basis.
- C. If the informal investigation of the facts and circumstances fails to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the student complainant, a formal written complaint setting forth the facts and circumstances of the alleged discrimination may be filed by the student with the Executive Director of Human Resources who will conduct a further formal investigation within 30 days of receipt of the complaint.
- D. At the conclusion of the formal investigation, a written summary report, including appropriate recommendations, will be made to the president. When warranted, disciplinary action may be taken against any person who violates this policy; or other actions may be taken by the college to ensure non-discrimination in the future. The student will be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation.

#### **2. HARASSMENT REPORTING PROCEDURES**

All reported incidents will receive a prompt and equitable investigation and complainants will be ensured due process as applicable under State and Federal guidelines. The college will inform the complainant, in writing, of the outcome of the investigation and in the event the college is found at fault in discriminatory investigation, corrective action will be taken to prohibit such discrimination in the future.



### **3. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT REPORTING PROCEDURES**

#### **A. Sexual Misconduct, Verbal or Nonverbal**

- a) College employees, agents, or students who believe they are the victims of sexual misconduct should report the facts and circumstances to their immediate supervisor, an instructor, a department head, a counselor, or other college official. The college official receiving the information will deliver a written report to the Executive Director of Human Resources outlining the allegations.
- b) Any allegation of sexual misconduct by a college employee, agent, or student will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly by an appropriate college official.
- c) If an initial investigation of the facts and circumstances fails to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the complainant, a formal written complaint setting forth the facts and circumstances of the alleged sexual misconduct may be filed as soon as possible, but within 30 days, with the Executive Director of Human Resources. If a written complaint is filed, a formal investigation will be conducted.
- d) At the conclusion of the formal investigation, a written summary report, including appropriate recommendations, will be made to the president and the findings will be provided to the complainant. When warranted and approved by the president or the District Board of Trustees, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against an employee, agent, or student who violates this policy and corrective action will be taken by the college to ensure future sexual misconduct is not tolerated.
- e) All allegations brought to a formal discipline hearing will be handled in such a manner as to provide due process to the alleged perpetrator and the complainant.
- f) Disciplinary procedures as covered in the Manual of Policy Internal Management Memorandum and the Student Handbook will be followed.
- g) Proven sexual misconduct may be the basis for the permanent expulsion of the student or termination of an employee's contract, regardless of employment status.

#### **B. Sexual Battery – The appropriate local law enforcement authority shall be immediately notified of allegations of sexual battery if:**

- a) The battery is alleged to have occurred on college-owned or controlled property, including any battery that originated with an abduction from such property;
- b) The battery is alleged to have occurred at or during a college-sponsored activity, and involves any student, employee, agents, or visitor or the college as alleged victim or perpetrator;
- c) The battery is alleged to have or appears to have a connection to college facilities, employees, agents, or students, such that the incident may pose a continuing danger to the community;
- d) Any battery in which the apparent victim has specifically requested a college official to notify the local law enforcement agency.

#### **C. Intervention Referral Services**

- a) The college shall provide the apparent victim with information about local counseling and crisis assistance agencies and shall encourage the apparent victim to take advantage of the services provided by those agencies;

- b) The college shall encourage the apparent victim to obtain appropriate medical evaluation and treatment as soon as possible;
- c) The college shall encourage the apparent victim to report the incident to the local law enforcement agency for criminal investigation and prosecution and shall offer to assist the apparent victim with making contact with the local law enforcement agency;
- d) If the apparent victim is a student, the college shall assist the student with making class or campus changes, notifying the student's instructors of any special needs of the student, or assisting with the withdrawal of the student from classes, as may be appropriate under the circumstances;
- e) If the apparent victim is an employee, the college shall assist the employee with processing a leave of absence request, as appropriate;
- f) In all cases, the college shall treat the information received from the apparent victim as confidential and shall make the information available on a strict need-to-know or legally defined basis.

