

# STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

## PLAGIARISM POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### Policy

The college recognizes plagiarism as defined in Black's Law Dictionary as "the deliberate and knowing presentation of another person's original ideas or creative expressions as one's own." Plagiarism will not be tolerated at Vance-Granville Community College.

Faculty will state the College's definition of plagiarism on course syllabi. Individual departments/programs and instructors may have more stringent plagiarism standards, and in this case, the department/program/course standards shall be clearly stated on the syllabi and shall be followed. Faculty will apply the policy and procedures consistently.

### Academic Dishonesty (Repeated or Severe Violations)

Students should not cheat or attempt to deceive instructors or any College staff member on assignments, tests, exams, etc. Plagiarism, which includes paraphrasing or summarizing another person's words, without proper acknowledgement is prohibited. Academic dishonesty also includes assisting or attempting to assist another student in an act of academic dishonesty.

### Class Procedure

- a. Following the first recorded incident of plagiarism in a class:

The instructor records a zero for the student on the assignment and informs the student of the zero grade due to the plagiarism incident. The instructor will ask the student to acknowledge the first incident of plagiarism in writing. The instructor reports the student and the incident to the student's academic advisor, department chair and/or program head, and academic dean, and Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement & Success. The instructor refers the student to the Academic Success Center for coaching on how to recognize and how to avoid future incidents of plagiarism. This first incident will be documented in Starfish and an email will be sent to the student to advise him or her of this violation of the College's Plagiarism Policy. In addition, a letter will be sent to the student from the Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement & Success.

- b. Following the second recorded incident of plagiarism in the same class:

The instructor records a zero for the student on the assignment and informs the student of the zero grade. The instructor also informs the student that an F# grade will be entered for the course. The F# is a plagiarism-specific grade that is assigned when a class is failed because of plagiarism. In addition to informing the student of the F# grade, the instructor reports the student and the incident to the student's academic advisor, department chair and/or program head, academic dean, and Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement & Success. The student is not allowed to return to the class for the duration of the semester. The F# grade should be entered immediately for the course grade. The student is not permitted to drop the course with a W grade to avoid the penalty. If a student does manage to drop the course (without the instructor's approval) with a W grade, the instructor will submit a grade change form to replace the W grade with the F# grade. The Registrar should confirm the plagiarism acts and implement the change.

- c. The following documentation will record the plagiarism.

Grade	Explanation	Quality Points per Credit Hour
F#	Failure due to Plagiarism	0

The information from this section of the catalog is reproduced on the back side of official transcripts from the college. This information should also be updated on transcripts so that recipients of an official transcript are notified of what an F# grade represents.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Students of all College programs, curriculum and non-curriculum, will be expected to conduct themselves at all times as mature and responsible individuals and should show a high regard for College facilities, property, and for the personal rights and property of others. Enrolling students are responsible for acquainting themselves with College regulations, including the Code of Conduct.

**The act of enrollment at Vance-Granville Community College indicates an acceptance by the student of published rules and policies of the College. Each enrolled student is considered to be a responsible individual, and Vance-Granville Community College assumes and requires that students who enroll in various programs and classes will maintain standards of conduct appropriate to the collegiate atmosphere of Vance-Granville Community College. More stringent policies of professional behavior may be required in specific programs. Detailed information can be found in the program student handbook.**

Students may be suspended or dismissed for conduct that is considered in violation of the Student Code of Conduct while on campus or while participating in school-sponsored activities either on or off campus.

The decision to suspend or dismiss students for violations of the College Code of Conduct will be at the discretion of the Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement, & Success or their designee. Pending an investigation, college administrators or campus security may require a student to leave campus and not return until instructed by the Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement, & Success.

## Student Rights & Responsibilities

All students are assured the following rights:

1. freedom to pursue their educational goals
2. freedom to inquire, assemble, and express their opinions
3. due process
4. un-prejudicial evaluation of academic performance (all students are entitled to an explanation of the basis for grades)
5. the expectation of personal safety and protection of property while on campus
6. continuity of the educational process.

All students are expected to meet the following responsibilities:

1. follow the student code of conduct policy and observe College regulations and policies
2. acquaint themselves with the criteria to meet graduation requirements of the College in his or her program
3. practice good citizenship.

