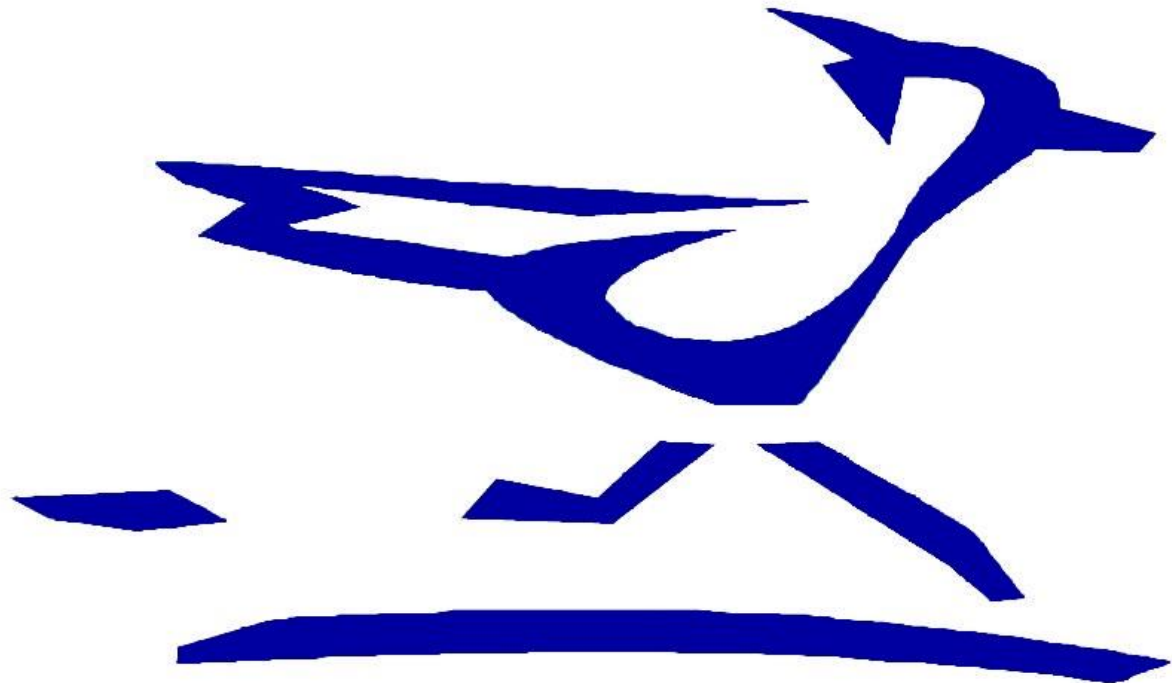


# Chaparral Student Handbook

## 2020-2021



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

## FOREWORD

The Vernon College *Student Handbook* is a source of valuable information regarding the student's responsibilities, obligations and privileges while attending the College. Advantages derived from attending Vernon College will depend not only on scholastic effort, but also upon wise participation in extracurricular activities.

The Handbook is available online to all students by visiting <http://www.vernoncollege.edu>. Failure to read this Handbook does not excuse students from the requirements and regulations described herein.

Information specific to a given learning center or program may not always be contained in this Handbook. For such information, the student is directed to contact the Student Services Division at the appropriate instructional location. **Since the programs, policies, and statements contained herein are subject to continuous review and evaluation, Vernon College reserves the right to make changes at any time without notice. This publication is for information only.**

No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored or conducted by Vernon College, on any basis prohibited by applicable law, including, but not limited to race, age, color, national origin, religion, gender or disability.

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## MISSION STATEMENT

**VERNON COLLEGE MISSION:** The mission of Vernon College is teaching, learning, and leading. Vernon College is a comprehensive community college that integrates education with opportunity through our instructional programs and student support services by means of traditional and distance learning modes. Therefore, to fulfill its mission, the College will provide access, within its available resources, to:

- Career technical/workforce programs up to two years in length leading to associate degrees or certificates;
- Career technical/workforce programs leading directly to employment in semi-skilled and skilled occupations;
- Freshman and sophomore courses in arts and sciences, including the new core and field of study curricula leading to associate and baccalaureate degrees;
- Ongoing adult education programs for occupational upgrading or personal enrichment;
- Compensatory education programs designed to fulfill the commitment of an admissions policy allowing the enrollment of disadvantaged students;
- A continuing program of counseling and guidance designed to assist students in achieving their individual educational goals;
- Career technical/workforce development programs designed to meet local and statewide needs;
- Support services for educational programs and college-related activities;
- Adult literacy and other basic skills programs for adults; and
- Other programs as may be prescribed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, such as *60x30TX*, or local governing boards in the best interest of postsecondary education in Texas.

Approved by College Effectiveness Committee on September 28, 2016

*Officially approved and adopted by the Board of Trustees on October 19, 2016*

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Mission as adapted from the Texas Education Code, Sec. 130.003(e).

## VISION STATEMENT

Vernon College will promote a culture of success for our students and communities through learner-centered quality instructional programs and exemplary services.

## QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

As directed by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, Vernon College is in the development phase of creating a second Quality Enhancement Plan. The specific compliance requirements are as follows:

- CR 2.12: The institution has developed an acceptable Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that includes an institutional process for identifying key issues emerging from institutional assessment and focuses on learning outcomes and/or the environment supporting student learning and accomplishing the mission of the institution.
- CS 3.3.2: The institution has developed a Quality Enhancement Plan that (1) demonstrates institutional capability for the initiation, implementation, and completion of the QEP; (2) includes broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in the development and proposed implementation of the QEP; and (3) identifies goals and a plan to assess their achievement.

## INSTRUCTIONAL LOCATIONS

### VERNON COLLEGE - VERNON CAMPUS

4400 College Drive, Vernon, Texas 76384, Telephone: 940-552-6291

### VERNON COLLEGE - CENTURY CITY CENTER

4105 Maplewood Avenue, Wichita Falls, Texas 76308, Telephone 940-696-8752

### SEYMOUR LEARNING CENTER

200 Stadium Drive, Seymour Texas 76380, Telephone: 940-889-3133

### VERNON COLLEGE - SKILLS TRAINING CENTER

2813 Central Expressway East, Wichita Falls, Texas 76302, Telephone 940-766-3369

### VERNON COLLEGE - DISTANCE EDUCATION (Internet, Interactive Video Courses)

<http://www.vernoncollege.edu/dstlrn>

### VERNON COLLEGE - OTHER LEARNING CENTERS

Selected academic, workforce and continuing education courses are offered at public schools and other facilities in the Vernon College service area. Among the locations are those at Burkburnett, City View, Holliday, Iowa Park, Paducah, Quanah, Vernon, and Wichita Falls.

## ASSISTANCE AND INFORMATION

The following is a directory of information on "where to go about what" for Vernon College.

100 - Osborne Administration Building  
200 - Wright Library  
300 - Electra Waggoner Biggs Arts and Sciences Center  
400 - Sumner Applied Arts Center  
500 - King Physical Education Center  
SRC - Student Residence Center  
SUB - Colley Student Center  
CCC - Century City Center  
STC - Skills Training Center

	<u>LOCATION &amp; EXT. #</u>	
Academic Standing	100	2286
ADA Accommodations	200	2308
Admissions and Records	100	2207
Admissions and Records	CCC	3208
Application for Graduation	100	2207
Application for Graduation	CCC	3208
Athletics	500	2285
Auditing a Course	100	2207
Bookstore	SUB	2281
Bookstore	CCC	3218
Business Office	100	2303
Business Office	CCC	3305
CLEP Tests	200	2317
Cafeteria/Snack Bar	SUB	2282
Career Services	100	2007



**ASSISTANCE AND INFORMATION (continued)**

	<u>LOCATION &amp; EXT. #</u>	
Change in Class Schedule	100	2278
Change in Class Schedule	CCC	3206
Change of Address	100	2207
College Catalog	100	2207
Continuing Education	CCC	3211
Student Success	100	2278
Student Success	CCC	3206
Degree Information	100	2278
Distance Learning	CCC	3308
Dorm Applications and Deposits	SRC	2319
Dropping a Course	100	2286
Employment/Career Services	100	2007
Employment/Career Services	CCC	3203
Facility Reservations	100	2202
Faculty Offices	300	2232
Financial Aid	100	2206
Financial Aid	CCC	3335
Health Care Clinic	400	2276
Housing Information	SRC	2319
Library	200	2223
Library	CCC	3220
Media Services	200	2221
New Beginnings Program	200	2325
Office for Students with Disabilities/PASS	200	2308
Parking Permits	100	2272
Payment of Tuition and Fees	100	2212
Police (Vernon Campus)	100	2272
Police (CCC)	CCC	3207
Posting Notices and Signs	100	2250
President's Office	100	2200
Public Information Office	100	2229
Public Information Office	CCC	3337
Refunds	100	2212
Schedule of Classes	100	2207
Schedule Overloads	100	2231
Student Activities	SUB	2319
Scholarships	100	2293
Student Government Association	SUB	2319
Student Government Association	CCC	3304
Student Mail	SRC	2319
Student Organizations	SUB	2295
Swimming Pool	500	2261
Testing Center	200	2317
Testing Center	CCC	3278
Transfer Information	100	2278
Transcript Request	100	2290

## ASSISTANCE AND INFORMATION (continued)

	<u>LOCATION &amp; EXT. #</u>	
Transcript Request	CCC	3208
Tutoring Center	200	2308
Tutoring Center	CCC	3257
Veterans Affairs	100	2007
Veterans Affairs	CCC	3203
Withdrawal from College	100	2207
Work-study Programs	100	2206

## TRADITIONS

As defined by Webster, traditions are customs that have their roots in the past and are handed down from one generation to the next. Traditions are what make the Vernon College experience unique. A few of our most valued are discussed below.

**TOWER OF KNOWLEDGE** - The Vernon campus is designed in what is termed a “quadrangle.” A key landmark designed for the center of the campus is a brick sculpture entitled the “Tower of Knowledge.” The Tower of Knowledge dominates the courtyard as an ever-present reminder of the soaring opportunities an education can offer.

**COLORS** - Royal Blue and Gray

**MASCOT** - Chaparral (Roadrunner)

**HONORS PROGRAM** - This function is an annual event honoring outstanding students for their scholastic achievements as well as student participation in Vernon College clubs and organizations.

### **NATIONAL SOCIETY OF LEADERSHIP AND SUCCESS (NSLS)**

Vernon College students who have earned a 3.0 or higher grade point average, with 15 or more semester hours accrued, are eligible to participate in Vernon College’s chapter of NSLS. Eligible students may join (for a one-time \$95 fee) and be a part of a dynamic student leadership training program. As an extra bonus, they will also become a member of the associated honor society. Furthermore, students that progress through the induction stages (Orientation, Leadership Training Day, Speaker Broadcasts, and Success Networking Teams), not only become full-fledged members of NSLS, but they also have access to discounts at major store chains, scholarship opportunities, further leadership development prospects, and career services opportunities.

**PHI THETA KAPPA INDUCTION** - This ceremony is held annually to recognize students with outstanding academic records and achievements who have been asked to join Phi Theta Kappa, the International Honor Society of the two-year community college. Benefits of Phi Theta Kappa include potential scholarship, national awards, instant respect from potential employers, and the friendship and support of other dedicated students.

**SPORTS DAY** - Each fall students, faculty, and staff from all instructional locations converge on the Vernon campus for a day of friendly competition and fellowship. Medals are awarded to top performers for activities ranging from volleyball and spades to canoe racing and horseshoes.

## TRADITIONS (continued)

**SPORTS BANQUET** - This traditional event provides for a gathering of Vernon College athletes, coaches, and fans. Awards are presented to individual athletes who have excelled in their sport. A “Fan of the Year” is recognized in each sport for dedicated support of the athletic program.

**TURKEY TROT** - This annual event is scheduled the week of Thanksgiving. Contestants are tasked with completing a 3.3-mile course that winds around the Vernon Campus. Prizes are awarded to the winners.

**COSTUME CONTEST** - The Student Forum annually sponsors an October costume contest with prizes awarded to the winners. Students from all Wichita Falls locations are invited to participate.

### ACADEMIC ISSUES

#### ACADEMIC STANDARDS

##### Grades and Grade Points

Vernon College uses the standard alphabetical system to record grades and uses the four point system for grade point evaluation. To illustrate, a student achieving an excellent rating in a three credit hour course will be awarded an “A” and four grade points per semester hour for a total of twelve grade points. An example of how grades are computed can be found in the Vernon College Catalog. The total grading system is as shown below:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Grade Point Value</b>
A - Excellent	4 Points Per Credit Hour
B - Above Average	3 Points Per Credit Hour
C - Average	2 Points Per Credit Hour
D - Passed	1 Point Per Credit Hour
F - Failed	(Computed in GPA)
I – Incomplete	(Not computed in G.P.A.) <sup>2</sup>
W - Withdrew Passing	(Not computed in G.P.A.)
WC – Withdrew Covid-19	(Not computed in G.P.A.)
WF - Withdrew Failing	(Computed in G.P.A.)
AU – Audit	(Not computed in G.P.A.) <sup>3</sup>
P - Pass-Pass/Fail Grading	(Not computed in G.P.A.) <sup>4</sup>
U - Fail-Pass/Fail Grading	(Not computed in G.P.A.) <sup>4</sup>
CP – Complete	(Not Computed in GPA) Non-Credit Course
NC – Non-Complete	(Not Computed in GPA) Non-Credit Course

<sup>2</sup> The grade of I, which denotes an incomplete, may be given when an instructor believes that a student has a justifiable reason for not completing a course, for example, an illness resulting in the failure to complete the required course work. If an I is given by an instructor, the student must contact the instructor and make arrangements to complete the required work within 60 days from the date the I was earned. Upon completion of the work, the grade of I is changed to a permanent grade. If the required work is not completed prior to the end of the 60-day time period, the I is changed to an F.

<sup>3</sup> AUDIT means to attend a course without working for or expecting to receive formal credit. Audit status declaration is accepted at the time of late registration through the official census day for that semester. Admission requirements, tuition, and fees are the same for auditing as for enrolling in credit classes and receiving a regular letter grade.

<sup>4</sup> Courses approved for pass/fail grading may be used to satisfy requirements for a certificate or degree. Courses taken through the pass/fail system will not be used in computing the VC grade point

## Grades and Grade Points (continued)

average regardless of the grade received. Individual student requests for the pass/fail option must be made to the Office of Admissions and Records during registration and no later than the last day of registration and/or change of schedule, whichever is later. Individual student requests for the pass/fail grading option may not be canceled after the end of late registration or the last day to change schedules.

At the end of each regular enrollment period, permanent grades are reported, posted to each student's permanent record, and available on the web site through Campus Connect with use of the student PIN. Grades and transcripts are not released if the student has a hold on his/her records. For more information, refer to the *Vernon College Catalog*.

### Honor Students

Full-time college-level students are eligible for the following honors: the President's List, which recognizes full-time students who complete their enrollment period with a grade point average of 4.0; and the Dean's List, which recognizes full-time students who complete their enrollment period with a grade point average of 3.5 or above. Half-time students (enrolled in six or more semester credit hours) are eligible for the Honor's List, which recognizes students who complete their enrollment period with a grade point average of 3.5 or above. Honor students are recognized each fall and spring semester.

### Scholastic Standards

Vernon College degree and certificate plans require that students have a GPA of 2.0 or higher for graduation. A student is considered to be in good standing as long as they maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher.

**Scholastic Probation** - A student who fails to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher will be placed on scholastic probation. A student on scholastic probation will be allowed to re-enroll if a 2.0 GPA or higher is earned in each subsequent semester. A student will remain on probation until his or her cumulative GPA reaches 2.0 or higher.

**Scholastic Suspension** – A student on scholastic probation who fails to maintain a 2.0 GPA or higher in any subsequent semester will be placed on scholastic suspension. A student on first scholastic suspension will not be allowed to attend VC the next long semester. A student on scholastic suspension for a second time will not be allowed to attend VC for a full academic year. Scholastic suspension may be appealed by written petition to the Admissions Committee if a student feels extenuating circumstances, beyond his/her control, were responsible for the suspension.