**4. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT INFORMATION DISSEMINATION:**

- A. The college policy on sexual misconduct will be published in appropriate college publications; i.e., Manual of Policy, Employee Handbook, Student Handbook, which are also available on the college website at [www.gulfcoast.edu](http://www.gulfcoast.edu).
- B. Comprehensive information about sexual misconduct will be present through student orientations, employee orientations, educational seminars, and awareness strategies.
- C. Regular monitoring of campus lighting, landscaping patterns and class scheduling will contribute to campus awareness of the potential for sexual misconduct.
- D. Campus security personnel will be familiarized with the college policy on sexual misconduct and will be trained to act appropriately when made aware of sexual misconduct.

**5. CAMPUS SAFETY:**

- A. The Director of Campus Safety and Security will oversee regular monitoring of campus lighting and landscaping patterns and will certify annually to the Executive Director of Human Resources that an inspection has been conducted to ensure compliance with security policies.
- B. Campus maintenance and security personnel will be familiarized with campus security policies and guidelines for maintaining a safe campus.

All information regarding the college's non-discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual misconduct policies can also be found on our website at [www.gulfcoast.edu](http://www.gulfcoast.edu).

## **STATEMENT OF STUDENT OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Gulf Coast State College holds students and community of central importance. The college provides many opportunities for learning and offers a range of programs and services to help students become well-educated, productive citizens. The college is equally dedicated to collaborating with the community to help create or improve economic well-being and to offer the space of the college for social dialog, events of art and culture, and other moments that enhance our quality of life.

In accordance with the college's mission, the institution articulates rights and responsibilities that shall form the foundation of the social contract between the student and the institution. Basic to these rights and responsibilities are the students' rights:

To be treated with respect and dignity

To be afforded due process in resolution of all conflicts with the college

To be provided counsel of a student advocate (Student Ombudsman) to assist in the resolution of such conflicts

To be afforded the protection of all rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States of America

As a member of the Gulf Coast State College community, students also are obligated to the following basic responsibilities:

To behave in a mature, responsible manner

To respect the rights, opinions and beliefs of other community members

To adhere to all established college policies and procedures

## V. STUDENT SERVICES:

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### **BOOKSTORE**

GCSC Bookstore is open to the public year round except on weekends and during holidays observed by the college. Normal hours are from 7:30 a.m. until 6:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday, and from 7:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. on Friday. Aside from course requirements such as textbooks, supplements and other course materials, the bookstore offers a wide range of study aids, academic software and school supplies to help the student learn more effectively. Students are advised to return their textbooks for a refund immediately if they drop a class or find out that their class has been cancelled. Refunds will not be granted without the original cash register receipt(s) or beyond 30 days from date of purchase. Full credit is given for books returned in mint condition if bought new or in serviceable condition if bought used. Course withdrawals do not entitle students to book refunds except in extenuating circumstances, and they may be asked to obtain prior approval from the appropriate authorities. For students wishing to sell books, the bookstore offers book buyback services at mid-term and end of the term each semester. Call the Bookstore at 872-3863.

### **CABIN CREEK FOOD SERVICES**

The Student Union-East houses the Commodore Cafe. A variety of entrees and ala carte items are available at reasonable prices in the cafeteria. 769-1551 x5876

#### Food Services Hours of Operation:

7:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. (Breakfast & Lunch, Mon - Thurs)

### **CULINARY ARTS JOHN HOLLY DINING ROOM**

As a part of the course curriculum, Culinary Management students prepare and serve meals at a student-operated, gourmet restaurant. The restaurant is located on the first floor of the Advanced Technology Center. John Holley Dining Room is located on the first floor of the Advanced Technology Center. By seating times, lunches are served Monday through Thursdays during the fall semester. Spring lunch service is served on Tuesdays and Thursdays and dinners are offered on Mondays and Wednesdays. Students are encouraged to participate. Advance reservations required! Call 769-1551 x5851

### **DENTAL CLINIC**

The GCSC Dental Clinic is a clinical training facility for students enrolled in the dental assisting/dental hygiene programs. Experienced licensed/certified faculty members supervise all clinic sessions. For a nominal fee, student services available include dental history review, soft tissue exam, radiographs, dental exam and charting, cleaning, fluoride treatments, and various types of selective restorative fillings. The clinic is located on 1st floor of the Health Science Building facing Collegiate Drive. For an appointment, call 872-3833.