## I. Classroom Conduct

The classroom is a place for learning and the exchange of ideas. In order for teaching and learning to occur, the appropriate environment must exist that includes respect, civility, and common courtesy. To help create this environment, the following items may be regulated on the course syllabus and may vary from instructor to instructor. Ask your instructor if you are unsure of the classroom rules. There may be additional items regulated by your instructor that are not listed here. Infractions of basic classroom rules will typically be addressed by your instructor; however, repeated or serious infractions may be referred for formal disciplinary sanction.

1. Tardiness
2. Attendance
3. Food and drink
4. Bringing guests to class
5. Conversation during class
6. Required protective equipment
7. Minor disruptions during class
8. Cell phones and other electronic devices
9. Temporary dismissal from class

**Temporary Dismissal From Class—When an instructor deems a student’s behavior detrimental to the continuation of the class, an instructor may dismiss that student for the remainder of the individual class period.** An instructor should complete and submit a Code of Conduct referral to document the dismissal. Any dismissal beyond that class period must follow established College suspension procedures. Instructors have ultimate control over online classroom behavior and may temporarily dismiss or remove from the classroom any student engaged in disruptive conduct. Upon dismissal from the online environment, the instructor must conduct a meeting with the student to discuss the reason for dismissal from the online environment.

While students are on Vance-Granville Community College properties or at a Vance-Granville Community College-sponsored event, acts that are illegal or against the College’s rules and regulations may be subject to disciplinary action. The following actions are specifically prohibited at Vance-Granville Community College.

## II. General Campus Conduct

- **Accessory** – You may not be an accessory or assist another in committing a violation of the Code of Conduct or other illegal act.
- **Alcoholic Beverages** – You may not possess, use, or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages while on campus or at a College sponsored event.
- **Animals** – You may not bring an animal of any kind on campus; this includes leaving animals in vehicles. Police dogs or animals sanctioned for the purpose of assisting the visually impaired are exempt. Emotional Support Animals are considered a reasonable accommodation for students with a documented disability and a physician's specific recommendation. Students must submit documentation for their service or Emotional Support Animal to the Office of Accessibility prior to reporting to campus.
- **Assault** – You may not threaten to strike or threaten to cause harmful or offensive contact with another person.

- **Battery** – You may not strike or cause intentional contact that causes harm or is offensive to another person.
- **Computer Use** –The College has a Computer and Network User Policy-VGCC Board Policy. Inappropriate or unauthorized use may result in disciplinary sanctions.
- **Disobedience** – You may not disregard reasonable directives of any College employee acting in the interest of the College.
- **Disorderly Conduct** – You may not act in a way that will create interruption and disturb the peace of the College.
- **Disrespect**– You may not speak or act in a manner that disrespects any person while on campus or while attending any College event.
- **Distribution and Display** – You may not distribute or place inappropriate, obscene, or libelous printed materials or pictures on campus.
- **Disruption** – You may not disrupt the normal activities of the College by verbally or physically interfering with instruction, meetings, events, or traffic. In addition, you may not cause disruption in buildings, hallways, or outside areas of campus.
- **Disruptive Clothing** – You may not wear clothing that may cause a disruption or that is provocative or obscene, including undergarments that are visible. Shirts and shoes are required.
- **Drugs** – You may not possess, use, or be under the influence of any narcotic or illegal drug in violation of state or federal law.
- **Failure to follow a reasonable request** – You may not disregard reasonable directives of any College employee acting in the interest of the College.
- **False Information** – You may not present false information that the College has properly and legally requested. Conversely, you may not withhold information that has been properly and legally requested by the College.
- **Fighting** – You may not engage in physical altercation with other college community members
- **Gambling** – You may not gamble on campus.
- **Hazing** – No group or individual shall require another student to wear abnormal dress, play abusive or ridiculous tricks, or use frightening or other harassing behavior that subjects those individuals to personal indignity or harm.
- **Law Violations** – You may not violate any local, state, or federal criminal laws on College property. Note: Charges for breaking certain local, state or federal criminal laws off campus may result in disciplinary sanctions by the College.
- **Parking and Motor Vehicles** – You may not operate your vehicle in an unsafe manner, or violate rules for vehicle registration, display of decals, or parking.
- **Profanity and Offensive Language** – Profanity and offensive language are not permitted. While the College does not intend to scrutinize every word spoken, College staff may take issue in

instances when a student's language is deemed unacceptable.

