

Vernon College Sexual Assault Policy and Procedures

Chapters 21 and 22 of the Texas Penal Code found at <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us> contain the definition of sexual assault.

Victims of sexual assault or persons who have information regarding a sexual assault are encouraged to report the incident immediately. In instances where sexual assault is alleged, the victim is strongly encouraged to report the incident. The campus personnel authorized to deal with sex-crimes are the Dean of Student Services, Associate Dean of Student Services, Vernon College Counselors, Director of Housing, Director of Human Resources or the Vernon College Police.

By contacting one of these offices, the victim will be given specific information as to how to proceed to file formal charges against the accused. Victims will be treated with sensitivity, compassion, patience, and respect by Vernon College staff. Vernon College staff will be available to receive reports of sexual assault, assist the victim in securing medical attention, participate in evidence preservation or collection, conduct investigations, and inform the victim of legal and administrative options both on and off campus.

Any person may request assistance from Vernon College personnel in notifying law enforcement authorities of a sexual assault. Vernon College officials will provide the victim with assistance in notifying the proper authorities of a sexual assault. Law Enforcement Agencies and medical personnel have extensive training in handling sexual assaults, therefore they are encouraged by Vernon College to use their own professional judgement with regard to individual circumstances.

Vernon College has a good working relationship with area law enforcement agencies. Vernon College will assist area law enforcement agencies as needed to investigate crimes. The following law enforcement agencies can be involved during sexual assault investigations:

- Wilbarger County Sheriff's Office
- Vernon Police Department
- Wichita County Sheriff's Office
- Wichita Falls Police Department

The procedures for on-campus disciplinary action would be the same as those outlined in the Vernon College Student Handbook or Vernon College Employee Handbook. The Vernon College Student Handbook includes procedures for disciplinary sanctions used with Vernon College Students. The Vernon College Employee Handbook contains procedures for disciplinary actions applied to Vernon College employees.

The Dean of Student Services or Associate Dean of Student Services will review information received regarding incidents involving sexual offenses for alleged violations of the Vernon College Student Handbook. The accuser and the accused are entitled to

the same opportunities of due process under disciplinary sanctions outlined in the Vernon College Student Handbook and the Vernon College Employee Handbook.

When appropriate, academic or living arrangements may be modified as a direct result of an allegation of sexual assault. This action may be taken when requested by the victim or the accused. These arrangements will be coordinated through the Dean of Student Services and the Dean of Instruction.

The Vernon College Student Handbook can be found at:

<http://www.vernoncollege.edu/Resources/Student%20Services/Vernon%20College%20Student%20Handbook%202015-2016.pdf>

The Vernon College Employee Handbook can be found at:

<http://www.vernoncollege.edu/Resources/Publications/2013-14%20Employee%20Handbook.pdf>

The rights of both the accused and the complainant shall be protected, and the confidentiality of all proceedings, meetings, reports, or investigations will be maintained to the fullest extent possible. The rights of the individual filing the grievance to pursue legal remedies through criminal or civil courts will not be infringed by the use of Vernon College disciplinary or grievance procedures. Similarly, Vernon College disciplinary or grievance procedures will not be prejudiced by the initiation of such action.

Vernon College Student Services maintains and publishes annually crime statistics as required by the Jeanne Cleary Act. These are made available to all employees, students, faculty and prospective students. An individual may view these statistics at: <http://www.vernoncollege.edu/sex-crimes-prevention-act>

The Vernon College Human Resources Office will have the responsibility of yearly SAVE Act training for Vernon College Employees. Vernon College Student Services will have the responsibility of yearly SAVE Act training for students.

This Vernon College Sexual Assault Policy and Procedures was approved by the Vernon College Board of Trustees at the August 2015 meeting.