## **HOUSING**

Gulf Coast State College is a non-residential campus.

## **INTERNET, E-MAIL, & COMPUTERS**

All Gulf Coast State College, computer labs are for the exclusive use of GCSC students and staff. Anyone using these facilities must be an enrolled student or a college employee. All others must request special permission from a department chair or other college administrator. Computers, data, and information processing facilities are provided for the college's academic and administrative purposes. Note that computers located in the library are available to students, staff, and community patrons. Any attempt, whether successful or not, to use or access computers, data, or information processing facilities by means other than those specifically provided and authorized by the college is specifically prohibited. Any attempt, whether successful or not, to make, acquire, or use copies of computer software in a manner which violates the college's license agreements is prohibited. Also, copying computer programs from the network to any removable media is not permitted. Computer/Internet Labs are available to students through the Library, Business Division, and Technology. The Policy for Computer Usage is displayed on all lab computers upon accessing the Internet. The policy is also available in the office of Information Technology Services.

## **MYGCSC**

Access to student web based resources is done through the myGCSC link at the top of the GCSC homepage. Use your student ID number (Axxxxxxx) to login. You will be required to register your account on the first logon. Once you have logged in you will be passed to the resource page with icons for all student web resources such as Canvas, student e-mail, Lighthouse, and others.

## **PASSWORD UNLOCK/RESET**

Passwords can be unlocked/reset through the myGCSC link on the GCSC homepage. Click on "Change password" or "User Self Service" and follow the instructions. You may also opt to receive a one-time-password through text or email depending on your account settings.

## **MOBILE APP**

The Gulf Coast State College Mobile App provides students with access to their schedule, grades, college calendar, campus maps, and a link to the library. Download the GCSC Mobile App on your mobile device. Simply search for Gulf Coast State College on the App Store (iPhone, iPad) or Play Store (Android version 4.0.3 and up) on your mobile device and download the app. Use your LIGHTHOUSE login to sign in.

## **LIBRARY**

The library provides students and employees access to library collections, resources, and services that are sufficient to support educational, research, and public service goals of all program areas. The library offers a comprehensive complement of resources and services for students, faculty, and staff at all campus locations and online, including reference, information literacy instruction, interlibrary loan, computing, and diverse study spaces.

Library staff provides one-on-one assistance through multiple platforms to help students find information. Reference and consultation services are available in person, on the phone, via email and online chat, through Blackboard Collaborate, and may be booked online. Embedded librarians interact with students during office hours within the course management system. Research consultations are

available upon request to assist with research methods, database strategies, and evaluating levels of evidence including textbooks, case studies, and literature reviews.

Resources are organized for effective discovery and access. Booking services and access to online resources are available through the library's website. To broaden access, librarians have focused on acquiring eBooks when available; we now have more eBooks than print books in our collection. Students can search for books, articles and other content in 40 college and university libraries across the state using our online discovery tool. If an item isn't available at the GCSC library, students can request it from another college or university library by clicking on the "UBorrow" button.

Students access print media and visual learning aids on video and DVD, gather for group collaboration, and utilize a multimedia studio with video and sound production programs to create and edit presentations. A technology lending service with digital cameras, a GoPro, tripods, and webcams expands the students' access to multimedia tools. The front desk in the lobby is staffed for all hours that the library is open; staff provides assistance with materials from the Course Reserves room and checks out study room keys.

## **Contact Us**

Call: (850) 872-3893 or (800) 311-3685

Email: [librarian@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:librarian@gulfcoast.edu)

Text: (386) 866-2853

## **Library Hours of Operation**

7:15 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. (Monday-Thursday)

7:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Friday)

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 pm (Saturday)

\* check website for changes to regular hours

## **LOST & FOUND**

Report lost or stolen articles to the Information Desk located in Student Union East.