- **Property Damage** – You may not damage property that belongs to the College or property of others.
- **Indecent or obscene behavior** – You may not engage in indecent or obscene behavior while on the premises of the college or at a college sponsored or supervised activity. Such behavior may include but may not be limited to inappropriate display of affection, obscene gestures or improper body exposures.
- **Sexual Misconduct** – You may not sexually harass any person on campus or engage in sexual activity while on campus. (See Title IX Policies and Procedures)
- **Theft** – You may not steal property that belongs to the College or that of another individual.
- **Threat** – You may not engage in behavior that is clearly designed to present harm to the emotional or physical well-being of another person or yourself.
- **Tobacco** – VGCC is a 100% Tobacco-Free Campus. You may not use any tobacco product while on any VGCC College Campus property or inside a College vehicle. See Tobacco-Free Policy
- **Unauthorized Use of College Documents and Images** – You may not forge, alter or misuse College documents, records, or instruments of identification. You may not use the College name, logos, or mascot without proper authorization.
- **Weapons** – You may not have a weapon or facsimile of a weapon of any kind, including firearms, knives, and tasers. Law enforcement officials are exempt.

### **Student Conduct in Online Courses, Discussions, and Chat Rooms**

The instructor's responsibility for managing online student behavior is no different from managing student behavior in a traditional classroom setting. Disruptive, intimidating, or uncivil student conduct that interferes with classroom procedures, the presentation of the instructor or other students, and another student's right to pursue coursework in the online environment, is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct. Consideration of the temporary suspension from the class must be discussed with the Department Chair or Academic Dean. Permanent dismissal from an online class must be administered by the Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement and Success or their designee. The instructor must complete a Code of Conduct Referral to initiate this process.

### **III. Disciplinary Sanctions**

When students violate College regulations, they are subject to disciplinary action by the College. Disciplinary action may be initiated by a complaint by any person of the College. Students who are found in violation of the College rules and regulations, can expect some form of official disciplinary action to be taken against them by the College if deemed necessary. The goal in selecting an appropriate sanction in every discipline case is to provide the student with an educational experience and to balance the perceived needs of the individual student. Therefore, the type of action taken in any particular case will depend on several factors,

including, but not limited to, the degree of seriousness of the violations, the violator's awareness about the problems caused by violator's behavior, and the violator's degree of maturity and apparent ability and readiness to learn more positive behaviors as a result of having participated in the College conduct process.

Violations should, which may be reported by any college employee, follow the following format:

1. Report the violation to the Office of the Dean of Student Retention & Success and/or Campus Security.
2. Report the violation using the Code of Conduct Referral Form.

The Dean of Student Retention and Success or their representative shall investigate all complaints and will assign in writing formal sanctions if justified. The disciplinary sanctions, represent a range of actions and seek to preserve flexibility in the imposition of punishment and do not imply an order or sequence of sanctions. Once formal sanctions have been determined, the student may accept those sanctions or appeal the decision.

The Student Code of Conduct sanctions are listed below. These sanctions seek to preserve flexibility in the imposition of punishment and do not imply an order or sequence of sanctions. The sanctions in each case will be determined by the factors related to each specific case. Any hearing agent, such as the Student Engagement and Success Office, upon finding a violation of College rules and regulations, may apply any one of these sanctions or a combination of these, in an effort to effectively respond to the situation of the case before them. Discipline is also progressive so a student who is already on "College Probation" and is found to have violated another College policy may receive a more severe sanction.

### **Sanctions:**

These sanctions are accompanied with a specific conduct status based on the nature of the violation. The actions, which may be taken in disciplinary cases are:

1. **Case Dismissed** - An action which closes a case for any one of the following reasons: a) not responsible finding is reached by the hearing body/officer, or b) there is a lack of sufficient information and/or evidence.

2. **Reprimand** - A verbal or written communication which gives official notice to the student that he/she has violated the College rules and regulations and/or that any subsequent violation of the Student Code of Conduct may carry heavier penalties because of this prior infraction.

3. **College Probation** - A probationary status imposed for a specified time period, not to exceed one calendar year during which a student is expected to show a positive change in behavior. In addition, conditions and restrictions appropriate to the offense may be imposed. Any further violation of the probation will be basis for more severe disciplinary action.

a. **General Probation** - An individual may be placed on general probation when involved in a minor disciplinary offense. General probation has two important implications: first, the individual is given the chance to show his/her capability and willingness to observe the Student Code of Conduct without further violation; second, if an additional violation occurs, additional sanctions will

be imposed. The probation will be in effect for determined time presented by College.