**Scholastic Dismissal** – A student placed on scholastic suspension for a third time will be scholastically dismissed. Students who are scholastically dismissed cannot enroll in Vernon College for a period of three years. Scholastic dismissal may also be appealed by written petition to the Admissions Committee if a student feels extenuating circumstances, beyond his/her control, were responsible for the dismissal.

Due to the structure of some specific programs, scholastic standards may vary from the above guidelines. Students should review departmental handbooks for specific requirements.

## Repeating a Course

A course may be repeated if a student desires to improve a grade received in the course. All grades earned will remain on the student's transcript, but the higher grade will be considered the grade of record included in the Academic GPA. Students planning to transfer to another college or university should check with the Registrar's Office at that institution to determine the repetition policy at the receiving institution.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to attend regularly all classes in which they are enrolled. Students are responsible for the subsequent completion of all work missed during an absence. Any instruction missed and not subsequently completed will necessarily affect the grade of the student regardless of the reason for the absence. The manner in which make-up work is administered is left to the professional discretion of the individual faculty member. Except for absences due to College sanctioned activities, it is at the instructor's discretion to excuse or not excuse an absence.

An instructor may request the withdrawal of a student from a class when the total number of unexcused absences exceeds the equivalent of two weeks of class and lab meetings in a course; specifically, this equates to the following allowable unexcused absences:

<b>16-week semester</b> Ten from a class that meets 5 times a week Eight from a class that meets 4 times a week Six from a class that meets 3 times a week Four from a class that meets 2 times a week Two from a class that meets 1 time a week	<b>11-week semester (Summer)</b> Seven from a class that meets 5 times a week. Six from a class that meets 4 times a week Four from a class that meets 3 times a week Three from a class that meets 2 times a week One from a class that meets 1 time a week
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<b>8-week semester</b> Five from a class that meets 5 times a week Four from a class that meets 4 times a week Three from a class that meets 3 times a week Two from a class that meets 2 times a week One from a class that meets 1 time a week	<b>5½ week semester (Summer)</b> Four from a class that meets 5 times a week Three from a class that meets 4 times a week Two from a class that meets 3 times a week One from a class that meets 2 times a week One from a class that meets 1 time a week
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**Labs are counted as a class meeting.**

Attendance counting begins on the first day the student is enrolled. When an instructor requests the withdrawal (drop) of a student from a course, a grade of "W" will be considered if the student has, at the time of the request, a course grade equivalent to the numeric average of sixty (60) or higher; otherwise, a grade of WF may be given.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY (continued)

Attendance policies and the calculation of unexcused absences apply to students enrolled in Internet courses who fail to make scheduled contact with the instructor and/or complete assignments as listed in the course outline. Students enrolled in certain work- force programs may be required to meet more stringent attendance regulations, as described in the programs' handbooks. Students who are required to enroll in developmental courses must participate continuously in a developmental program until all Texas Success Initiative requirements are satisfied. Students enrolled under these restrictions will be withdrawn from the College if they exceed the allowed number of absences in a developmental course(s) and this was the only developmental work the student was participating in due to failure on the placement test.

Students who are absent from class for the observance of a religious holiday may take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence if, not later than the 15th day of the semester, the student notifies the instructor(s) that they will be absent for a religious holiday (Sec. 51.911 Texas Education Code).

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

**Rights and Responsibilities of Faculty.** All members of the college community have a responsibility to ensure academic integrity, and members of the instructional faculty are especially instrumental as academic integrity is based in the classroom whether real or virtual.

Members of the faculty have primary responsibility for:

1. communicating standards of academic honesty and scholastic expectations,
2. managing activities, assignments, and assessments so as to minimize opportunities for dishonesty,
3. approaching students who are suspected of misconduct and meeting with them privately in a civil and respectful manner,
4. establishing and following prescribed procedures for academic dishonesty,
5. protecting the identity of a student who reports an incident of academic misconduct.

**Student Responsibilities.** Students have a responsibility to behave in accordance with ethical standards that will build and sustain the trust of the faculty, the administration, and their peers and to follow the Honor Code of Conduct of Vernon College:

By virtue of being a student of Vernon College, I pledge to behave ethically by:

1. following the standards of academic honesty and scholastic expectations,
2. refraining from giving or receiving any unauthorized aid or engaging in collusion,
3. refusing to take the work of others and submit it as my own,
4. notifying the appropriate instructor and/or those in immediate authority of any incidents of suspected academic misconduct.

**Specific Violations of Academic Integrity.** Violations of academic integrity are serious academic violations and will not be tolerated. Violations of academic integrity and forms of scholastic dishonesty include but are not limited to the following:

Plagiarism, collusion, cheating and other acts designed to give an unfair academic advantage to the student.

"Plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means someone else's work and then submitting that work for credit as if it were one's own. It also includes the failure to properly document sources used in research.



### **Specific Violations of Academic Integrity (continued).**

“Collusion” includes, but it is not limited to, unauthorized collaboration with another person in the preparation of an academic assignment offered for credit.

“Cheating” includes, but is not limited to:

1. copying from another student’s work, e.g., test paper or assignment, or allowing another student to copy from one’s own without authority;
2. possessing any materials during a test that are not authorized by the instructor, such as class notes, specifically designed “crib notes,” calculators, electronic devices, etc.;
3. using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or in part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer programs;
4. collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
5. discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
6. divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructor has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or kept by the student.
7. substituting for another person or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take the course, to take a test, or to complete any course-related assignment;
8. registering for and taking a class for which the student does not have the formally required prerequisite classes or a written waiver from a Division Chair or Instructional Dean;
9. falsifying academic records, including, but not limited to, altering or assisting in the altering of any official record of the College.

**Sanctions Related to Violations of Academic Integrity.** The sanctions for academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

1. grade of zero on an exam or assignment
2. “F” in a course
3. administrative withdrawal from a class with a possible recommendation of disciplinary sanctions

### **PREREQUISITES**

Each student is responsible for determining course prerequisites prior to enrollment. Credit may not be granted and/or a student may be administratively withdrawn from a course taken out of order or without other stated prerequisites unless permission is obtained before enrollment from the instructor and the appropriate instructional administrator. Prerequisites are listed in course descriptions.

### **EXAMINATIONS**

Periodic examinations in a course will be given at the discretion of the instructor. Make-up examinations for students absent on a regular examination day may be scheduled at the convenience and discretion of the instructor. Final examination make-ups or final examinations given prior to the regularly scheduled time will be given only after approval by the appropriate instructional administrator. The student will be responsible for obtaining permission for postponement of a final examination or for an early final examination. If a final examination is scheduled, failure to take the examination may result in a permanent grade of “F” in a course.

## INSTRUCTOR OFFICE HOURS

Full-time instructors maintain scheduled office hours in order to be available to students for individual conferences. These hours are posted on the doors of the instructors' offices or listed in the course outline. While part-time instructors are not required to maintain office hours, they are required to provide time before and after classes to visit with students and to provide academic assistance. Students requiring conferences with part-time instructors should make appointments directly with the instructor or through the appropriate Division Chair.

## NON-TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

Credit earned through the methods below will be held in escrow until the currently enrolled student has completed (with a grade of "C" or better) six semester hours of college-level courses in residency at Vernon College. Credit earned through the following methods are not applied to the twenty-five (25%) percent college level course work required in residence for graduation with certificates or degrees from Vernon College.

### Credit by Examination

Students who believe that they already possess the knowledge and/or skills taught in any college-level course offered by Vernon College may challenge that course by examination. Credit earned by examination may be applied toward meeting the requirements of a certificate or an associate degree at Vernon College. Credit by examination awarded to students to meet Vernon College graduation requirements is no guarantee that such credit will transfer to other institutions. Credit earned by examination; other than Vernon College Departmental Challenge Exams, may not be used to meet the residence requirement. Successful performance on an examination is recorded on a student's transcript as credit by that particular examination. No annotation of unsuccessful performance on a credit by examination testing instrument is made on the student's permanent record. For more detailed information, students should contact the testing coordinator or a counselor and review the information in the *Non-Traditional Education* brochure. Listed below are the means by which a student may earn course credit by examination.

**Departmental Challenge Examinations.** For all Vernon College college-level courses which cannot be challenged through standardized examinations, departmental challenge examinations will be constructed by the appropriate faculty specialists as students apply to challenge such courses. These examinations are given during the fall and spring semesters. Departmental challenge exams will cost \$35.00 per semester hour of credit to be awarded. Students may retest after a six-month waiting period.

**Advanced Placement Program (AP).** The Advanced Placement (AP) Program is a cooperative education endeavor of secondary schools, colleges, and the College Board of the Educational Testing Service. The examinations are given each year at selected high schools throughout the nation. Vernon College will accept AP credit toward selected courses with appropriate scores.

**College-Level Examination Program (CLEP).** The College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) is a national testing program administered by the Educational Testing Service. VC is a test center for CLEP examinations, and the examinations are given to anyone who wishes to take them. However, not all CLEP examinations are accepted for credit at VC. CLEP is a computerized test and administered by appointment only. Examinees are responsible for contacting each college or university they plan to attend to ensure that CLEP credit is accepted. Additional score reports are available through the Educational Testing Service.



## **Credit by Examination (continued)**

**International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO).** The International Baccalaureate Organization is a college preparatory program recognized for its challenging curriculum. Vernon College values the organization's efforts. In accordance with S.B. 111, students who have earned an IB diploma can expect to receive at least 24 hours of college credit. Non-traditional course credit is recorded to transcripts after the completion of six (6) hours of Vernon College coursework. Where applicable, IB Higher and Standard exam scores will earn selected Vernon College course credits. Within their first academic year, IB students are responsible for notifying Vernon College Admissions of their IB status and scores. Prior to enrollment, all IB students must meet TSI (Texas Success Initiative) guidelines for placement.

**Excelsior College Examination Program (ECEP).** Excelsior College sponsors the ECEP (formerly Regents College). The Educational Service Center on Sheppard Air Force Base provides these tests to military personnel. Vernon College is not a testing center for ECEP.

**Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Support (DANTES).** DANTES subject standardized tests are available to members of the military and accepted for credit toward courses at Vernon College. The passing score is the American Council on Education (ACE) recommended score as shown on the transcript of the test results. The Educational Service Center on Sheppard Air Force Base provides these tests for military personnel. Vernon College is not a testing center for DANTES.

### **Advanced Technical Credit**

The Advanced Technical Credit (ATC) Program gives high school students a chance to receive credit at participating community colleges across Texas for taking certain enhanced technical courses during high school. The equivalent college courses are designated in the VC General Catalog catalog by an (A). For a high school to offer an ATC course to its students, the teacher of the course must meet the ATC teacher requirements, go through ATC training and teach the high school course so that it is enhanced to meet the content of the equivalent college course. ATC courses are only offered in technical or workforce areas - courses in academic areas such as English or History are not offered as ATC courses.

### **Articulated Credit**

College courses taken in grades 11 and 12 in a secondary school may be awarded credit according to the articulation agreement developed by Vernon College and the secondary school.

### **Credit from Non-Degree Programs/Courses and Professional Certifications**

Hours earned in a Vernon College non-degree program/course or through professional certification may be converted to semester hour credit provided the following conditions are met: the credit awarded must apply to the student's declared major; the amount of credit awarded is clearly stated and is in accordance with commonly accepted good practice; the course outcomes and competencies must be equivalent; the course must have been taught by a qualified faculty member; and decisions regarding the awarding of credits and the determination of such credits will be made by qualified faculty members and the Dean of Instructional Services.

Students concurrently enrolled in courses taught for both credit and continuing education may convert fifty (50%) percent of their technical course work from continuing education to credit. Conversion must be requested within five years after the last course is completed. No more than four (4) semester hours for a credit certificate of 29 or less hours and no more than eight (8) semester hours for a credit certificate over 30 hours or a degree may be converted to semester hour credit through professional certification except in the case of Emergency Medical Technology Paramedic Certificate Program in which case a maximum of nineteen (19) semester hours may be awarded. Prior training hours must

## **Credit Non-Degree Prog./Courses (con't)**

be equal to Vernon Colleges EMS classroom/clinical hours. All prior training will be evaluated by the EMS Coordinator prior to approval. A \$25.00 fee is charged for each course recorded to an academic transcript.

### **Evaluation of Military Experiences**

*A Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services*, published by the American Council on Education, has been adopted by Vernon College as a basis for evaluating training in the armed forces. Information concerning the evaluation of military training may be obtained in the Office of Admissions and Records.

*NOTE: Students receiving veteran's education benefits are required to submit military transcripts in order to be certified.*

### **Credit for Experiential Learning**

Credit for experiential learning may be awarded for required external work experience courses (cooperative education, internship, clinical, practicum) in the curriculum provided the learning is documented and achievement of all outcomes for the courses is demonstrated. Documentation will include how such learning was evaluated and the basis on which such credit was awarded. This credit (not to include the capstone course) must not duplicate credit already awarded. Credit can only be given in one course for the same experiential learning. Capstone external work experience credit may be awarded during the last semester before graduation. Refer to the Vernon College Catalog for specific course degree plans. A \$25 fee is charged for each course recorded to an academic transcript.

## **PLACEMENT TESTING**

Vernon College adheres to the Texas Success Initiative Law adopted by the Texas Legislature. Vernon College requires placement testing and subsequent developmental course work as needed. Vernon College Testing Centers offer TSI approved computerized placement testing. Please contact the Student Services office for information on placement testing and possible exemptions.

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

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford eligible students certain rights with respect to their education records. (An "eligible student" under FERPA is a student who is 18 years of age or older or who attends a postsecondary institution.) These rights include:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the College receives a request for access. A student should submit to the registrar, dean, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official, a written request that identifies the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. The school official 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 school official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student 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, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. A student who wishes to ask the school to amend a record should write the school official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested, the school will notify the student in writing of the decision and the student's 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.

## FERPA (continued)

3. The right to provide written consent before the university discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. The school discloses education records without a student's prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person serving on the board of trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the College who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent or a student volunteering to assist another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for the College. Upon request, the school also discloses education records without consent to officials of another school 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 the College to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202

Areas in which student records are maintained include the following: admission and academic records (Office of Admissions and Records), financial aid records (Office of Financial Aid), financial records (Business Office), advising, disciplinary, and placement records (Office of Student Services), housing records (Housing Director's Office), testing records (Testing Centers), student health records (Health Clinic), athletic records (Athletic Director's Office) and progress records (faculty offices).

### **FERPA Annual Notice to Reflect Possible Federal and State Data Collection and Use**

As of January 3, 2012, the U.S. Department of Education's FERPA regulations expand the circumstances under which your education records and personally identifiable information (PII) contained in such records - including your Social Security Number, grades, or other private information - may be accessed without your consent. First, the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, and the U.S. Secretary of Education, or state and local education authorities ("Federal and State Authorities") may allow access to your records and PII without your consent to any third party designated by a Federal or State Authority to evaluate a federal- or state-supported education program. The evaluation may relate to any program that is "principally engaged in the provision of education," such as early childhood education and job training, as well as any program that is administered by an education agency or institution. Second, Federal and State Authorities may allow access to your education records and PII without your consent to researchers performing certain types of studies, in certain cases even when we object to or do not request such research. Federal and State Authorities must obtain certain use-restriction and data security promises from the entities that they authorize to receive our PII, but the Authorities need not maintain direct control over such entities. In addition, in connection with Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems, State Authorities may collect, compile, permanently retain, and share without your consent PII from your education records, and they may track your participation in education and other programs by linking such PII to other personal information about you that they obtain from other Federal or State data sources, including workforce development, unemployment insurance, child welfare, juvenile justice, military service, and migrant student records systems.

## **Directory Information**

Directory information is information that may be released to the general public without the written consent of the student. A student may request that all or any part of the directory information be withheld from the public by making a written request to the Admissions and Records office during the first 12 class days of a fall or spring semester or the first four class days of a five and one-half week summer semester. This request will apply only to the current enrollment period; therefore, the student must file a written request for each subsequent enrollment. The following is to be included as directory information: name, date and place of birth, current and permanent address (including e-mail address), telephone listing, major and minor fields of study, enrollment status (full-time, part-time), classification, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, all previous educational agencies or institutions attended, and photographs.