## **LOCKERS FOR STUDENTS**

The Office of Student Government provides combination lockers to GCSC students at no cost each semester. Book lockers are assigned on a first come, first serve basis. They are located in Student Union-East. To receive a locker combination, you must come, in-person to Student Government Office and sign a locker agreement each semester. Call 873-3598

## **MAIL & MESSAGES**

GCSC does not offer any services or facilities for delivering messages to students in or out of class. Only during an immediate medical emergency, may a student be contacted and taken out of class.

Call 769-1551 select "0" for the operator.

## **PARKING & CAMPUS SECURITY**

Campus security and parking safety are important for students, staff, and visitors to GCSC. Employees and students should keep personal safety as their first priority and take these steps if in need of assistance:

- ✓ Call the FSU Police (x3111 or 850-774-2705),
- ✓ Call “911” if a life-threatening emergency, to dial out of a building one must first dial “9” eg(9-911)
- ✓ Call the switchboard operator (0 or 769-1551).

Operating a vehicle on college properties is a privilege and it is the student’s responsibility to adhere to all published guidelines and posted traffic information. Failure to follow these rules may result in the loss of this privilege.

All parking areas are color coded accordingly: a) green curb parking is reserved for faculty and staff, b) blue curb parking is reserved for handicapped permits,) and yellow curb parking areas are designated as No Parking. Any areas not marked as previously designated are available for student and guest parking. Effective with the 2009 fall semester, all vehicles on the GCSC Panama City campus, the North Bay Center, and the Gulf/Franklin Center will be required to display a parking decal or temporary permit, as appropriate. The cost of the first decal or permit is included in the student’s fee and additional decals are available for fee-paying students at a small additional cost.

Students, faculty, staff, and visitors parking in restricted areas will receive traffic citations for violations. Fines must be paid in a timely manner in the college’s Business Office or the fines will increase in accordance with guidelines published on the college’s website. Funds generated from parking violations will be placed in a student loan fund administered by Financial Aid. To aid in the prevention of accidents and criminal activity on campus, GCSC requests students report suspicious activities to staff immediately. The Florida State University – Panama City Campus Police monitor parking areas and buildings for the safety of our students, faculty, and staff. “Campus Crime Watch Area” signs with instructions and periodic crime awareness programs help student’s protect their personal safety and possessions on campus.

CRIME STATISTICS

# Crime Statistics

Crimes Reported to Gulf Coast State College (Panama City Campus) 2013-2015

Panama City Campus				
Clery Reportable Crimes	2015	2014	2013	Total
Murder	0	0	0	0
Manslaughter	0	0	0	0
Forcible Sex Offenses	0	0	0	0
Non-Forcible Sex Offenses	0	0	0	0
Robbery	0	0	0	0
Aggravated Assault	0	0	0	0
Burglary	0	0	0	0
Arson	0	0	0	0
Motor Vehicle Theft	0	0	0	0
Domestic Violence	1	0	0	1
Dating Violence	0	0	0	0
Stalking	0	1	0	1

Select Offenses reported to Gulf Coast State College (Panama City Campus) 2013-2015

Panama City Campus				
Select Offenses	2015	2014	2013	Total
Alcohol Offenses	0	0	0	0
Drug Offenses	0	2	1	3
Illegal Weapons Offenses	0	0	0	0

**\*Note:** Crime statistics indicated here are a compilation of self-generated (FSUPC Police reports) incidents and those incidents reported by outside agencies.



Crimes Reported to Gulf Coast State College (Gulf / Franklin Campus) 2013-2015

<b>Gulf / Franklin Campus</b>				
<b>Clery Reportable Crimes</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Total</b>
Murder	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Manslaughter	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Forcible Sex Offenses	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Non-Forcible Sex Offenses	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Robbery	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Aggravated Assault	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Burglary	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Arson	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Motor Vehicle Theft	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Domestic Violence	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Dating Violence	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Stalking	0	0	0	<b>0</b>

Select Offenses reported to Gulf Coast State College (Gulf / Franklin Campus) 2013-2015

<b>Gulf / Franklin Campus</b>				
<b>Select Offenses</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Total</b>
Alcohol Offenses	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Drug Offenses	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Illegal Weapons Offenses	0	0	0	<b>0</b>

**\*Note:** Crime statistics indicated here are a compilation of incidents from Port St. Joe Police Department and those incidents reported by the Gulf County Sheriff's Office.