**b. Restrictive Probation** – Restrictive conditions may limit activity or access to certain places within the College community. Generally, the individual will not be eligible for initiation into any local or national organization, and may not receive any College award or other honorary recognition. The individual may not occupy a position of leadership or responsibility with any College or student organization, publication, or activity. This probation will be in effect for no more than two terms. Any violation of restrictive probation may result in immediate suspension.

**4. Suspension from College** - Suspension status excludes a student from classes and from all privileges and activities of the College for a specified period of time, not to exceed one calendar year. This action may be deferred to become effective after a certain date. During the period of suspension, a student is not permitted to be on the College property or use the facilities or equipment without the expressed permission of the Student Engagement and Success Office. If the conditions of the suspension are violated, they will be subjected to further disciplinary action.

**5. Expulsion** - A student may be dismissed (expelled) from the College for conduct which is not in the best interest of the student, or of the College. Expulsion is a permanent dismissal from the College, which includes no trespassing on any sites operated by the College. At the end of this period of expulsion, the student may be re-admitted to the College only with the approval of the College President or their designee. Students who successfully petition their return to the College are immediately placed on conduct probation.

### **Conditions:**

The Dean of Student Retention and Success or his/her representative may attach conditions to any disciplinary action, including but not limited to the following:

**1. Restitution** – A student may be required to pay for damaging, misusing, destroying, or losing property belonging to the College, College personnel, or student(s).

**2. Loss of academic credit for a course** – This may be imposed as a result of severe or repeated academic dishonesty. Note: The instructor may impose loss of credit or grade for an individual assignment or assignments as an alternative.

**3. Group Probation** – This is assigned to a College club or other campus organization for a specified period of time. If group violations are repeated during the probationary period, the charter may be revoked or activities restricted.

**4. Group Restriction** – While under restriction, a campus group may not seek or add members, hold or sponsor events in the College community, or engage in other activities as specified.

**5. Group Charter Revocation** – This action removes recognition for a group, club, society, or other organization for a minimum of two (2) years. In order to be chartered again after the period of revocation has ended, the request must be approved by the Student Government Association and the College President.

**Notice: Vance-Granville Community College reserves the right, under Federal law, to include notations of disciplinary sanctions on a student's academic transcript. Once formal sanctions have been determined, the student may appeal the decision. See Order of Disciplinary Appeals Procedures.**

## **Due Process**

All students are entitled to due process. Due process provides students with the following rights:

- Be advised in writing of all alleged violations.
- Be advised of the identity of the individuals who will be present at the hearing.
- Be informed of any evidence provided at any stage of the investigation.
- Submit a written account relating to the alleged charges.
- Be provided written notification of the charges at least two (2) business days prior to any hearing or administrative review on the charge.
- Inform the student that they are presumed innocent until found in violation of the Code of Conduct by the preponderance of the evidence.
- Request a delay of the hearing for extenuating circumstances only, which will be granted at the discretion of the Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement and Success or their designee
- Admit responsibility for any or all of the violations.
- Present relevant evidence and witnesses.
- Request an alternate employee with the same disciplinary authority as the Dean of Student Retention and Success, if it can be proven that there may be bias. The request should be made to the Office of the Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement and Success.
- Appeal a decision based upon the guidelines stated in the outcome correspondence received by the student.

## **Order of Disciplinary Appeals Procedures**

Once an official report of an alleged violation of College rules is accepted, the office is required to produce a "Specification of Charges."

**Specification of Charges:** Lists the information about the alleged offense, the rules allegedly violated, the name of known witnesses to the situation and/or other sources of information, which support the allegations, and the time a hearing is scheduled to review these allegations. This information is sent to the accused prior to the hearing.

### **Rights of the Accused**

The accused may elect to

- a) Voluntarily accept sanctions imposed by the Office of the Dean of Student Retention & Success or
- b) Students who question the fairness of Disciplinary action taken against them are entitled to submit an appeal. Request a hearing



before the Judicial Committee by completing a Disciplinary Appeals form. The appeal must be filed with the Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement, & Success within 10 College business days from the date on the disciplinary action letter. If a student requests an appeal, the sanctions assigned will be in effective while the appeal process takes place.

An appeal must be based on one or more of the following grounds:

1. Insufficient evidence to support the decision.
2. New evidence unavailable at the time of the original hearing.
3. Procedural error serious enough to affect the outcome of the hearing.
4. Excessive or inappropriate sanctions.
5. Discrimination based on the appellant's membership in a protected group (race, gender, sexual orientation etc.)