## **GENERAL ADMISSIONS POLICY**

Vernon College has an open admission policy, which insures that all persons who can benefit from higher education have an opportunity to do so. The admission policy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, marital status, religion, disability, or age. The admission policy, procedures, and decisions of Vernon College are managed by both the administration and faculty. All matters pertaining to admission to Vernon College should be addressed to the Admissions and Records office.

### **“ADMIT ME, VC”**

Vernon College provides regular information sessions called “Admit Me, VC.” The goal of these meetings is to assist potential VC students as they navigate the admissions process, as well as become more familiar with the associated instructional locations and respective departments. Information about these meetings can be obtained by contacting the admissions office at any Vernon College location.

## **STUDENT CLASSIFICATIONS**

The freshman class of Vernon College is composed of both beginning freshman (students who have never enrolled in college before) and freshman (students who have earned less than 30 semester hours of college credit). A sophomore is a student who has completed at least 30 but less than 72 semester hours and has not earned an associate degree. The unclassified category is for the student with 73 or more hours who has not earned an associate degree. The remaining two classifications are associate degree and baccalaureate or above, which are both self-explanatory. A full-time student is one enrolled for 12 or more credit hours in a standard academic semester

## **CREDIT HOUR**

In accord with federal regulations, a credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates:

1. Not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester hour, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required outlined in item 1 above for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practical, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hour.

## **COURSE LOAD**

The normal course load during a sixteen (16) week semester or two (2) 8-week semesters within the 16-week semester is five courses of fifteen to seventeen hours. Physical education activity courses, labs, and other one-semester-hour courses are not included. The maximum load for a student is six regular courses or no more than 18 total hours in a Fall or Spring 16-week semester, and/or two (2) 8-week semesters, without the approval of the Vice President of Instructional Services.

The maximum load for a student is restricted to two regular courses during each five and one-half week summer semester unless permission is granted by Vice President of Instructional Services for an additional enrollment. No more than fourteen total hours may be attempted in a summer semester of eleven (11) weeks or two (2) summer semesters of five and one-half weeks each.

## **TRANSCRIPT OF COLLEGE RECORD**

An official Vernon College transcript is a chronological listing of all courses attempted at Vernon College with the grade earned in each course. No course is removed or purged from the transcript for any reason. When a course is repeated, each attempt is shown along with the earned grade.

Prior to the fall of 1987, all transcripts were kept manually and updated at the end of each enrollment period. Beginning with the fall of 1987, transcripts are computer generated and list all courses attempted since September 1, 1987. Transfer work accepted by Vernon College is listed using Vernon College course numbers and titles and is shown ahead of the Vernon College resident work on the transcript.

An official transcript, bearing the college seal and signature of the Registrar, will be furnished to a student, an employer, or an educational institution upon the student's written request. Grades and transcripts will not be released if the student has a "hold" on his/her records.

## **REVERSE TRANSFER**

The opportunity to earn an associate in arts or science degree at Vernon College is also available after the student has transferred to a Texas public university. This process is designed for students who transfer before completion of their associate degree. A student must earn at least twenty-five (25%) percent of the college-level courses for the degree in residence at Vernon College. Please contact the transfer university, after completion of the required course work, for additional information.

## **HOLD ON STUDENT RECORDS**

Grades and transcripts will not be released if the student has a "hold" on his/her records. Holds may be placed on the student records for failure to meet admission requirements; financial reasons (returned checks, overdue loans, defaulted loans, defaulted payment plans, overdue residence hall payments, etc.); academic or financial aid suspension; materials overdue at the library; Vernon College parking fines; housing rule violations; or other reasons deemed necessary by the College. These holds can be released only after the cause of the hold has been satisfactorily cleared.



## STUDENT INITIATED DROPS AND WITHDRAWALS

There is a distinct difference between a “drop” and a “withdrawal.” A student initiated “drop” takes place during the schedule change period of a semester, up until the official census date (12<sup>th</sup> class day). Subsequently, “drops” do not appear on a student’s academic transcript. “Withdrawals” begin after the census date, and continue through the “withdrawal” deadline date listed for each semester. Please refer to the semester Advising and Registration Guide for published “withdrawal” dates.

Students may drop a part of their course loads or withdraw from all classes anytime after they have registered and paid and until the last day to withdraw as documented in the Advising and Registration Guide. **Students are strongly encouraged to visit with their instructor(s) before seriously considering dropping a course or withdrawing from school.**

To accomplish the “drop” and/or “withdrawal,” specific procedures must be followed. Students should contact the Admissions and Records office on the Vernon campus or the Century City Center to execute the “drop” and/or “withdrawal” procedure. Students receiving Title IV financial aid funds must contact the Financial Aid Office concerning the calculation of return of funds before the “drop” and/or “withdrawal” will be completed.

Students voluntarily “dropping” and/or “withdrawing” within the first 75 percent of the semester will receive an automatic grade of “W,” unless an administrative withdrawal has previously been processed by the College.

The grade of “F” will be awarded for “drops” and/or “withdrawals” processed after the dates indicated in the Advising and Registration Guide, unless an administrative withdrawal has previously been processed.

### ADMINISTRATIVE WITHDRAWAL

The College reserves the right to withdraw a student from one or more classes if, in the judgment of college officials, such action is deemed to be in the best interest of the student and/or the College. Examples of some reasons for administrative withdrawal are failure to pay registration tuition and fees, failure to provide admission credentials or meet course prerequisites, failure to follow Vernon College TSI policy, failure to remove “holds” in a timely manner, failure to comply with Title IV financial aid requirements, excessive absenteeism, academic dishonesty, or any disciplinary reasons.

### EARLY ALERT

An Early Alert is a student notification early warning system utilized by the faculty to inform students when they are concerned about the student’s academic progress in their class. Early Alerts can be sent for unsatisfactory academic progress, frequent absenteeism, or other concerns of the instructor. If a student receives an Early Alert, it is because the instructor is concerned about progress in the class. This could be due to: an excessive number of absences, not turning in assignments, low grades, or students who indicate they are struggling with social or personal issues. Instructors are not required to send Early Alerts.

Early Alerts are sent only to the Vernon College issued student email address. Early Alert warnings can also be monitored by other Vernon College departments including but not limited to Student Success and Financial Aid but are not seen by other Vernon College instructors or advisors. Instructors can also use the Early Alert system to notify Student Services of students who appear to be in crisis or students who breach the Academic Integrity Policy. The purpose of the Early Alert is so that the student realizes their success in class is at risk and that the student will seek assistance through Vernon College student support services.

## **GRADUATION**

Vernon College awards the Occupational Skills Award, Certificate of Completion, the Associate in Arts Degree, the Associate in Science Degree, the Associate of Arts in Teaching, and the Associate in Applied Science Degree. All students applying for a degree, certificate, or award must complete an application for graduation and pay the appropriate fee. The application for graduation deadline is documented in the Advising and Registration Guide each semester.

### **Occupational Skills Award**

Occupational Skills Awards consist of a course or series of courses that provide workforce skills for basic-entry-level employment in a vocational career field. An award may be a workforce credit program of 9-14 semester credit hours or a workforce continuing education program of 144-359 contact hours.

### **Certificate of Completion**

Certificate programs are designed for entry-level employment, meeting a particular specialty within an occupational area, and/or upgrading one's skills and knowledge within a vocation. It is possible for a student to earn a certificate while qualifying for an associate degree in some programs.

### **Associate of Arts, Associate of Arts in Teaching, and Associate of Science Degrees**

The Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees provide general academic curricula in university-parallel and pre-professional courses of study that generally correspond to the first four semesters of a bachelor's degree program. While VC does not offer a major in the AA, AAT, or AS degrees, suggested transfer curricula are included in the catalog to serve as a guide for students whose educational goals include transfer to a four-year university. Students should consult the catalog of the receiving institution for specific requirements.

### **Associate in Applied Science Degree**

The Associate in Applied Science degree programs are designed to prepare the student for immediate employment and/or career advancement. These programs are generally workforce or paraprofessional in nature and are identified with a specialty designation.

## **GRADUATION APPLICATION AND CEREMONY ATTENDANCE**

In order to receive a diploma for a degree or certificate, and to facilitate planning for the graduation ceremony, students are required to apply for graduation before the published deadlines. The application for graduation is filed with the Office of Admissions and Records. Degrees or Certificates which are not applied for may be awarded and posted on the student's transcript when earned.

Candidates for a degree or certificate of twenty-four (24) or more semester credit hours are expected to attend commencement exercises. Skill certificate graduates from programs of less than twenty-four (24) semester credit hours will receive their diplomas by email. Since there is no commencement ceremony for August or December, diplomas are available approximately six (6) weeks after the graduation date.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

### **Barrier Free Campus**

The College recognizes that individuals with disabilities should be encouraged to further their education and has made available facilities free of barriers and which aide and assist students with physical disabilities.

### **BUSINESS OFFICE**

There are business offices located in Vernon in the Osborne Administration Building and in Wichita Falls at the Century City Center.

### **BOOKSTORE**

Vernon College has two bookstores operated by the Texas Book Company for the convenience of the student body. One bookstore is located on the Vernon campus and the other is located in the Vernon College Century City Center facility. The bookstore hours may vary from regular Vernon College hours. Required textbooks and other instructional materials are available as well as appropriate college-type variety items and gifts.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES**

### **Distance Education**

To meet the changing educational needs of its service area, Vernon College provides distance education opportunities to students with special scheduling needs, at remote locations, and at high schools and other regional centers. Distance education courses are available through the internet (in both online and hybrid formats) or by two-way interactive video (ITV) classrooms at area high schools and other selected sites. Interactive video (ITV) courses provide real-time instruction from Vernon College to the remote site. Hybrid courses contain both a traditional face-to-face component and an online component. Internet (online) courses allow students to take courses from remote locations by accessing courses online via a personal computer. While course content may be obtained online, proctored testing may be required for both hybrid and/or online courses.

Anyone eligible to enroll in a course at Vernon College may enroll in a distance education course. However, internet (online) courses require a significant amount of self-motivation, self-discipline, excellent study habits, and commitment for success.

All distance education students are authenticated through the use of a unique username and password. Students receive their unique username and password upon completion of the registration process. The student is responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of the password and account. A student must not disclose his/her username or password to any other person. Disclosure of a username and/or password may result in administrative withdrawal from Vernon College with forfeiture of tuition and fees. Any student who is aware of a violation of username and/or password security must immediately notify either the instructor of the course or the Learning Management System Administrator.

The privacy of distance education students is maintained in accordance to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Communication precautions are taken to protect distance education students. Instructional and course communications between instructors and students are primarily accomplished using Vernon College issued electronic mail accounts which require authorized credentials and password securities. For more information, students may access the Vernon College Distance Education Student Manual at <http://www.vernoncollege.edu/DistanceEducation/>



## **Distance Education (continued)**

Distance education courses not in the College catalog/schedule may be available to Vernon College students through the Virtual College of Texas (VCT), a collaborative effort among Texas community colleges. Through VCT, eligible Vernon College students may register through Vernon College to take distance education courses from other community colleges throughout Texas. Student eligibility requirements and restrictions to VCT enrollment can be viewed on page 5 of the VC Distance Education Student Manual which is available on the VC website. For additional information about the Virtual College of Texas (VCT), students may access the VCT web site at <https://www.vct.org/new.php#>

## **PASS Department**

The Proactive Assistance for Student Success (PASS) Department Tutoring Centers provide tutoring through an online tutoring service called NetTutor and in-house essay tutoring that will assist students in academic learning that will help them become successful individuals. The Tutoring Centers also provide free computer usage, including Internet access and a quiet place to study or read. Feel free to visit the Tutoring Centers or contact one of our staff members.

Wright Library  
940-552-6291 Ext 2309  
Room 217  
4400 College Drive  
Vernon, Texas 76384

Century City  
940-696-8752 Ext 3257  
Room 111  
4105 Maplewood Avenue  
Wichita Falls, Texas 76308

Skills Training Center  
940-766-3369 Ext. 7100  
2813 Central Expressway East  
Wichita Falls, Texas 76302

## **Tutoring Center Services**

Vernon College offers free academic assistance through an online tutoring service called NetTutor. The Tutoring Centers located at the Vernon Campus, Century City Center, and Skills Training Center can help students access NetTutor and will assist students with logging into NetTutor. In addition, the NetTutor link is on most Canvas courses. The Tutoring Centers offer free in-house, online essay tutoring for students writing essays for English classes or other Vernon College classes. Free math tutoring is also available in the Open Math Labs for all students enrolled in Vernon College math courses. Instructors will publish lab dates and times. To contact a specific Tutoring Center Coordinator, please visit [www.vernoncollege.edu/tutoring-centers](http://www.vernoncollege.edu/tutoring-centers) or go to the Vernon College homepage and select the orange tab marked "Inside VC" and choose PASS Department/Tutoring under the "For Students" column.

## **Resource Center**

The Resource Center provides students with information about agencies that may be able to provide financial assistance, such as help with utilities, house, childcare, and educational expenses. More information and a Resource Information Request Form can be found at:

[www.vernoncollege.edu/Additional-Resources](http://www.vernoncollege.edu/Additional-Resources). For more information contact Jane Robinson via email at ([jrobinson@vernoncollege.edu](mailto:jrobinson@vernoncollege.edu)) or by phone at 940-552-6291/940-696-8752, ext. 2325.

## ADA Accommodations

Vernon College provides appropriate accommodations to qualified students in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) act. Accommodations are made on a case-by-case basis. Students with special needs are encouraged to contact the PASS Department Director/Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) Coordinator as early as possible. Early notice is required to prepare for and provide certain special accommodations during the first week of class. All requests for special accommodations due to a disability **must** be accompanied by appropriate and acceptable documentation. It is the responsibility of the student to provide documentation that qualifies the student as an individual with a disability, as defined by law, and supports the requested accommodation. The student is also responsible for providing current and accurate contact information and for meeting with PASS Department personnel to sign paperwork and receive instructor letters. Special arrangements may be made for distance students who never travel to one of the Vernon College campuses. Students must complete the request process before any accommodations are made. More information may be obtained from the Vernon College website at [www.vernoncollege.edu/ADA-home](http://www.vernoncollege.edu/ADA-home). Students may also email [jshoemaker@vernoncollege.edu](mailto:jshoemaker@vernoncollege.edu) or [dlehman@vernoncollege.edu](mailto:dlehman@vernoncollege.edu) or call (940) 552-6291, ext. 2307.

## Interpreter Services

Vernon College is committed to providing timely and efficient interpreter services for students who are deaf. The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) handles all requests for interpreter services.

Interpreter services for academic classes, career and technical classes, and continuing education classes are provided by Vernon College. Students are responsible for initiating the request for interpreter services. At least two weeks' notice is needed so that arrangements for interpreter services can be made in a timely manner. Requests that are made on short notice may result in no interpreters being available due to conflicts in interpreter schedules. Documentation may be required to prove the need for interpreter services if the student does not appear in person to make the request.

Every effort is made to provide the student with a qualified interpreter; however, students may not necessarily receive the individual interpreter of their choice. Interpreters are assigned by Vernon College in order to best utilize the interpreters' skills and to assure that the student has the opportunity to ask questions of the instructor immediately preceding or following the class.

For further information regarding interpreter requests, please visit the Interpreter Requests page on the college website at [www.vernoncollege.edu/interpreter-requests](http://www.vernoncollege.edu/interpreter-requests).