### **WKGC RADIO STATION**

- GC 90.7 FM – Local & BBC World News, Jazz, Blues, Soul, Big Band/Alternative Swing, Funk, Classical and more!
- Alternation 1480 AM – College Radio run by students
- GC<sup>3</sup> – College Radio run by students (HD3)
- Listen on the radio or online at [www.WKGC.org](http://www.WKGC.org).

Each station carries a variety of musical programs from modern jazz and classical music to soul. Local, national and international news is featured as well as college highlights. Sports action by the GCSC Commodores (men's and women's basketball) is broadcasted live. WKGC is a member of American Public Media and students can participate at the station through communication courses and internships.

Call 873-3500

## VI. STUDENT GOVERNMENT

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Campus activities are offered at GCSC to enrich the lives of students. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities to “get involved” on campus. All events provided by Student Government fees are free or at a discount depending on the event or activity. A range of activities both on-campus and off-campus are based on the needs and interests of the student body. Get connected with GCSC...Attend concerts, guest lectures, as well as exciting Visual and Performing Arts and Commodore Athletic events. Student clubs serve GCSC student's cultural, personal, and career interests.

Special events sponsored by the Student Government Association (SGA) throughout the year entertain students and relieve the stress of “life’s balancing act” between academics, family, and careers. Participation in Student Government provides excellent opportunities to practice what has been learned in class, develop special skills, serve in challenging leadership roles, or just try something new. Remember, a college I.D. card will be required for free admission, discounts, or to participate in student-related activities.

### **ACTIVITY HOUR**

GCSC designates one hour from 12:00-1:00pm every Tuesday and Thursday, as the “Activity Hour” so only a minimum number of special classes are scheduled during this time. Most clubs or organizational meetings, intramural sports, open wellness facilities, and Student Government take place during this time with the exception of special events.

### **ATHLETIC EVENTS**

Intercollegiate Athletics at GCSC is considered a student activity and is subject to the same policies and procedures as other student programs. While the college has no desire to overemphasize team sports and competition of intercollegiate athletics, it does strive for excellence in all aspects of college life. Commodore school spirit is encouraged! Free home game admission with your student I.D.

Men’s Basketball

Men’s Baseball

Women’s Volleyball

Women’s Basketball

Women’s Softball

## **BRAIN BOWL**

Florida College System Activities Association (FCSAA) encourages collegiate, academic competitions at the community college level. Any student can try-out for the Brain Bowl Team in the fall providing they are enrolled in a minimum of 6 hours and have a cumulative 2.5 GPA. Spring scholarships are provided to the student team selected.

For tryout dates and practice times, call Sara Duff at ex. 5811

## **CLUBS & STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

GCSC Student Government fees assist student clubs and organizations in maintaining a "self-sufficient" funding status for student participation on campus. It has been proven that student organizations develop "well rounded" students while exploring personal and career interests. Approved clubs with charter status can remain as a permanent organization as long as the organization remains active, serves the student needs, and meets college Student Government Association criteria each year. Any student organization that becomes inactive for over two fiscal years will lose its charter status and club funding.

## **HOW TO ORGANIZE A NEW CLUB**

To be officially recognized as a club or organization at GCSC, a group must meet the standards below:

1. A group must have sufficient student membership that may vary according to the club purpose/mission.
2. A group must have one or more full time employee sponsors/advisor whose names are filed with the Office of Student Government.
3. The group must file with Office of Student Government a statement of purpose, stating specific ways in which the organization can benefit the college and the community.
4. A GCSC student is one who is currently enrolled in a credit course.