Students who appeal sanctions of conduct (warning and conduct probation) may have their request granted, but not guaranteed. This decision will be made within the Office of the Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement, & Student Success and if granted, the hearing officer's decision is considered final.

Students who appeal sanctions of conduct dismissal (suspension or expulsion) may be provided the opportunity to convene a Judicial Review Hearing Committee, but not guaranteed. This decision will be made within the Office of the Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement, & Student Success and if granted, the hearing officer's decision is considered final.

The Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement, & Success may summon the committee for a hearing within 10 business days from the receipt of the Appeals request. The committee is comprised of faculty, staff, and students.

### **Judicial Appeal Hearing Process**

*The Judicial Committee will:*

1. Hear the complaint from those initiating disciplinary action, along with any witnesses. All participants (Complainants and Respondents) involved in the judicial hearing process, are expected to be familiar with the College's Student Code of Conduct Policy printed in the Vance Granville Community College Student Catalog. The purpose of the hearing is to address a student's potential sanction of conduct dismissal (suspension or expulsion)
2. Hear the appeal from the accused, along with any witnesses (legal counsel may be present but cannot participate in this hearing process). If participants have any witnesses that will testify on their behalf relating only to the appeal in question, participants are required to submit those names to the Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement, & Success no later than five (5) business days prior to the hearing including the nature of their testimony.

### **Basic procedural rights of the accused include the following:**

a. The right to counsel. The role of the person acting as counsel is solely to advise the student. The counsel shall not address the committee. If the student opts to bring counsel, the student must inform the Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement, & Student Success of this intention when the request for the hearing is filed no later than five (5) business days prior to the hearing. If the

student brings counsel to the hearing without so informing the Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement, & Student Success, the committee chairperson will give the student the option of proceeding without counsel or postponing the hearing.

b. The right to request that the committee chairperson disqualify any member of the committee for prejudice or bias. Additionally, if a faculty or staff member is the defendant, the faculty or staff member also has the right to request that a committee member is disqualified for prejudice or bias.

c. The right to present new evidence that was unavailable at the time of the hearing.

d. The right to face the person(s) bringing the charge(s). The accused will not be able to question the accuser during the appeal process.

e. The right to hear witnesses on behalf of the person bringing the charges.

f. The right to testify or to refuse to testify without such refusal being detrimental to the student.

g. The right to appeal the decision of the committee to the president who will review the official record of the hearing. The appeal to the president must be in writing and it must be made within 10 business days of the receipt committee's decision.

**The conduct of the committee hearings is as follows:**

A. Hearings before the committee shall be confidential and closed to all persons except the following:

1. The student. (Absence of the student will result in adjournment of the hearing and the appeal process will end. All assigned sanctions will stand).
2. The faculty or staff member bringing the charge against the student. or being accused by the student.
3. Counsels if applicable (see The Right to Counsel)
4. Witnesses who shall:
  - a. Give testimony singularly and in the absence of other witnesses.
  - b. Leave the committee meeting room immediately after completion of the testimony. The Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement, & Student Success will keep copies of all correspondence and rulings surrounding the hearing.
5. The committee shall have the authority to render written advisory opinions concerning the meaning and application of this code
6. Upon completion of a hearing, the committee shall meet in executive session to determine concurrence or non-concurrence with the original finding and to recommend sanctions, if applicable.
7. Decisions of the committee shall be made by majority vote. In the event of tie, the administrative liaison(s) of the committee will have the deciding vote.
8. In any situation, the Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement and Success, may deem a question by the committee inappropriate and will instruct the committee take appropriate actions concerning questioning
9. After the decision of the committee, the Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement, & Student Success shall send a certified letter to the student's address on file in the admissions office providing the

student with the committee's decision.

**B. Appeal to the President:** A student who disagrees with the findings of the committee may appeal in writing to the president within ten (10) business days after receipt of the committee's decision. The president shall have the authority to:

1. Review the findings of the proceedings of the committee.
2. Hear from the student, the Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement, & Student Success, and the members of the committee before ruling on an appeal
3. Approve, modify, or overturn the decision of the committee.
4. Inform the student in writing of the final decision within five (5) business days of the receipt of the appeal. The decision of the President is final.

The Vice President of Learning, Student Engagement & Success will decide if a student may attend classes during an Appeals process. Each case is decided individually.

*Note: Academic Grievance/Grade Appeals information is located in the Academic section of this catalog.*