Location: Wright Library, Room 217 on the Vernon Campus

Email: [dlehman@vernoncollege.edu](mailto:dlehman@vernoncollege.edu)

Phone: (940) 552-6291, ext. 2307 or 2308

Fax: (940) 552-6387

## Accommodations for College Events

Individuals who need accommodations for events required by an instructor or offered by the college must contact the Vernon College Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) **at least five (5) working days prior to the event or activity**. The student may send this request to [dlehman@vernoncollege.edu](mailto:dlehman@vernoncollege.edu) or [jshoemaker@vernoncollege.edu](mailto:jshoemaker@vernoncollege.edu) or may fax the request to (940) 552-6387. The student may call (940) 552-6291, extensions 2307 or 2308, or the student may send the request through the US mail to the following address:

## Accommodations for College Events (continued)

Vernon College  
PASS Department Director /Office for Students with Disabilities Coordinator  
4400 College Drive  
Vernon, Texas 76384

NOTE: Requests through the mail ***must be postmarked at least seven (7) days prior to the event*** in order to reach OSD at least 5 days beforehand. Students should include their name, the name, time, and location of the event (including room number, if applicable), the name of their instructor, and the type of accommodation requested. Accommodations may not be available if the request is not received at least five working days prior to the event.

### Procedure for Reasonable Substitution and Waiver Requests

Any Vernon College student with a disability who wishes to request a reasonable substitution or a waiver for a course should adhere to the following procedure:

- I. The student must submit evidence of a documented disability written by a qualified professional. The documentation must verify that a disability exists and that it impacts major life functions in a way that impairs the student's ability to successfully complete the course(s) in question.
- II. After the documentation is reviewed and the individual is considered qualified under the ADA, the student must submit in writing to the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) the following:
  - A. Proof that the documented disability is reason for the failure to meet the educational or class requirement for which the substitution or waiver is requested.
  - B. An expert's written opinion that a course substitution or waiver is warranted.
  - C. A copy of the student's transcript, including test scores and transfer information.
- III. Once all required information is submitted, the OSD Coordinator will convene a committee within five class days of receiving the information. The committee will consist of the following people:
  - A. The Division Chair in charge of the student's declared or certified major area
  - B. One faculty member representing the subject area to be substituted or waived
  - C. OSD Coordinator
  - D. A Vernon College counselor
- IV. The committee's recommendation regarding this request shall be put in writing. It shall include the rationale of the decision, and in cases where a substitution is approved, shall recommend a specific substitution. All course substitutions must conform to the principle of "reasonable accommodations" and follow the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board rules.
- V. The OSD Coordinator will forward the decision to the Vice President of Instructional Services within five class days. The Vice President of Instructional Services will make a final decision and forward that decision to the OSD Coordinator within five days. The OSD Coordinator will contact the student within five days of the final decision.
- VI. Grievance Procedure  
A student who is denied a substitution/waiver may follow the Vernon College ADA Grievance Procedure outlined in the Vernon College Student Handbook.

Please contact the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) on the Vernon Campus if you have questions.

Location: Wright Library, Room 217, Vernon Campus

Phone: (940) 552-6291, ext. 2308

Fax: (940) 552-6387

## **Students with Disabilities and Attendance Issues Policy**

Faculty determines class attendance policy at Vernon College. Depending on the level and nature of each class, attendance may be considered essential to the pedagogic process and is required by the instructor or department. Faculty also determines policies regarding make-up work and missed exams or quizzes.

The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) can verify to faculty the presence of a disease or disability which has the potential to affect attendance. Verification is based upon written medical documentation from a qualified professional. Such verification is included on the Accommodations Request Letter that is delivered by the students to the instructor. This letter should be used by students to initiate a discussion with instructors regarding their particular circumstances and the possible impact upon class attendance and participation. Students and instructors should discuss classroom attendance policy, procedures for notifying instructors about absences, and make-up policies. This interaction allows students and instructors to determine how the students' academic progress may be affected by absences within a particular course or program.

Students are responsible for reporting absences directly to their instructors in accordance with the instructors' attendance policies except in the event of an illness which is so severe that it results in the student being unable to do so. In that event, the student or student's representative may contact the Office for Students with Disabilities to request assistance in notifying instructors. The OSD may require verification of the illness or emergency event.

Please contact the Office for Students with Disabilities if you have additional questions.

Physical Location: Wright Library, Room 217 on the Vernon Campus

Phone: (940) 552-6291, ext. 2307 or 2308

Fax: (940) 552-6387

Email: [jshoemaker@vernoncollege.edu](mailto:jshoemaker@vernoncollege.edu) or [dlehman@vernoncollege.edu](mailto:dlehman@vernoncollege.edu)

## **Service Animal Information**

According to the amended ADA, the definition of a service animal is "any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability." The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. Dogs whose sole function is "the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship" are **not** considered service dogs under the ADA. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. This policy can be seen in its entirety at the following website location: <http://www.vernoncollege.edu/service-animal-policy>.

Students using a service animal who plan to live in student-housing should contact the Dean of Students prior to move-in.

## **ADA Grievance Procedure**

If students feel they have not been served with reasonable accommodations as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act, they may file an ADA grievance by following the process outlined below. All ADA grievances must be initiated within three (3) weeks of the alleged occurrence, omission, or denial. The ADA Grievance Procedure is separate from all other college grievances.

1. Discuss the matter with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) Coordinator.
2. The decision of the OSD Coordinator shall be made and communicated to the student within five (5) class days of the student conference. The decision is final unless within five (5) class days the student contacts the Vice President of Instructional Services with a written narrative of the complaint. (Alternative means of filing complaints, such as personal interviews or a tape

## **ADA Grievance Procedure (continued)**

recording of the complaint, will be made available for qualified persons with disabilities upon request.)

3. The Vice President of Instructional Services has five (5) class days to investigate, reach a decision, and respond in writing to the student. The decision is final unless within five (5) class days after the decision has been made, the student completes an “ADA Student Grievance and Appeals” Form (available in the Student Services Division) and presents it to the ADA appeals committee through the Student Services Office.

## **ADA Appeals Committee**

The ADA appeals committee, appointed annually by the President, will have the authority to impose sanctions on any instructor, student, or staff member appearing before it. The chairperson of the ADA appeals committee is appointed by the President. The committee will consist of three faculty members, two staff members, three students, and the chairperson to equal a total of nine members. There shall also be appointed one faculty member, one staff member, and two students as alternates in the event that the appointed committee member(s) cannot be present. The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) Coordinator will serve in an advisory capacity. The chairperson, two faculty/staff members, and two students must be present to constitute a quorum and hear a case. To ensure a fair and impartial hearing, any member of the committee who has a direct interest in the case should recuse himself/herself from the committee, and an appropriate alternate shall serve on the committee for that case. Upon a written (or alternative format) request to the ADA appeals committee, the committee chairperson will within three (3) class days contact the committee members to arrange a hearing date, time, and place and will advise the Dean of Student Services of such. The Dean of Student Services will issue notice to the student. The student will be given at least five (5) class days notice of the date, time and place of the scheduled hearing.

## **ADA Appeals Committee Hearing Procedures**

All ADA committee hearings will be conducted in private in order to protect the confidential nature of the proceedings. Any student or employee requiring accommodations for this hearing shall make the request for such accommodations to the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) Coordinator at least three (3) class days prior to the hearing. In the event that an essential accommodation cannot be provided by the College by the date of the hearing, the hearing shall be rescheduled with the respective date to be no more than one week later. The chairperson will preside at the hearing. The Dean of Student Services or his designee will be present to make sure procedural matters are followed. The hearing shall be of an informal nature and need not adhere to the rules of procedure or technical rules of evidence followed by courts of law.

Deviations from prescribed procedures will not necessarily invalidate a decision or proceeding unless significant prejudice to a student respondent or the College may result. A written record of the proceedings will be kept by the committee chairperson. No audio recordings will be permitted. The record of the hearing will be filed in the office of the Dean of Student Services and only for the purpose of appeal be accessible to the College and the student.

Hearings will proceed in the following order:

1. Reading of the charges by the committee chairperson
2. The complainant’s statement of position with respect to the charges (no more than 5 minutes)
3. The private presentation of evidence by the respondent and questions by the ADA appeals committee (no more than 10 minutes total, including questions)
4. The private presentation of evidence by the complainant and questions by the ADA appeals committee (no more than 10 minutes, including questions)



## **ADA Appeals Committee Hearing Procedures (continued)**

5. Brief closing statements by both parties (no more than 3 minutes with the respondent speaking first, followed by the complainant)

Upon conclusion of the hearing, the ADA appeals committee will consider the merits of the case. The appeals committee chairperson will transmit the committee's findings and determinations in writing, to only the complainant, the respondent, and the Dean of Student Services within three (3) class days. The decision of the ADA appeals committee is final, unless within five (5) class days after the decision has been made the student makes a written (or alternative format) request to the President for review.

### **Appeals to the President**

Within five (5) class days after the decision has been made by the ADA appeals committee, either or both parties may submit a written request for appeal to the College President. The President's decision will begin with the record of the hearing. Both parties may, at the discretion of the President, submit oral or written arguments to support their position. The President may approve, reject, or modify the decision in question. The President may require that the original hearing be reopened for the presentation of additional evidence and reconsideration of the decision or for correction of a procedural error.

Note: After completing the ADA appeals process, students dissatisfied with Vernon College's decision regarding their ADA complaint may also choose to file a complaint of discrimination directly with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), Texas Commission on Human Rights, or any other federal, state or local agency as is their right under the ADA.

### **Library Services**

<http://www.vernoncollege.edu/library>

The library supports the institutional purpose of Vernon College by providing a comprehensive and quality collection of print and electronic resources serving the informational needs of all students, faculty, and staff.

Print and E-book Collections: Students may search the library's online catalog for e-books and print titles housed within the Vernon College Library System. The catalog is accessible via a link posted on the library homepage. E-books may be conveniently accessed and downloaded directly from the catalog. Print collections are maintained on the Vernon campus and at all major center locations with over 26,000 volumes housed at the Wright Library in Vernon. Collections include reference materials as well as general circulating titles supporting all academic areas. Distance learners and students attending other VC locations may request and obtain books from any instructional location via the Interlibrary Loan Request Form accessible from the library homepage at [www.vernoncollege.edu/library](http://www.vernoncollege.edu/library). Students may also submit an interlibrary loan request to obtain books and other materials unavailable within the Vernon College Library System.

On-Campus and Remote Access to Online Databases: Remote research options are essential in meeting the informational needs of all Vernon College students, including onsite and distance learners. The library provides on-campus as well as remote access to a quality selection of databases offering full text access to journals, reference materials, career resources and other information sources. Databases are accessible via the "Access to Databases" link posted on the library homepage. Researchers may log-in with a VC student ID number and "PIN" from any Internet connection to search the databases remotely.

## **Library Services (continued)**

Tex-Share Card Program: A TexShare Card entitles the holder to full borrowing privileges and services offered by participating academic and public libraries throughout Texas including the Moffett Library at Midwestern State University. Students may request a card at any Vernon College library location.

Additional Services: The library also offers online access to library assistance via email and live chat, wireless Internet access (Wi-Fi), and group study rooms at library locations in Vernon and at Century City. Computer workstations at all locations facilitate electronic research, word processing, and other software applications.

### **Computer Facilities**

Computer facilities are available at all major instructional locations. Open computer laboratory times are posted adjacent to all computer laboratory entrances. In addition, all libraries and resource centers have computers with access to the Internet. These computers are available to students during posted library/resource center hours. An Internet connection is also provided for students residing in the student residence centers on the Vernon campus.

## **ACCEPTABLE USE OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS RESOURCES**

### **Personal Responsibilities**

Every student has personal responsibility for reporting any misuse of Vernon College's telecommunications facilities to the Institutional Support Specialist (940-552-6291 ext. 2242) or to his/her instructor. Misuse includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. sharing of passwords any account access information;
2. invasion of privacy of other users;
3. unauthorized access to data belonging to other users;
4. downloading or installing any software (e.g. newer browser versions, instant messengers, games, add-ins) to the hard drive of a Vernon College computer;
5. changing the home page setup and/or any other settings on a Vernon College computer; and
6. violating any of the Inappropriate Network Use provisions listed below.

### **Inappropriate Network Use**

On Vernon College computers and on personal computers connected to the Internet in the student residence centers, students may not download, upload, save, receive, send or publish web pages, e-mail, messages, social media content or other material related to, containing, or including any of the following:

1. offensive material of any kind, including pornographic, obscene or other inappropriate material (see Policy on Pornography);
2. material promoting discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, or disability;
3. information promoting, encouraging or facilitating illegal activities, including terrorism;
4. information or messages encouraging the use of illegal substances;
5. abusive, inflammatory, obscene or otherwise objectionable language;
6. information or messages threatening or encouraging violent behavior;

## **Inappropriate Network Use (continued)**

7. copyrighted materials, including but not limited to music, movies and software, subject to the following two exceptions:
  - a. the student has paid for the downloaded item, and it is downloaded to a student-owned computer in a student residence center.
  - b. the student has been directed to download the item by a Vernon College instructor.

Vernon College's Internet and e-mail services must not be used for any of the following:

1. commercial advertising;
2. publishing material or sending messages for personal financial gain;
3. unethical or illegal solicitation;
4. sending a message with someone else's name on it;
5. sending a large number of personal messages from computers on campus;
6. knowingly placing a computer virus, worm or Trojan on the network;
7. publishing or distributing unlawful information;
8. sending unsolicited bulk e-mail messages commonly known as spam;
9. gambling;
10. peer-to-peer networking, such as bittorrent (1st violation results in visit with the Dean of Student Services; second violation results in suspension of Internet access);
11. forwarding chain letters.

## **Policy on Pornography**

Vernon College's computers are not to be used for knowingly accessing, downloading, or uploading sexually explicit graphics and information in terms patently offensive as measured by contemporary community standards. However, material that has specific instructional uses at Vernon College is excluded from this statement. For example, nursing and biology students may need access to graphics and text dealing with human anatomy or sexuality even though some community members will consider such graphics sexually explicit and offensive. This statement is not meant to limit academic freedom in any way.

## **Network Security**

Security is a high priority in the Vernon College system. Any user who identifies a security problem is required to report it immediately to the Information Technology Department. The problem should never be demonstrated to any person outside this department.

## **Email Policy**

The purpose of the Vernon College student email policy is to ensure the proper use of Vernon College's email system and make users aware of what Vernon College deems as acceptable and unacceptable use of its email system. The college reserves the right to amend this policy at its discretion. In case of amendments, users will be informed appropriately.

Email is an educational communication tool and users are obliged to use this tool in a responsible, effective and lawful manner. Although email seems to be less formal than other written communication, the same laws apply. Therefore, it is important that you are aware of the legal risks of email:

- If you send or forward emails with any libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remarks, you can be held liable.
- If you unlawfully forward confidential information, you can be held liable.
- If you unlawfully forward or copy messages without permission, you can be held liable for copyright infringement.



## **Email Policy (continued)**

- If you send an attachment that contains a virus, you can be held liable.

Email is a mechanism for official communication within Vernon College. The college has the right to expect that such communications will be received and read in a timely fashion. Official email communications are intended only to meet the academic and administrative needs of the college community. New Vernon College students are issued a student ID, a student PIN, and a student email address. Students are expected to check their email on a frequent and consistent basis in order to stay current with college related communications. Students have the responsibility to recognize that certain communications may be time-critical.

Vernon College considers email as an important means of communication and recognizes the importance of proper email content in conveying a professional image. Users should take the same care in drafting an email as they would for any other communication. Although the email system is meant for educational use, Vernon College allows limited personal usage if it is reasonable. However, the sending of chain letters, junk mail, jokes and executables is prohibited. All messages distributed via the college's email system are college property. Users expressly waive any right of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive on the college computer system.

## **Web Pages**

Web pages may be designed by students as part of classroom instruction. These pages will only be put on the Vernon College web server for students at the request of the instructor.

## **Security of Personal Information**

Students should be aware that not all Internet sites are secure. If students choose to transmit personal information such as credit card numbers or social security numbers while using Vernon College's telecommunications facilities, they do so at their own risk. Vernon College cannot be responsible for any problems that occur.

## **FINANCIAL AID SERVICES**

The goal of the financial aid program at Vernon College is to fairly and equitably assist students who have financial need. Vernon College participates in several federally funded financial aid programs. In addition, the College administers state, institutional, and local programs. Financial assistance may be provided in the form of grants, loans, employment and/or scholarships, or in any combination of these programs.