When the first four requirements are satisfactorily met and after their approval by the Student Affairs Council, the group may operate on a probationary basis for a maximum of one semester. During that semester, preferably at least one month before the end of the semester, the group must meet two additional requirements:

5. Submit a written plan, organizational outline, or constitution stating its purpose, organizational structures, officers, and standard procedures to the Student Affairs Council.
  - a. That policies, purposes, and principles of the club are consistent with and not harmful to GCSC philosophies and principles.
  - b. That membership and leadership positions in the organization shall be open to students enrolled at the college without respect to race, sex, religion, age, nationality, or handicap
  - c. That membership, policies, and actions of the organization are determined by the vote of only those persons who hold bona fide membership in college community.

6. File with the Office of Student Government a list of the officers and members of the club or organization. When all five of the above requirements have been satisfactorily met and/or the probationary period has successfully passed, a club may apply for a charter as college-recognized organization. Upon approval from the Office of Student Government and the Student Affairs Council, a club attains the Chartered Organization status. Having achieved that status the group is expected to maintain continuity and self-sufficiency. Any violations of college regulations and standards of good taste as well as non-cooperation with the Student Government Association (non-attendance by organizational representatives at SGA meetings, etc.) will result in the organization's charter being revoked or returned to probationary status. Any act of misconduct is subject to individual student code of conduct disciplinary action and equally applies to student organizations. A club or its individual members in violation may be brought to the Discipline Committee. Questions about a new club, call 873-3598.

### **CLUB FINANCES**

All monies collected by student clubs and organizations must be deposited through the GCSC's Business Office. All purchases for club activities must be approved with at least three signatures (1) the club advisor, (2) the Student Government Advisor, (3) the Vice President of Student Affairs to complete the standard requisition process. The club advisor is responsible for maintaining a club budget according to college accounting policies. Each fiscal year, the club must submit a projected budget one month from the beginning of the fall term to the Office of Student Government. Any roll over any account funds must be requested in the proposed budget. The club advisor should always return receipts from purchases and a signed (CRD) central receiving document to Business Office as soon as expenditures are completed. This purchase order process allows the necessary money from the organization's account to be taken to pay a bill. Any purchases less than \$100.00 may be done through the petty cash reimbursement process through the student organization's advisor and the Business Office. A check requisition form, with approved signatures must be attached with the original receipt to receive reimbursement. SGA funds for special unbudgeted campus events that include food must be approved a minimum of two weeks in advance by the Student Government Association.

### **CLUB ADVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Check eligibility of all club officers elected officers. GCSC students must have minimum 2.0 GPA and not be on disciplinary probation.
2. Ensure that the student organization complies with all required filing information as requested by SGA.
3. Ensure that all official club activities are entered in the college general schedule (use the Event Form) and on the college activities calendar kept in the Student Government Office. Planning must involve courtesy to fellow organizations and agencies and the consideration of scheduled events and activities.
4. Confer with newly elected officers to orient them to their responsibilities and their constitution.

5. Assist the club president in evaluating the performance of the organization and other participants while playing an active role within SGA
6. All organizational participants are to be clearly aware that any action taken on occasions at which the sponsor is not personally present is not official. Disputes or problems associated with such unofficial action will result in revocation of the act where practicable. Individual members and the organization as a whole will be held responsible for unofficial acts undertaken in the name of the college and/or organization.
7. The advisor's name must be one of three signatures on the designated college club account. No accounts are to be established independently at area banks. All club/organization funds are to be kept in college accounts and supervised by the advisor and club officers. It is the advisor's responsibility to provide signature approval and encourage sound financial planning and practice according to the Manual of Policy and purchasing guidelines.
8. Obtain approval for all fund-raising projects from the Office of Student Government. All fund-raising activities that do not give value for value received, in the name of the college (its agencies or organizations), and fund-raising activities determined to be in bad taste, are prohibited.
9. Ensure that college-collected funds, or any funds raised in the name of the college, its agencies, or organizations, are spent only for students or organization as a whole. Funds may not be spent to pay expenses, fees, or any other items for non-students. All unexpended amounts must be returned to the college account before the end of each fiscal year.
10. Seek approval from the Student Government Office and Director of Marketing and Communications if an organization wishes to issue a publication or conduct outside fundraising activities.
11. Be prepared to supervise local or out-of-district travel planned by any student organization. Advance approval and signatures are required on the Student Travel Form and on check requisitions for registration, hotel, food or student advances. An employee must accompany the group. Please submit all completed forms to the accounting department at least two weeks in advance to allow for processing of funds and that students meet all requirements as stated in the manual of policy.