To apply for financial aid, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Students should contact the Financial Aid office for complete details on requirements and regulations on all financial aid programs. A list of federal and state financial aid programs may be found in the Vernon College *General Catalog*.

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress**

Students who receive federal and/or state funds administered by the Vernon College (VC) Office of Financial Aid, must demonstrate satisfactory academic progress. The VC Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress policy is separate and stricter than VC Admissions and Records academic standards. Coursework attempted and grades earned in semesters forgiven through the state of Texas' "Academic Fresh Start" program will be included in the satisfactory academic progress calculation. The student's Financial Aid Transcript that is located in Campus Connect under the

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress (continued)**

Account Information option, and not the VC academic transcript, is the transcript used for all satisfactory academic progress calculations. The financial aid cumulative GPA and the number of hours attempted and earned could be different than the student's academic cumulative GPA and number of hours attempted and earned.

All periods of enrollment at VC must be counted, including any semester in which the student did not receive financial aid. Students who do not have a VC academic history (first time college enrollment or incoming transfer students) will be assumed to be making satisfactory progress at the time of first enrollment. There are three standards for satisfactory progress: qualitative, quantitative and maximum time frame.

Qualitative – The qualitative measure evaluates the quality of academic work using standards measurable against a norm. Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0. Grades of A, B, C, D, F and WF contribute toward the GPA. Grades of W, WC, P, I, AU and U do not. All grades, including developmental coursework and repeated courses, are included in the student's GPA. However, pass fail grades (P/U) are counted in the quantitative measure and are considered the qualitative measure for these courses. Transfer grades are not included in the GPA calculation.

Quantitative – The quantitative measure is the pace of completion required to make sure the student completes within maximum timeframe. Students must have a successful pace of completion rate that is at least sixty-seven (67%) percent of all courses attempted at VC. This includes both developmental and college-level coursework. Successful completion is measured by grades of A, B, C, D, and P. Grades of F, W, WF, U, I, and AU are counted toward the total hours attempted but not successfully completed. A grade of WC is not counted toward the total hours attempted. Repeated courses are included in the pace of completion calculation. Pace of completion is calculated by dividing the cumulative number of hours the student has successfully completed by the cumulative number of hours the student has attempted. The VC Office of Financial Aid will use standard rounding rules when calculating percentages under the quantitative measurement. Transfer courses are not included in the quantitative measurement.

Maximum Timeframe – Federal regulations specify that the maximum time frame for program completion may not exceed 150 percent (150%) of the published length of the program. Time frame is measured by the number of credit hours attempted. If the student switches degree or certificate programs, Vernon College will not count toward the one hundred fifty (150%) percent maximum time frame the credits attempted in the old major. However, any courses that apply to the new program must be counted.

For transfer students, Vernon College will count accepted transfer credits that apply toward the new or current program in the maximum timeframe calculation. Students who exceed the one hundred fifty (150%) percent maximum time frame limit will no longer be eligible for financial aid. Developmental classes do not count toward the one hundred fifty (150%) percent maximum time frame. Credits that have been repeated will be counted toward the one hundred fifty (150%) percent maximum time frame. Once it is determined that it is mathematically impossible for the student to complete his/her program within the maximum time frame, the student immediately becomes ineligible for aid.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress (continued)

### Failure to Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress:

Financial Aid Warning - Students who fail to meet one or more of the satisfactory academic progress standards will be placed on financial aid warning status for their next semester of enrollment. A student on financial aid warning will be eligible to receive financial aid. If the satisfactory academic progress standards are met at the end of the warning semester, the warning status will be removed. If at the end of the warning status semester the satisfactory academic progress standards are not met, the student will be placed on financial aid suspension. Students cannot appeal a financial aid warning status.

Financial Aid Suspension - Financial aid suspension occurs when the student does not meet the satisfactory academic standards for two consecutive semesters. The Director of Financial Aid also reserves the right, through professional judgement, to place a student on financial aid suspension. Students will not receive financial aid, including student loans, while on financial aid suspension. Students placed on financial aid suspension may continue to enroll at Vernon College, but must pay for their coursework and expenses from their own funds. Enrolling and paying for courses as well as successfully completing courses can assist in regaining the student's eligibility. Financial aid suspension will last a minimum of one semester. Students can regain eligibility by reenrolling at Vernon College and having a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0, a cumulative successful pace of completion of at least 67%, and remain within the 150% maximum timeframe. When this is accomplished, the student will be removed from financial aid suspension and therefore eligible for financial aid. **STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR NOTIFYING THE OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID WHEN THEY BELIEVE THEY HAVE REGAINED ELIGIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.**

Financial Aid Probation – Students who successfully appeal their financial aid suspension status will be placed on financial aid probation for one semester. Vernon College can require that a student on financial aid probation fulfill specific terms and conditions, such as taking a reduced course load or enrolling in specific courses. A student on financial aid probation may receive financial aid. At the end of that semester, the student must meet Vernon College's satisfactory academic progress standards or the requirements of the established individual academic plan. Failure to do so will result in the student being placed on financial aid suspension.

Monitoring - Student progress will be reviewed at the end of each long semester (December for students enrolled in the Fall, Fall I and/or Fall II semester[s]; May for students enrolled in the Spring, Spring I and/or Spring II semester[s]; and August for students enrolled in the Summer, Summer I and/or Summer II semester[s]). Notification of a student's satisfactory academic progress status will be posted on his or her Campus Connect account. Students should access Campus Connect to verify their status.

Appeal Procedure - Students placed on financial aid suspension due to lack of satisfactory progress may appeal the denial of financial aid due to an unusual or extraordinary situation that affected the student's progression toward the successful completion of his or her program of study. Examples of unusual circumstances include: injury or illness of the student or family member, death of a relative of the student, maximum time limit exceeded, or other special circumstances. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Financial Aid office and must include supporting documentation to support the appeal.

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress (continued)**

Appeals submitted without supporting documentation will be denied. The appeal must address all semesters that the student failed to make satisfactory academic progress, and explain what has changed in the student's situation that would allow the student to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress at the next evaluation. An appeal may be approved only if the review committee determines that the student will be able to meet satisfactory academic progress standards after the subsequent semester. The review committee also has the option to have the student develop an academic plan with a student success specialist that, if followed, will ensure that the student is able to meet satisfactory academic standards by a specific point in time.

Students who are appealing the maximum time frame limit, must be meeting the requirements for 67% completion and a 2.0 cumulative GPA in order for this appeal to be approved. In regard to grade changes, Vernon College is only required to include the changed grade in its satisfactory academic progress evaluation that will be performed at the time of the next review. Students who have received a grade change after a satisfactory academic progress evaluation and want to be reevaluated, must submit a satisfactory academic progress appeal. If the appeal is approved, depending on the program and timing, only certain Title IV aid can be paid under certain conditions.

Vernon College must take into account grade changes that both increase the student's eligibility, and changes that may cause the student to lose Title IV eligibility. Vernon College cannot adjust Title IV aid from a prior award year due to a retroactive grade change. It does not matter what the reasons are for the grade change. The Financial Aid office will notify students in writing of the results within 10 business days after submitting all requested documentation. Students whose appeal is denied may submit a second appeal, in writing, to the Vice President of Student Services. The Vice President's decision will be final and will be reported to the student, in writing, within 10 business days after receipt of the second appeal.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

### **Student Services Mission Statement**

Student Services will advise and counsel students as well as provide engagement opportunities through student activities and student support services that promote a commitment to education, persistence, completion, and a culture of success.

### **Student Services Objectives**

The Division of Student Services at Vernon College is dedicated to the concept that every student is unique with individual needs that must be recognized and fulfilled to the greatest extent possible. Believing in the need for a student services program that supports the philosophy and objectives of the institution, Vernon College establishes the following objectives:

1. To create and foster an interpersonal environment that embraces diversity and celebrates individual differences.
2. To provide avenues which allow and encourage students to take an active, responsible role in decision-making processes.
3. To provide a counseling and guidance program that encourages every individual to discover more about himself/herself, and that provides assistance to the faculty and staff in their efforts to meet the needs of the student.
4. To provide a program of testing and other analytical devices which offer information necessary to the educational process.

## **STUDENT SERVICES (continued)**

### **Student Services Objectives (continued)**

5. To provide information about community resources.
6. To provide employment preparation and job seeking skills.
7. To accommodate students in a resident hall setting which is conducive to an overall learning environment.
8. To offer health clinic services appropriate to the needs of campus students within the resources available.
9. To assist with student recruitment, informing prospective students in a professional manner of the programs offered at the College.
10. To provide a student activity program appropriate to the needs and preferences of the greatest number of students possible within the resources available.
11. To provide direction to resources and programs available to promote student success.

### **Student Services Personnel**

Dr. Jim Nordone  
Vice President of Student Services

Kristin Harris  
Dean of Student Services

Amanda Raines  
Director of Admissions and Registrar

Criquett Scott  
Director of Student Success Pathway

Melissa Elliott  
Director of Financial Aid

Kevin Holland  
Chief of Police

#### **Office of Admissions (Admissions Clerks)**

Rebecca Ashlock  
Cyndi Danner  
Sharon Dennis  
Erika Hernandez  
Julie Lama  
Andrea Sanchez  
Karla Wooten

#### **Office of the Registrar (Assistant Registrar)**

Maria Servin

#### **Office of Career Services/VA**

Chelsey Henry (Career Services/ VA Coordinator)  
Sharon Anderle (Administrative Asst. Career Serv./VA)

#### **Office of Student Success (Student Success Specialists)**

Lindsey David  
Sjohonton Fanner  
Clara Garza  
Kelly Peterson  
Jackie Polk

## **Student Services Personnel (continued)**

### **Office of Student Success (Administrative Assistants)**

Delilah Fowler  
Teri Reese  
Renee Ritchie

### **Office of Financial Aid (Various Positions)**

Rosa Alaniz - Processing Disbursement Clerk  
Debbie Alexander - Coordinator of Financial Aid/Veterans  
Nancy Arnold - Financial Aid Administrative Clerk  
Jeanne Ballard - Assistant Director of Financial Aid  
Ellen Binion - Financial Aid Process./3rd Party Award Clerk  
Aletha Newman - Student Loan Coordinator  
Ashleigh Ochoa - Financial Aid Processing/Direct Loan Clerk  
Crystal Wells - Financial Aid Processing/Electronic Clerk

### **Office of High School Relations/Dual Enrollment**

Melissa Moore (Early College Start Coordinator)

### **Office of Housing/Student Activities (Director of Housing)**

Jesse Dominguez

### **Office of Recruiting**

Rachel White - Recruiting Coordinator  
Marco Torres - Assistant Recruiting Coordinator

### **Office of Security/Campus Police**

Ken Terry - Century City Center Police Sergeant  
Gregory Young - Police Officer – Century City Center  
Ken Boatman - Police Officer – Vernon

### **Office of Testing Services**

Tracy Catlin - Testing Coordinator  
Shealeigh Arledge - Assistant Testing Coordinator

### **Dean of Students Office**

Dona Crow (Administrative Assistant)



## **Student Support Services**

### **New Student Orientation**

Each new Vernon College student must attend a mandatory New Student Orientation program prior to enrollment. Programs are offered at the Vernon and Century City Center locations at a variety of times as well as online. Students are unable to register for courses until they attend a New Student Orientation session. Students will learn valuable information to help them throughout their Vernon College tenure including but not limited to: student success pathways, explanation of steps needed to complete enrollment, resources such as catalog, registration guide, website, and student portal (MyVC). Upon completion of New Student Orientation, students will schedule an appointment with their designated Student Success Advisor. Students should contact the Office of Student Success for dates and times.

### **Student Success Advising**

The individual student is ultimately responsible for course and program selections. At Vernon College, all students are assigned a Student Success Advisor upon completion of New Student Orientation. The Student Success Advisor is a student's primary point of contact for all student success needs beginning with the first semester and continuing through the completion of educational goals.

Each new Vernon College student must attend a mandatory New Student Orientation program. Programs are offered at the Vernon and Century City Center locations at a variety of times as well as online. Students will learn valuable information to help them throughout their Vernon College tenure including but not limited to: student success pathways, explanation of steps needed to complete enrollment, resources such as catalog, registration guide, website, and student portal (MyVC). Upon completion of New Student Orientation, students will schedule an appointment with their designated Student Success Advisor

### **Career Services**

Services available through the office of Career Services includes: interest inventories, aptitude testing, career exploration, job search techniques, resume' writing, cover letter creation, job application completion, mock interviews, electronic job placement board, and fall and spring semester job fairs. The Coordinator of Career Services helps students with regard to clarifying and evaluating their career and educational goals, Students interested in utilizing this service should contact the Career Services office at the appropriate instructional location.

### **Student Wellness/Counseling**

Student Success Specialists are available to provide consultation on personal or social matters including resources available and developing a support system to help each student achieve their goals. Specific areas of assistance focus on stress management, study skills, time management, personality assessment, crisis intervention, and coping with test anxiety. In situations where more intensive counseling is required, a Student Success Specialist will refer the student to an outside mental health professional.

## **Office of Student Success**

The Office of Student Success is structured to help students maximize progress and reach their educational goals. Student Success Specialists work with students individually and in groups to provide intensive guidance, ongoing support, and intrusive advising to promote engagement, retention, persistence and completion.

### **Academic Coaching**

Academic Coaching is a collaborative and interactive process intended to assist students in making an individualized plan for achieving academic success. It provides students with the opportunity to work individually with a Student Success Specialist to enhance their academic skills, increase awareness of educational resources, gain confidence and discover motivation. Academic Coaching is available year round. Sessions may vary based on student need.

### **Chap Express**

Chap Express is an interactive workshop offered early each semester. It is an opportunity for students requiring additional assistance to learn more about Vernon College programs and services. Chap Express is designed to guide students and equip them with the tools necessary to maximize their potential for success. Participants will connect with other students, access their VC<sup>3</sup> accounts (Student Email, MyVC, and Canvas), determine personal learning styles, be introduced to proven study skills, learn about organizations and services, and engage in the college experience.

### **Peer Mentor Program**

The purpose of the Peer Mentor Program is to promote the improvement of academic success, persistence and successful completion of students. Vernon College Peer Mentors are selected through an application process based on criteria including proven success as a student and interest in helping others. The Peer Mentor Program is designed to provide support and guidance to students as they adjust to college life. Vernon College's Peer Mentors are committed to sharing their experiences to provide motivation and promote self-efficacy. Peer Mentors help students connect to college services and resources, find information on policies and dates, develop time management strategies, and take action regarding academic and career goals.

### **Striving to End Probation Status**

Striving to End Probation Status (STEPS) is a targeted academic coaching opportunity with a Student Success Specialist. Individual participant sessions include but are not limited to goal setting and detailed discussion of tools and resources available to increase student success. STEPS is designed to include periodic progress checks throughout the semester with a Student Success Specialist.

### **Student Success Series**

The Student Success Series provided by the Office of Student Success are workshops comprised of a variety of student success related topics (e.g. time management, note-taking, test anxiety, study skills). Workshop requests are initiated by faculty, staff or student organizations.



## **Testing**

Vernon College operates Testing Centers at the Vernon Campus and the Century City Center. Vernon College Testing Centers offer the Texas Success Initiative Assessment, Accuplacer, HESI A2, TEAS 5, VCT, CLEP, and GED tests. Vernon College Testing Centers also offer proctor services for correspondence exams needed for other institutions of higher education. For more information, contact a Testing Center by phone or view specific information on the Vernon College webpage.

## **Employment**

The Coordinator of Career Services helps students with regard to clarifying and evaluating career and educational goals. Specific services offered include: interest inventories, aptitude testing, career exploration, job searching techniques, resume writing, cover letter creation, job application completion, mock interviewing, electronic job board, and fall and spring semester job fairs. Students interested in utilizing these services should contact the Career Services office at the respective location.

## **GradCast**

GradCast is a career placement service utilized by Vernon College for graduates of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. This service is free to qualifying students and provides for 100 free resumes sent anywhere in the United States among over 600,000 employers in over 30 career and technical education programs of study. Student directory information (permissible under FERPA law) released to GradCast upon graduation includes name, address, graduation date, type of award, phone number, email address, and program of study. GradCast will contact the graduates through a series of automated emails, text messages, and/or phone calls to initiate this career placement service.

## **Career Coach**

Career Coach is a free tool on the Vernon College website that can give you information about local jobs; such as entry, median and high-end wages, number currently employed in that field, number of annual job openings, and number approaching retirement age, as well as the degree related to that job. Career Coach also has a free career assessment, current job postings and a free resume builder.

## **College Safety and Security**

Vernon College strives to maintain a safe and secure atmosphere for members of the student body, faculty, staff, and the general public so they are not unreasonably concerned for their personal safety. The College, as with any other public or private entity, cannot guarantee a crime-free living or working environment. Accordingly, it is the responsibility of members of the college community to act in a security-conscious manner, and to avoid actions that jeopardize their security as well as the security of others.

Student Services provides information to students on crime prevention, a mass notification system, and safety awareness during orientation. This information as well as literature provided by the College, encourages the campus community to adopt safe behaviors. All Vernon College locations may be subject to electronic surveillance. In case of emergency, a Vernon College Vice President or Dean should be contacted as well as the campus switchboard operator.

Campus security policy and procedures are available via the Vernon College website at [www.vernoncollege.edu](http://www.vernoncollege.edu) or by contacting Student Services at (940) 552-6291 ext. 2272.

## **Vernon College Police**

Vernon College operates a fully sanctioned police department. The full-time team is comprised of a Chief of Campus Police, Police Sergeant, and two patrol officers. In addition, part-time police officers are utilized at the Vernon and Wichita Falls locations. Patrol Services are conducted at both the Vernon Campus, Century City Center and Skills Training Center. Students are encouraged to contact a Vernon College Police Officer with any safety concerns or problems. The Chief of Campus Police can be reached at ext. 2272.

## **Parking**

Parking is provided for students, staff, and faculty. Parking decals are mandatory for Vernon College students who park anywhere on Vernon College property. However, if you park on Vernon College property, you do so at your own risk. Vernon College accepts no responsibility for damages occurring to an individual's vehicle. For the general safety of the students, faculty, and visitors of Vernon College, the following regulations are established:

1. All student vehicles parked on Vernon campus property must display a valid Vernon College parking permit. The permit is to be mounted on the driver's side rear window.
2. Unauthorized parking in areas marked "RESERVED" is prohibited.
3. Speed limit on campus is 10 MPH unless otherwise posted.
4. Parking is restricted to paved areas designated by vehicle marking lines. Vehicles must be parked so as not to extend over any marking line. Parking that blocks entranceways, loading docks or normal traffic flow is prohibited.
5. All posted traffic and parking signs must be observed.
6. Failure to abide by the above regulations will result in a ticket being issued or the violator's vehicle being towed away at the violator's expense. Additional violations may result in the violator being prohibited from operating any motor vehicle on the Vernon College campus.

## **Crime Awareness Statistics/Policy and Procedures**

In compliance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act of 1998 and the Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act of 2002, Vernon College provides a full disclosure of the campus security report via its web site. Security policies and procedures as well as statistics for reported criminal activities for the previous three school years may be accessed at [www.vernoncollege.edu](http://www.vernoncollege.edu) or by contacting the Vernon College Police Office at (940) 552-6291 ext. 2272 or by writing Government Mandated Information, Office of Student Services, 4400 College Drive, Vernon, Texas 76384.

## **Campus Sex Crimes Prevention**

In compliance with the Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act (Section 1601 of "Public Law 106-386") and the Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offender Registration Act, all persons required to register as part of the State of Texas' Sex Offender Registration Program are required to provide notice of their presence on campus to Student Services and the Chief of Police. Information on registered sex offenders can be obtained through the Texas Department of Public Safety Crimes Record Service at [http://records.txdps.state.tx.us/DPS\\_WEB/Portal/Index.aspx](http://records.txdps.state.tx.us/DPS_WEB/Portal/Index.aspx).

## **Security of Personal Information**

Students should be aware that not all Internet sites are secure. If students choose to transmit personal information such as credit card numbers or social security numbers while using Vernon College's telecommunications facilities, they do so at their own risk. Vernon College cannot be responsible for any problems that occur.

### **Vernon College Cyber Security Policy**

Security is a high priority in the Vernon College (VC) system. Any user who identifies a cyber security problem is required to report it immediately to the Cyber Security Officer. Students should never share cyber security problems to any person outside of Information Technology.

The IT department has the authority to examine all Vernon College owned computers at any time to check for inappropriate use. This includes unauthorized software or programs, inappropriate websites, inappropriate use of email, storage of inappropriate material, or any other use not authorized by Vernon College. In order to maintain network security, the College reserves the right to:

- a. Limit, restrict, or terminate an account holder's usage;
- b. At any time to inspect, copy, remove, or otherwise alter any data, file, or system that threatens the security of that system or the network, with or without prior notice to the user;
- c. Periodically check the systems and take any other such actions necessary to protect the College's computers, information, and networks.

## **Protect Personal and College Devices**

By using their digital devices to access college emails or accounts, students introduce security risks to Vernon College data. Vernon College students must keep both their personal and college-issued computer, tablet, and cell phones secure. They can do this by doing the following:

### Keep hardware and software secure

- Choose and upgrade a complete antivirus software.
- Do not leave devices exposed or unattended.
- Keep all devices password protected.
- Install security updates of browsers and systems monthly or as soon as updates are available.
- Log into college accounts and systems through secure and private networks only.
- Avoid accessing internal systems and accounts from other people's devices or lending their own devices to others.

## **Keep Emails Safe**

Emails often host scams and malicious software (e.g. worms). To avoid virus infection or data theft, Vernon College instructs students to:

- Avoid opening attachments and clicking on links when the content is not adequately explained (e.g. "watch this video, it's amazing").
- Be suspicious of clickbait titles (e.g. offering prizes, advice).
- Check email and names of senders to ensure they are legitimate.
- Look for inconsistencies or giveaways (e.g. grammar mistakes, capital letters, excessive number of exclamation marks).
- If a student is not sure that an email they received is safe, they can refer to the Vernon College Cyber Security Officer for instructions.

## **Manage Passwords Properly**

Password leaks are dangerous since they can compromise Vernon College's entire digital infrastructure. Passwords should be secure and secret to avoid hacking. For this reason, Vernon College students must:

- Choose passwords with at least eight characters (including capital and lower-case letters, numbers and symbols) and avoid information that can be easily guessed (e.g. birthdays).
- Remember passwords instead of writing them down. If students need to write their passwords, they are obliged to keep the paper or digital document confidential and destroy it when their work is done.
- Exchange credentials only when absolutely necessary. When exchanging them in-person is not possible, students should utilize the phone instead of email, and only if they personally recognize the person they are talking to.
- Change passwords every six months.

## **Transfer Data Securely**

Transferring data introduces security risks. Students must:

- Avoid transferring sensitive data (e.g. customer information, student records) to other devices or accounts unless absolutely necessary. When mass transfer of such data is needed, Vernon College requests students ask Run Business Solutions for help.
- Share confidential data over the college network/ system and not over public Wi-Fi or private connection.
- Ensure that the recipients of the data are properly authorized people or organizations and have adequate security policies.

## **Security Breach Measures**

Other measures will be used in case of a suspected breach. Students must:

- Report scams, privacy breaches and hacking attempts to the Cyber Security Officer. The Vernon College Cyber Security Officer needs to know about scams, breaches and malware to better protect Vernon College's digital infrastructure. For this reason, Vernon College advises students to report perceived attacks, suspicious emails, or phishing attempts as soon as possible to Vernon College specialists.
- The Vernon College Cyber Security Officer must promptly investigate, resolve the issue, and send a college-wide alert when necessary.

The Vernon College Cyber Security Officer is responsible for advising students on how to detect scam emails. Vernon College encourages students to reach out to the Cyber Security Officer with any questions or concerns. The Cyber Security Officer will be listed on the VC "Cyber Security" webpage.

## **Additional Measures**

To reduce the likelihood of security breaches, Vernon College students must:

- Turn off their screens and lock their devices when leaving their areas.
- Report stolen or damaged equipment as soon as possible to Run Business Solutions.
- Change all account passwords at once when a device is stolen.
- Report a perceived threat or possible security breach of college systems.

## **Additional Measures (continued)**

- Refrain from downloading suspicious, unauthorized or illegal software on the college equipment or network.
- Avoid accessing suspicious websites.
- Vernon College students must comply with Vernon College social media and internet usage policy.

## **Disciplinary Action**

Vernon College expects all VC students to always follow this policy, and those who are responsible for security breaches may face disciplinary action:

First-time, unintentional, small-scale security breach: Vernon College may issue a verbal warning and train the student on security.

Intentional, repeated or large scale breaches (which cause severe financial or other damage): Vernon College will invoke more severe disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Vernon College will examine each incident on a case-by-case basis.

Additionally, students who are observed to disregard Vernon College's security instructions will face progressive discipline, even if their behavior has not resulted in a security breach.

## **College Health Services**

The Health Care Clinic (located in the Sumner Applied Arts Center) is available to all students attending the Vernon campus. Vernon campus students support the clinic through a service fee paid at registration. Prevention is the primary goal of the Vernon College Health Care Clinic. The scope of the Health Care Clinic includes treatment of students' injuries and illnesses as well as to provide students with the tools they need to maintain a state of optimum health. The clinic serves as a resource in areas of health promotion, health maintenance, and health education. The clinic is staffed by a licensed vocational nurse. A family practice physician is also at the clinic on a scheduled basis. The nurse is available 10 hours per week at the Vernon Campus in the clinic located in the Sumner Applied Arts and Sciences building. Hours of availability are posted on the clinic door each semester.

At all locations, students may be transported via emergency vehicles to the hospital at their own expense when, in the opinion of College officials, medical attention is necessary.

## **Student Insurance**

Health insurance policies for students are available. These policies are issued by private agencies authorized by the College. Insurance company information may be obtained during registration periods or in the Student Services office at the appropriate instructional location.

## Student Life

### Colley Student Center

The Colley Student Center is designed to be the hub of student activities on the Vernon campus. Facilities located in the Student Center are the bookstore, recreation room, snack bar, Jack D. Eure Dining Hall, and faculty/staff lounge. The Housing Director is responsible for Vernon Campus Student Activities and can be found at the Vernon College Residence Hall.

### Jack D. Eure Dining Hall (Vernon Campus)

Great Western Dining Hours of Operation

#### Fall and Spring semesters

Monday – Friday

Breakfast - 7:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.

Lunch - 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Dinner - 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

#### Summer semester

Limited Schedule - TBA

### VC Café (Wichita Falls Century City Center)

Monday – Thursday

7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

## Posting Notices and Signs

Student and faculty organizations on campus are invited to use designated bulletin board space. Community Information Bulletin Boards and electronic message boards exist at each of the major instructional locations. The purpose of these is to alert students, faculty, and staff of services and events in the community. In order to maintain a clutter-free environment, notices are to be approved through and posted by the Office of Student Services. Signs and posters may be placed in window areas, but are not allowed to appear on any glass door surfaces. No hand bills/flyers are allowed to be distributed outside of the buildings on Vernon College properties. This includes but is not limited to distribution by hand or by placement on vehicles. No unauthorized postings or distributions will be tolerated on Vernon College locations.

## Identification Cards

I.D. cards are processed and distributed during all posted registration periods. I.D. cards are required for the following activities: library use, athletic events, gym/natorium privileges, food service, refund/financial aid disbursements, and check cashing services. I.D. cards also function as Debit cards and will be used for direct disbursement of all refunds processed through the Vernon College Business Office. Discounts may be available through local merchants with a valid Vernon College I.D. There is a \$15 replacement fee if a student must replace a card for any reason.

## Reserving College Facilities

Students or student groups must complete a facility requisition form in order to use college facilities. Assistance in obtaining and completing the form may be obtained through the Student Services division. Requests for facilities are made through the Human Resources Office or the Vice President of Instruction's Office. Use of classroom space is approved through the Vice President of Instructional Services office upon receipt of the facility requisition form.



## **Solicitation Policy**

Solicitation is permitted on a Vernon College campus with approval from the President, Vice President of Student Services, and the department head of the area in which they wish to transact business. The following terms will form the basis of an agreement by and between Vernon College and the exhibitor.

1. All exhibitors seek approval through the Office of Student Services at least one week prior to the preferred date.
2. The time, place, and manner of the exhibition must be approved through the Office of Student Services. Solicitation outside of this area or hard sell tactics will not be allowed. Exhibitors not willing to abide by regulations and rulings of Vernon College shall be expelled from the area.
3. No items may be sold that compete with the Vernon College bookstore or existing food contracts. Items for sale that do not enhance the goals and purposes of Vernon College will not be allowed. The Vice President of Student Services will decide on items deemed acceptable.
4. Giveaways must be available to anyone and openly displayed on the exhibitor's table. There can be no expectation of a person signing or buying a service or product or completing an application that is offered by the exhibitor. Incentives (including but not limited to items or pictures of items) to be given away by off-campus vendors/exhibitors at the completion of an application or buying of a service or product may not be displayed at exhibitor's tables. No storage space is available to exhibitors.
5. Any personal action by the vendor or its representative not deemed appropriate for a college campus may result in the termination of this agreement and the removal of the vendor from campus.
6. Vernon College and its representatives will assume no responsibility for property or merchandise transported to Vernon College by the exhibitor that maybe allegedly lost, stolen, misplaced, or damaged during the exhibit. Risk or loss other than due to negligence of the organization shall remain with the exhibitor. Exhibitor assumes full responsibility for any damages to the premises or fixtures.
7. All warranties and guarantees on merchandise sold by the organization must be valid and enforceable through the exhibitor or its representatives.
8. Exhibitor shall hold harmless Vernon College, its agents, employees, and representatives from any liability or action arising from personal injury or property damage proximately caused by the negligent act of omission or commission of the exhibitor.
9. Exhibitor shall be able to present proof of liability insurance in accordance with Vernon College requirements to cover injuries to persons caused by accidents involving their operation on campus and/or the use or sale of the product.

## **Petitions, Handbills, and Literature**

Each petition, handbill, or piece of literature shall identify the person or organization distributing it. No person or organization may publicly distribute on College property petitions, handbills, pieces of literature that are obscene or libelous, or that contain unauthorized solicitation. Distribution must be conducted so as not to interfere with free and unimpeded flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic or to disturb or interfere with academic or institutional activities. Individuals distributing material must first obtain guidelines from Student Services and must leave the area around which the literature was distributed in the same condition as before distribution.

## **Speakers on College Controlled Property**

Freedom of speech is a constitutional guarantee; however, responsible speakers are considerate of their audience and organizations they represent. Speeches on college-controlled property must not contain statements that are libelous, obscene, or in violation of federal, state, or local laws; and statements which attempt to exploit for commercial purposes the name, image, or reputation of Vernon College. VC has a designated area on each of our campuses for speakers to utilize.

## **The Students' Role in Participation in Institutional Decision Making**

Vernon College acknowledges the importance of involving students in institutional decision-making. The College's aim is to educate the students for leadership in society. This is evidenced through student membership in the institution's standing committee structure, as well as through opportunities for student leadership through the Student Government Associations.

## **Student Organizations**

The student body of Vernon College has founded numerous clubs and organizations and continues to have the opportunity to develop new groups to satisfy individual and group interests. Organizations already recognized include the Aggie Club; the Chaparral Singers; the Chaparral Christian Fellowship; Faith Factor Christian Fellowship; Lab Coat Posse Biology Club; National Society of Leadership and Success; Phi Theta Kappa; the Student Government Associations; the Student Nurses Association; the Surgical Technology Student Association; and the Student Veteran Organization. The College encourages the founding of any organization that is in keeping with the philosophy and purpose of the College and the interests of the students. Any student organization seeking recognition must be tied to an academic or workforce program, or college initiative, or standing department at Vernon College. Student organizations recognized by or registered with Vernon College are not authorized agents of the College, and the College assumes no responsibility for the actions of the group.