#### **CLUB EVENTS, GUEST SPEAKERS, & FREE SPEECH**

Campus organizations inviting a guest speaker or planning any event on campus must submit an Event Form for approval at least two weeks in advance to the Office of Student Government. Any assembly that interferes with the orderly operation of the college or does not adhere to campus policy will not be permitted. Advisors are asked to submit annual dates for guest speakers in the college calendar each year. Outside speakers or community groups wishing to have access to the campus for the purpose of exercising their constitutional "freedom of speech" may be invited by a student organization or campus department. However, it is the responsibility of the club advisor, department contact, and guest to schedule the visit within the guidelines of the free speech area no less than one week in advance. Call 872-3864

#### **CLUB SCHEDULING**

All club meetings and activities must be placed on a college activity calendar maintained by the Student Government. The facility or classroom needed for meetings and activities must be reserved in advance

by the advisor each semester. An Event Form should be submitted to the Office of Marketing and Communications when the activity is confirmed. Call 872-3864

### **SECRET SOCIETIES, FRATERNITIES & SORORITIES**

The college does not permit secret societies or other organizations composed of college students, which operate without college approval or recognition. Officials of the college are authorized to take appropriate disciplinary action against any student in such an organization whose conduct or attitude, either on or off campus, reflects discredit upon GCSC. College "service fraternities or sororities" are prohibited unless they have compiled and demonstrated a three-year record of on-campus operation that clearly demonstrates an interest in and dedication to service while meeting the high-standards of other student organizations.

### **FITNESS FACILITIES**

The Wellness and Athletic Division offers fitness facilities for students and faculty to use during open hours:

-Gymnasium & Locker Room, Indoor Swimming Pool

-Wellness Weight Room & Fitness Area

Check out the new 4,000 square foot Wellness Center with Body Masters free weights and a great line of cardiovascular equipment. Fitness facilities are available to all currently enrolled GCSC students, staff and faculty with a valid I.D. at no additional cost. For information and open hours call 872-3831.

## **POSTERS & SIGNAGE:**

GCSC posting policy applies to campus general bulletin boards:

Bookstore (Used Books for Sale)

Career Development Center/CareerSource GULFCOAST Office (Help Wanted)

For Rent/Roommates Bulletin Board

Student Union (Student Services)

Cafeteria (For Sale/For Rent/Help Wanted)

Library (General College Related Information)

1. Information must be pre-approved, stamped by Student Government prior to posting on GCSC general bulletin boards. Signs cannot be posted anywhere, except official college bulletin boards. Placing flyers, outdoor signage, or coupons in campus parking areas is strictly prohibited.
2. Please drop an index card or flyer for approval by the Student Government Office #51. Messages not stamped as pre-approved will be removed immediately.
3. Information will be posted by the following business day and removed one month later unless notified.
4. Classroom bulletin boards are used for instructional use and must be approved by the division where bulletin board is located.

## **STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (SGA)**

The Student Government Association, (SGA) is the primary information, communications link between the student body and administration. SGA is responsible for the budgetary allocation of Student Activities fees and tasked with planning a wide range of student programs, activities, and events to meeting the needs of the students.

The Student Government Association makes recommendations regarding student government issues to provide input into the institutional decision-making process. Each spring semester, (4) officers are elected for the upcoming year: President, Vice-President, Parliamentarian, and Secretary. Fall semester, applications are taken for the representatives from each recognized campus organizations, and general members-at-large are interviewed and selected. All SGA officers must maintain a minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA and members must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA, enrolled in minimum of (6) credit hours; attend weekly meetings and events to serve on the Student Government Association.