## **Rules and Regulations**

The following statement of policies and standards has been endorsed by the Student Government Association and administration of Vernon College.

## **Definition of College Organizations or Clubs**

### **1. Recognition**

In general, College organizations will be permitted to exist if they:

- A. Are composed entirely of currently enrolled student body members.
- B. Hold their meetings on College-controlled property. Exceptions should be outlined in writing and approved by the Vice President of Student Services.
- C. Use a democratic plan for the selection of members without regard to race, religion, or national origin.
- D. Establish aims that are educational and compatible with the best interests of the College.
- E. Have an annually approved constitution on file in the Office of Student Services.

Upon verification of conformity to the conditions listed above, clubs must receive official recognition from the Student Government Association, the Vice President of Student Services, the College President, and the Board of Trustees.

## **Definition of College Organizations or Clubs (continued)**

### **2. Organization Rules**

To exist and to continue to exist, organizations must comply with the following conditions:

- A. A constitution developed by the organization and containing the approval signatures of each College advisor (who must be a full time Vernon College employees) and will be filed in the Office of Student Services after being submitted to and approved by the following groups.
  1. The Student Government Association
  2. The Vice President of Student Services
  3. The College President
- B. Maintain a current membership roster in the Student Services office.
- C. Have an approved College advisor in attendance at all meetings.
- D. Program activities for each group, both on and off-campus, should be approved fourteen days in advance of the event by submitting a written request to the Vice President of Student Services. This request must include the nature of the program (description of the film, name of the speaker, subject of the discussion, the names of the members of a panel, list of chaperon(s), etc.). The organization's advisor must sign this request. It is a requirement that the needed facilities and equipment be ascertained. Failure to clear facilities and request equipment with proper authorities could mean cancellation of the planned event. Suggested places for holding events may be discussed with the Dean of Student Services or College advisor.
- E. All student organizational fund raising activities must be approved through the Office of the Student Services in advance. Student organizations may gain this approval by submitting the appropriate form, which is available in the Student Services Office. Student organizations will be allowed a maximum of four fund raising activities per semester. All student organizational fund raising will be in accordance with the College's Mission. Following each fundraising activity, student organizations must submit the appropriate financial report to the Office of Student Services. Financial report forms are available in Student Services Office. At the end of each academic year, Student Services will compose a report of all student organization fundraising activities and deposits.
- F. The president of the club or organization shall send to the Office of Student Services a written financial report (revenues, expenditures, dues, fund raising) at the end of each academic year. The advisor should also sign the report.
- G. Be responsible for conduct of members in accordance with College rules and regulations.
- H. In cases of organizational conduct inconsistent with this section (Organizational Rules), or in cases of organizational conduct that is inconsistent with the Code of Student Conduct, that organizations official recognition may be revoked.

### **Student Government**

A major contribution to the educational process on the Vernon College campus is made by the Student Government Associations (SGA's). Student Government Associations are available at the Vernon Campus and for the combined Wichita Falls locations of Vernon College. Through these organizations, students may receive practical experience in the art of self-government. The SGA's will act as forums in aiding the institution in the development of future goals and policies. Elections for SGA representatives are held each fall. The officers of the SGA's regulate campus social activities within the structured policies of the College. Involvement in the SGA's will help prepare students for their ultimate role as participating members of society-at-large.

## **Student Activities**

Students at Vernon College are encouraged to get involved and have fun. Knowing the importance of co-curricular activities, the College supports a variety of student clubs and organization. Vernon College also offers a variety of intramural style competitions, and on-campus entertainment activities for students.

## **Student Travel**

Vernon College recognizes the importance of student travel to supplement instruction, to provide opportunities for leadership growth, for cultural and social development, and for representation of the College in contests and competitions. The purpose of the student travel procedures is to maximize the probability of safe travel for Vernon College students on college-sanctioned trips. College-sanctioned travel occurs when travel meets one or more of the following conditions: 1) a college department or student organization plans the travel and/or recognizes it for professional or educational purposes; 2) a faculty or staff member serving in his/her official capacity supervises the travel; and/or 3) departmental and/or organizational resources are used. The following travel is NOT considered "college-sanctioned travel" for the purpose of these regulations: when a class or organization is meeting at an off-campus site and the meeting is not a requirement of the class or organization but is voluntary and students in the class or organization are responsible for their own transportation to the site.

The appropriate faculty member, club or organization sponsor, or other college employee is responsible for completing all travel forms and securing all approvals for student travel. However, students/sponsors driving personal vehicles will not be required to complete the travel authorization process for a college-sanctioned trip within the city limits of the campus they attend if they are traveling in their personal vehicle from their work or residence to the location, and they are not chauffeuring other students/sponsors in their personal vehicle to the location.

## **Sports**

### **Intercollegiate Athletics**

Vernon College participates in intercollegiate baseball, rodeo, softball and volleyball. Competing in the Southwest Region of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association, Vernon College team members compete against over twenty college and university teams. In baseball, softball, and volleyball, Vernon College competes in Region V of the National Junior College Athletic Association and the Northern Texas Junior College Athletic Conference. The rodeo, baseball, softball, and volleyball programs are widely recognized for their excellence and competitiveness.

### **Intramural Sports and Activities**

The intramural program, part of the comprehensive student activity program, works to offer a wide variety of activities including flag football, basketball, volleyball, badminton, spades, tennis, chess, softball, and table tennis. The purpose of the intramural program is to provide an opportunity for every student to participate in recreational competition. For further information concerning participation, the student should contact the Director of Housing.

### **Fitness Centers, Gym, and Swimming Pool**

*Enrolled students* are eligible to use the fitness center facilities (within stated guidelines and posted facility schedules) at no cost and are defined as those students enrolled in a minimum of 3 semester credit hours of academic or technical coursework during the semester which they plan to utilize the fitness center facilities. Continuing Education students enrolled in workforce courses or programs

## **Fitness Centers, Gym, and Swimming Pool (continued)**

with a minimum of 48 instructional hours in one semester are also eligible to utilize the fitness center facilities. A valid Vernon College ID is required for each visit. Enrolled students may also participate in other recreational or personal enrichment classes offered by the fitness centers by paying the associated fee.

### **Vernon College Fitness Center Guidelines**

1. Memberships to the Vernon College Fitness Centers are available at no charge to all credit students and those Continuing Education students enrolled in CE certification classes of 180 contact hours or more.
2. No food in Fitness Center or locker rooms. Water and other appropriate beverages are allowed.
3. Appropriate attire must be worn at ALL TIMES during use of the facility. Please be courteous to others in what is worn and visible to the eye. You may be asked to leave should you not abide by this rule.
4. Students and members may provide their own lock to use a locker on a semester basis. At the end of each semester, lockers must be emptied and locks removed. Employees may have a permanent locker by registering their locker number at the fitness desk and providing their own lock. Fitness Center Staff is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
5. After using the Fitness Center, please wipe the equipment you used, remove your trash items, and secure or remove personal items. Detailed cleaning and sanitizing will be performed regularly by Fitness Center Staff.
6. Vernon College scheduled instructional courses have priority use of all areas and equipment. Fitness Center patrons are not allowed to interrupt Vernon College scheduled classes.
7. Do not slam, drop, or throw weights. Use the equipment with care. Re-rack free weights, including dumb bells, when finished.
8. All users must scan ID card to enter. Failure to comply with this rule will result in users' loss of the facility until procedures have been followed.
9. Do not remove Fitness Center equipment or property from the facility.
10. If a machine or equipment item becomes non-functional or appears malfunctioning, please notify Fitness Center Staff, preferably the Coordinator, immediately.
11. Please be courteous of other users. If there is a wait for fitness equipment please limit your cardio to 30 minutes.
12. Community recreation directors, supervisors, or other College officials may suspend anyone from the facility who does not adhere to Vernon College Fitness Center guidelines. The suspension will be for a specified period of time.
13. King Center will charge a walk in fee of \$5.00 for any person choosing to utilize the facility not considered a student/employee or member of the King Center. These patrons will be required to sign a liability form upon entrance as a guest and will receive a copy of the King Center Guidelines. Any person failing to pay the walk in fee or follow the guidelines of the King Center may be asked to exit the facility and not return.



## **Rodeo Arena Usage Guidelines**

The purpose of the practice/riding arena is for instructional and rodeo-related activities. Non-instructional use of the arena shall be limited to College rodeo participants who are members of NIRA. The arena is not for general public use.

The practice/riding arena will be available to non-rodeo team members as long as the following guidelines are followed:

1. The arena/stall usage guidelines are followed.
2. The arena is not being used for organized practice or instruction.
3. Each participant must sign a waiver releasing the College from responsibility for injury. Waivers for those users under 18 must be signed by a parent or legal guardian and be notarized.
4. Roping, bronc and bull riding (and/or other activities involving rough stock) must be supervised by qualified College personnel.
5. Each participant must be proficient in the activity for which he/she wants to use the arena. Such proficiency will be judged by the rodeo coach.
6. Users may not use the arena alone. Other individuals must be present at all times.
7. Approval of arena usage must be secured from the Rodeo Coach and the Athletic Director. A minimum use fee may be charged to non-Vernon College students.
8. The responsibility for implementation of these guidelines shall rest with the Rodeo Coach and the Athletic Director.

## **Chaparral Baseball Field Usage Guidelines**

Chaparral Field and its practice areas are for the Vernon College baseball team use only unless written permission is given by the Athletic Director and the Head Baseball Coach. Any non-Vernon College student/athletes may use the facility only after receiving proper permission. Vernon College and its employees will assume no liability for injury to individuals using this facility.

## **Wade Kirk Softball Field Usage Guidelines**

The Wade Kirk softball field and its practice areas are for the Vernon College softball team use only unless written permission is given by the Athletic Director and the Head Softball Coach. Any non-Vernon College students/athletes may use the facility only after receiving proper permission. Vernon College and its employees will assume no liability for injury to individuals using this facility.

## **Housing**

Housing is available on the Vernon Campus. Vernon College provides co-ed housing for 156 students.

Room preference for fall will be given to students whose reservations are received by June 1. Reservations will be held through the first class day as published in the College calendar. Further information on student housing may be obtained from the housing office.

For the convenience of the residents and other Vernon College students, a lighted outdoor recreation area is provided. Included in this area are a sand volleyball court, a basketball court, picnic area, and open areas for horseshoes, etc.



## **Housing Security**

The Vernon College Police patrol the residence centers routinely. The housing facilities staff are responsible for reporting policy violations and criminal acts to the police officer on duty. All room doors in the residence centers open to the outside. Each of the room doors is equipped with a deadbolt lock. Keys for these deadbolt locks are maintained and controlled by the College.

## **Housing Regulations**

The purpose of regulations for student residents is to protect the safety and rights of all students. If an individual infringes upon the safety and rights of others by violating these regulations, that individual may be subject to disciplinary action. The Student Residence Handbook is provided in printed format at the mandatory housing orientation at the beginning of each semester. The Student Resident Handbook is also available online.

## **Missing Persons Policy and Procedures**

A person residing on the Vernon Campus student residence halls is required to list a confidential name on the emergency contact information form to be notified in the event they are reported missing. When a missing person report is made regarding a student residing in Vernon College Housing, the following protocol will be enacted. If the notification is made to the Office of Housing, the Director of Housing should be immediately notified to assess the situation.

### Assessing the Situation: (Director of Housing)

- a. Search room and building for individual. If not located, proceed to step B.
- b. What are the circumstances that lead one to report a person missing?
- c. What was the emotional state of the missing individual?
- d. What are the missing person's normal habits?
- e. How long has the individual been missing?
  1. Last time the person was seen?
  2. Who were they with at the time?
  3. Last known destination?
  4. What type of transportation did he/she have?
- f. Description of missing individual.
  1. Age and build.
  2. Clothes they were wearing when last seen.
  3. Facial hair, glasses, color and length of hair, etc.
  4. Other unusual or identifying characteristics, e.g., braces, scars, etc.

### Actions to be Taken:

Director of Housing will:

1. Notify the Vice President of Student Services and/or the Dean of Student Services.
2. Notify missing person contact information listed on the housing application.

## **Housing Contract**

The housing contract is a nine-month academic year contract for students entering housing space in the fall. Students entering student housing in the spring or summer will sign a contract that covers the spring or summer only. This contract governs the housing refund regulations.

Students residing in campus housing are urged to carefully read the housing contract and the *Student Resident Handbook*.

For purposes of establishing charges and refunds, occupancy is defined as being assigned a room and in possession of a room key.

## Room Deposit

To reserve a room, a \$100 room deposit must be submitted to the housing office. This amount must be maintained on deposit as long as a student resides in College housing. Refund information is found in the cost section of the *Vernon College General Catalog*.

## Policy on Comfort and Therapy Animals

Vernon College recognizes the rights of Vernon College Housing residents to have Comfort Animals or Therapy Animals. Comfort and Therapy Animals may also be called Emotional Support Animals. This is different from Service Animals, which are registered with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Service Animals registered with Vernon College OSD are allowed access to all areas of Vernon College. Comfort or Therapy Animals are only permitted in Vernon College housing, not in classrooms, administrative buildings, dining halls, housing common areas, or gyms and athletic fields.

No animal will be permitted in Vernon College Housing that:

- Does not have prior approval by the Vernon College OSD Office, the Dean of Student Services and Vernon College Housing Office
- Poses a direct threat to the health and safety of other students or staff
- Would cause substantial physical damage to Vernon College facilities or other residents
- Would fundamentally alter the nature of Vernon College Housing operations
- Is defined as “dangerous wild animals” in the Texas Health and Safety Code 822.101 (big cats, apes, bears, hybrids of these animals), primates, high rabies risk animals (bats, fox, raccoon, coyote), venomous animals, or domestic animals with an unknown health history are not allowed

The Vice President of Student Services, Dean of Student Services, OSD Coordinator, and the Housing Director will make the final determination for on-campus residents requesting a waiver of the “no pets” policy so that they may have a Comfort or Therapy Animal. A decision about if a particular accommodation is reasonable is a fact intensive, case-specific determination.

To request to have a Comfort or Therapy Animal in Vernon College Housing the student must submit the following to the Office for Students with Disabilities:

- Complete a Disability Services intake form
- Provide a Comfort or Therapy Animal Request letter completed by a licensed mental health professional (therapist, psychologist, or psychiatrist – not a family doctor) on his/her letterhead that states the student is under his/her care, is emotionally or psychiatrically disabled, and prescribes a Comfort or Therapy Animal for the specific student
- Provide documentation from a licensed veterinarian that the animal is inoculated and free from diseases. The paperwork must also show that all shots are updated and in compliance with Wilbarger County and the City of Vernon requirements

Once a Comfort or Therapy Animal is approved the student will be required to complete animal registration paperwork with the Vernon College Housing Office and sign an acknowledgement of Comfort and Therapy Animal Housing Policies.

Residents with approved Comfort or Therapy Animals will not automatically be assigned a private room. Efforts will be made to match students with Comfort or Therapy Animals to potential

## Policy on Comfort and Therapy Animals (continued)

roommates to whom contact has been made to prevent possible incompatibilities such as allergies or other concerns. If a private room is requested, and available, approved standard private room rates will apply. A specific exercise location for the Comfort or Therapy Animal is the responsibility of the student. Comfort or Therapy Animals may not be fed food or scraps from on campus dining.