Students serve a vital role in the institutional decision-making process through active participation on Student Government Association, Board of Trustees, Tri-College Committees, and a number of college-



wide administrative committees. GCSC's Student Government Association (SGA) affiliates with the Florida College System Student Government Association (FCSSGA) which provides state-level leadership opportunities. The SGA Constitution and By-laws dictate the guidelines for the decision-making process as well as organizational structure. SGA committees are open to all students. Administrative committee student representatives are nominated. Descriptions of student organizations and committees are listed below.

### **STUDENT GOVERNMENT & PARTICIPATION**

GCSC encourages students to participate in the institutional decision-making process through leadership roles in Student Government. The following are minimum guidelines concerning participation in student government. Some clubs may require additional criteria based on their mission and purpose.

1. All students are required to maintain 2.0 GPA to hold office in any student club or organization. Students who serve such student government leadership roles as a SGA Executive Board are required to have a 2.5 GPA to run for and/or hold office.
2. Students interested in activities may be required to sign-up to participate or pick-up tickets according to information posted.
3. Students who participate in intercollegiate Athletics or Visual & Performing Arts may receive elective credit for participation. It is the responsibility of the student to properly register for such activities so that credit may be awarded.
4. Students who represent the college in any recognized activity (Athletics, SGA, Music, etc.) may be given excused absences from class or college employment when necessary for travel. It is the student's responsibility to notify his/her instructor or supervisor in advance and identify what tasks or assignments must be made-up before missing class or work hours.

### **STUDENT POLITICAL RALLIES**

Gulf Coast State College is happy to welcome official candidates for political office to its campus. It is understood that such individuals will be representatives of a party ticket recognized by a political party in the State of Florida. Planning the candidate(s) format, event activities, and on-campus time shall be a joint endeavor involving GCSC officials and the local (Bay, Gulf, and Franklin) campaign organizations. Adequate advance planning (two weeks' notice at a minimum) and an agreement of the date and time of appearance are required. Campaign groups and staff of the candidate must assume responsibility for set-up and cleanup of facilities made available to them. Candidates and local organizations shall assume responsibility for the cost of "attractions" which promote crowd enthusiasm. In cases where campus groups are used to staff the attraction, they should be paid on an agreed upon amount.

### **TRI-COLLEGE COMMITTEE**

Students, faculty, and administration meet the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month at 12:30 pm in the Private Dining Room, SUE. All students are welcome to attend and provide input or suggestions on how to

resolve campus issues or student concerns. The informal communication committee plays a vital role in making GCSC a successful campus that meets the educational needs of students.

### **VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS**

We offer degree programs in Visual Arts, Music, Theatre and Entertainment Technology, but our arts classes and events are also open to non-majors.

Visual Arts classes are offered in different media and student work is chosen for the Annual Student Art Show. Talented students should submit their portfolios for scholarships. Frequent visiting guest artists provide important networking opportunities for current students. Join Visionaries Ink, the student art club or travel to Greece in the summer to study ceramics and photography as part of our study abroad program.

We offer numerous classes in both instrumental and vocal music that prepare students for transfer to university. Performance ensembles include: The Singing Commodores, Concert Chorale, Concert Band and Jazz Ensemble. Vocal and instrumental scholarships are also available. Current students have opportunities to play with local musical groups including Panama City Pops Orchestra.

The Theatre program offers concentration in acting, musical theatre, and design/technical theatre. Scholarships are granted to talented students in theatre. We have a strong working relationship with Emerald Coast Theatre Company, Seaside Repertory Theatre and the Marina Civic center where many students get their first professional opportunities while still students at GCSC. Join our award winning student theatre organization, GCSC Players. Auditions for plays and musical are open to all students and members of the community.

The Entertainment Technology program prepares students to work in all technical fields of the entertainment industry: audio, video, lighting, stagecraft, scene design, etc. Students even have the opportunity to record an album in our recording studio or be on the air on WKGC FM or GCTV.

All arts events at GCSC are free to students with a valid ID. Find our current events at [www.gulfcoast.edu/arts](http://www.gulfcoast.edu/arts) or call 850-872-3886.