In addition to complying with ADA guidelines, Vernon College Housing policies, and community standards residents with Comfort or Service Animals must meet the following expectations:

- Animals must be on a leash, in a carrier, in a cage or otherwise restrained when not in the residents room
- Animals must receive daily care (food, water and attention) from the resident
- Animals must be kept clean, their waste disposed of properly in the residence hall and from any outside campus area when walking the animal, and any problems with fleas or ticks promptly eliminated
- Animals must not bite or make excessive noise – barking, growling, screeching howling, crying, etc...
- Residents will be responsible for any damages caused by the animal
- Repeated complaints by students or staff about an animal's hygiene or behavior without prompt resolution may result in removal of the animal
- If the animal poses an immediate threat to other Vernon College students or Vernon College staff Wilbarger County Animal Services may be contacted to remove the animal immediately
- All liability for the actions of the animal is the sole responsibility of the owner
- The owner of the animal must notify Vernon College Housing staff immediately if the animal escapes or is lost
- Students are not allowed to leave the Comfort or Therapy Animal unattended overnight at any time. If a student will be gone from Vernon College Housing overnight the Comfort or Therapy Animal must be removed from Vernon College Housing to either be with the student or be in proper boarding

Any violations of the above policy can result in immediate removal of the animal and permanent revocation of the Comfort or Therapy Animal privileges for the student.

Checkout expectations of students with Comfort or Therapy Animals are:

- Checkout must be scheduled by appointment with the Director of Housing
- The room must be completely clear of animal hair
- The room must be cleaned sufficiently to eliminate any animal odor or waste odor
- Residents will be charged upon checkout if any additional cleaning, deodorizing, or disinfecting is required to remove animal hair, dander, waste or odor

## **CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT**

### **Standards of Conduct and Student Rights**

The purpose of this section is to provide guidelines to the educational environment of Vernon College. This environment views students in a holistic manner, encouraging and inviting them to learn and grow independently. Such an environment presupposes both rights and responsibilities.

Standards and procedures, which comprise the Code of Student Conduct, are considered as College policy. All students need to become familiar with the information contained in this publication in order that they may be sufficiently informed of the standards of conduct established by the College. These regulations apply to individuals as well as to individuals acting in concert with others (groups, student organizations, etc.). Enrollment in Vernon College is considered by the College as implicit declaration of acceptance on the part of the student of College regulations. It is stressed that all local, state, and federal laws are supported by the College. Being a student does not exempt a person from being a law-abiding citizen.

Vernon College is an academic community in which all persons share responsibility for its growth and continued well-being. As members of the College community, students can reasonably expect the following:

1. In all instances of general discipline, the student has the right to due process. Due process, as applied to student-College relationship and the disciplinary process, is equated with fundamental and procedural fairness.
2. Students have the right to freedom from discrimination on the basis of race, gender, age, religion, creed, national origin, or disability.
3. Vernon College considers freedom of inquiry and discussion essential to a student's intellectual development. Thus, the College recognizes the right of all students to engage in discussion, to exchange thought and opinion, and to speak, write, or print freely on any subject in accordance with the guarantees of federal and state laws.
4. The College affirms the right of students as citizens to exercise their freedoms without fear of College interference for such activity.
5. Students have the opportunity to participate in the formulation of policy directly affecting students through membership on appropriate committees as determined by the President of the College, the student government, and other recognized groups within the College community.
6. Students shall have ready access to established College policies and procedures.
7. Students, as members of the College community, have the responsibility to participate in any of the disciplinary proceedings and to testify as a witness when reasonably notified. Self-incrimination is not intended or construed.
8. Students are free to engage in peaceful and orderly protest, demonstration, and picketing at times and in areas designated by the College, which do not disrupt functions of the College.
9. Students are protected from unreasonable searches and seizures.

## **Policies, Rules, and Regulations**

### **Interpretation of Regulations**

Disciplinary regulations at the College are set forth in writing in this handbook in order to give students general notice of prohibited conduct. The regulations should be read broadly and are not designed to define misconduct in exhaustive terms.

### **Definitions of Terms**

1. "Cheating/collusion/plagiarism" - cheating means intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise; collusion means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for credit; plagiarism means intentionally representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. (See Academic Integrity Policy)
2. "College premises" means buildings or grounds owned, leased, operated, controlled, or supervised by the College.
3. "College regulation or policy" means standards of conduct or requirements located in the:
  - a. College Catalog
  - b. Policies and Procedures Manual
  - c. Student Handbook
  - d. Any other official publication or College website
4. "College sponsored activity" means any activity on or off campus, which is initiated, aided, authorized, or supervised by the College.
5. "Controlled substance" and "illegal drugs" are those as defined by the state-controlled substances act, as amended.
6. "Fabrication" means intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation.
7. "Organization" means a number of persons who have complied with college requirements for registration of the group.
8. "Reckless" means conduct which one should reasonably be expected to know would create a substantial risk or harm to persons or property, or which would otherwise be likely to result in interference with normal college or college-sponsored activities.
9. "Sanctions" means any or all of the penalties that may be imposed for violation of College regulation.
10. "Student" means a person who has paid tuition and fees, and is taking or auditing courses through Vernon College.
11. "Violation" means an act or omission, which is contrary to a published college regulation or policy.
12. "Weapon" means any object or substance designed to inflict a wound, cause injury, or incapacitate, including but not limited to, all firearms, knives, clubs, or similar weapons, which are defined and prohibited by the state penal code, as amended.

### **Prohibited Conduct**

Particular behavior that violates Vernon College standards of conduct listed below will be subject to disciplinary action through the appropriate judicial process. Prohibited student actions include, but are not limited to:

## **Academic Misconduct**

1. All forms of academic dishonesty (plagiarism, fabrication, cheating, aiding and abetting academic misconduct).
2. Failure to comply with classroom behavior as outlined in the course syllabus provided by the instructor.
3. Illegal downloading and unauthorized use, infringement, and/or distribution of copyright materials, including unauthorized peer-to-peer file sharing, is prohibited and subject to appropriate disciplinary sanctions and may subject the student to civil and criminal liabilities. (See also Academic Integrity Policy – specific violations of “cheating”, “plagiarism”, and “collusion” and associated sanctions related to violations of academic integrity).

## **Non-Academic Misconduct**

1. Any physical, mental, verbal act, or expression through electronic means that intentionally embarrasses, threatens harms or harasses any person or group on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.
2. Possession, storage, use, or distribution of fireworks, explosives, weapons, ammunition, or any other substance or device designed to harm or incapacitate is prohibited on College premises or while attending a College sponsored activity.
3. Destruction or abuse of a fire alarm, extinguisher, or other safety device anywhere on college premises or making a false report concerning a fire, bomb, or other emergency.
4. Furnishing of false information to the College, forgery, unauthorized alteration or the unauthorized use of any College document or instrument of identification.
5. Unsolicited, deliberate or repeated sexual flirtations, advances or propositions, the display of sexually suggestive pictures or objects, and/or offensive or abusive physical contact of a sexual nature.
6. Unauthorized use of computer hardware or software.
7. Unauthorized possession, use or the abuse, destruction, or theft of property of the College or any of its members or guests.
8. Failure to comply with the direction of College officials acting in performance of their duties.
9. Failure to properly meet financial responsibilities to the College, including, but not limited to, knowingly passing a worthless check or money order in payment to the College.
10. Participating in or inciting a riot or any unauthorized or disorderly assembly.
11. Gambling, conducting or holding a raffle or lottery on college premises or at any College function except in cases of specific approval by the VP Student Services and/or the Dean of Student Services.
12. Unacceptable standards of common decency in mode of dress.
13. Use of smokeless tobacco on all College premises or smoking of tobacco products in other than designated smoking areas.
14. Self-inflicted harm or the intent to physically harm others.
15. Any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off College premises that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of, or resulting from being initiated into or affiliating with any recognized or non-recognized organization, despite an individuals “willing” participation.
16. Selling, peddling or soliciting with literature on campus except in cases of specific approval by the Dean of Student Services.
17. Forcing, threatening to force, coercing, or deceiving another to engage in sexual activity, or engaging in sexual activity with another knowing that the activity is offensive to that person or that the person is unable to assess the nature of or control their own conduct.
18. Violation of federal, state, or local law when in the judgment of College officials, the violation represents a potential threat to the safety or security of the College community.



## **Non-Academic Misconduct (continued)**

19. Inappropriate and/or disruptive use of cell phone.
20. Violence (or threat of violence) Against a Fellow Student: physical abuse of any person (including dating violence, domestic violence or sexual violence) on Vernon College premises or college-supervised functions, including physical actions which threaten or endanger the health or safety of any such persons. This includes physical actions which threaten or endanger the health or safety of any such persons. This includes fighting and/or other disruptive behavior, which includes any action or threat of violence which endangers the peace, safety, or orderly function of the College, its facilities, or persons engaged in the business of Vernon College. Note: certain physical abuse may also be considered unlawful harassment.
21. Violence (or threat of violence) Against a Faculty or Staff Member: physical abuse of any faculty or staff member (including dating violence, domestic violence or sexual violence) on Vernon College premises or college-supervised functions, including physical actions which threaten or endanger the health or safety of any such persons. This includes physical actions which threaten or endanger the health or safety of any such persons. This includes fighting and/or other disruptive behavior, which includes any action or threat of violence which endangers the peace, safety, or orderly function of the college, its facilities, or persons engaged in the business of Vernon College. Note: certain physical abuse may also be considered unlawful harassment.
22. Harassment Against a Fellow Student: Vernon College prohibits unlawful conduct based on race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender, religion, disability, age, genetic information, political affiliation or belief, disabled veteran, veteran of the Vietnam Era or citizenship status addressed directly to any individual or group that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably and objectively interfering with that individual or group's: (1) performance, (2) work or educational environment or (3) ability to participate in an educational program or activity. The College also prohibits stalking, or other behavior which objectively and unreasonably interferes with another's legal rights or creates an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. (This also includes the display of or navigation to pornography and other inappropriate websites and materials and inappropriate behavior on social media and/or networking applications.) Impermissible harassment may include verbal, non—verbal and/or physical conduct.
23. Harassment Against a Faculty or Staff Member. Vernon College prohibits unlawful conduct based on race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender, religion, disability, age, genetic information, political affiliation or belief, disabled veteran, veteran of the Vietnam Era or citizenship status addressed directly to any faculty or staff member that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably and objectively interfering with that faculty or staff member's: (1) performance, (2) work or educational environment or (3) ability to participate in an educational program or activity. The College also prohibits stalking, or other behavior which objectively and unreasonably interferes with another's legal rights or creates an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. (This also includes the display of or navigation to pornography and other inappropriate websites and materials and inappropriate behavior on social media and/or networking applications.) Impermissible harassment may include verbal, non—verbal and/or physical conduct.
24. Miscellaneous Misconduct.
25. Theft/Damage of College Property.
26. Occupation or seizure, in any manner, of Vernon College property, facility, or any portion thereof for a use inconsistent with prescribed, customary, or authorized use.
27. Unlawful Presence on College Premises.
28. Prohibited Assembly.

## **Non-Academic Misconduct (continued)**

29. Tampering with Fire or Smoke Alarms.
30. Obstruction of Normal College Business.
31. Possession of Alcohol on College Grounds or at a College Sponsored Event.
32. Possession of a Controlled Substance on College Grounds or at a College Sponsored Event.
33. Smoking/Tobacco in unauthorized areas.
34. Unauthorized use, possession, or storage of any weapon or explosive (including fireworks) on College premises or at College sponsored activities.
35. Failure to comply with Housing rules and regulations.
36. Entry into, or use of, any building, facility, or room or other College property or grounds without authorized approval. This also includes the unauthorized possession or use of College keys, lock combinations, or other access codes.
37. Failure to comply with College traffic rules and regulations.
38. Damaging, destroying, defacing, or altering the property of the College or the property of another person or entity.

## **Copyright Infringement**

Vernon College prohibits the unauthorized use and distribution of copyrighted materials including unauthorized peer-to-peer file sharing. Violating this policy may subject the student to civil and criminal liabilities and appropriate disciplinary actions as specified in the Student Handbook.

Copyright infringement is the act of exercising, without permission or legal authority, one or more of the exclusive rights granted to the copyright owner under Section 106 of the Copyright Act (Title 17 of the United States Code). These rights include the right to reproduce or distribute a copyrighted work. In the file-sharing context, downloading or uploading substantial parts of a copyrighted work without authority constitutes infringement. Penalties for copyright infringement include civil and criminal penalties. In general, anyone found liable for civil copyright infringement may be ordered to pay either actual damages or “statutory” damages affixed at not less than \$750 and not more than \$30,000 per work infringed. For “willful” infringement, a court may award up to \$150,000 per work infringed. A court can, in its discretion, also assess costs and attorneys’ fees. For details, see Title 17, United States Code, Sections 504, 505. Willful copyright infringement can also result in criminal penalties, including imprisonment of up to five years and fines up to \$250,000 per offense. For more information, please see the website of the U.S. Copyright Office at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov).

## **Procedures in Student Disciplinary Matters**

In the interest of maintaining order and guaranteeing the broadest range of freedom to each member of the College community, standards of conduct have been adopted by the College. These standards limit some activities and prohibit behavior which is harmful to the orderly operation of the institution. All students are responsible for being informed of prohibited conduct as it is printed in this publication.

## **Due Process**

Students who allegedly violate provisions of this code are entitled to fair and equitable proceedings under this code. The focus of inquiry in disciplinary proceedings shall be the guilt or innocence of those accused of violating disciplinary regulations.

## **Disciplinary Sanctions**

Under the direction of the President, the sole responsibility for the administration of student discipline is the Vice President of Student Services (or designee). Sanctions that may be imposed include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Warning
2. Disciplinary probation
3. Withholding of transcript or degree
4. Restitution
5. Suspension of rights or privileges
6. Suspension of eligibility from official college activities
7. Suspension from the College
8. Expulsion from the College

The following definitions apply to the sanctions listed above:

- “Warning” means a written or verbal reprimand from the Dean of Student Services.
- “Disciplinary probation” means further violations may result in suspension. Disciplinary probation may be imposed for any length of time up to one calendar year. The student shall be automatically removed from probation when the imposed period expires.
- “Withholding of transcript or degree” means a hold may be placed upon a student’s academic files until all debts owed to the College have been paid or for other reasons deemed necessary by the College.
- “Restitution” means reimbursement for damage to or misappropriation of property. Reimbursement may take the form of appropriate service to repair or otherwise compensate for damages.
- “Suspension of rights or privileges” means that limitations or restrictions may be imposed to fit the particular case.
- “Suspension of eligibility from official college activities” means that the student is prohibited, during the period of suspension, from participating in an official extracurricular activity, including athletics. Such suspension may be imposed for any length of time up to one calendar year.
- “Suspension from the college” means that during the period of suspension, the student may not be initiated into an honorary or service organization, enter the college campus except in response to an official summons, or register either for credit or non-credit scholastic work at or through the college.
- “Expulsion from the college” means a permanent severance from the college.

## **Administration of Student Discipline**

The Vice President of Student Services (or designee) has primary authority and responsibility for the administration of student discipline at the College. It is her/his or a designated staff member’s duty to investigate allegations that a student has violated the Code of Student Conduct.

Complaints for alleged violations of the code may be filed against any student by any member of the College community. The complaint, addressed to the appropriate dean, should be a brief, written statement citing the provisions of the code allegedly violated and providing a summary of the facts surrounding the incident.

## **Administration of Student Discipline (continued)**

### **Preliminary Procedures**

Upon investigation and before initiating disciplinary procedures, the Vice President of Student Services or an appropriate staff designate will give the student the opportunity to present their personal version of the incident or occurrence. The Vice President of Student Services or an appropriate staff designate may discuss, consult, and advise with any student whose conduct is called into question. Students shall attend such consultations as requested.

### **Informal Disposition**

Upon completion of preliminary proceedings, the Vice President of Student Services may:

1. Dismiss the allegation as unfounded; or
2. Make the determination that the charges are founded and impose disciplinary sanction.

If the student accepts the disposition of the Vice President of Student Services, the student shall sign a statement that he/she understands the charges and the penalty or penalties being imposed. The signed statement waives his/her right to formal disposition and appeal.

If the student disputes the facts upon which the charges are based or disputes the sanctions of the Vice President of Student Services, then the procedures for "formal disposition" will apply.

### **Interim Disciplinary Action**

The Vice President of Student Services, after consulting with the President of the College, may suspend a student for an interim period, pending formal disposition proceedings when there is evidence that the continued presence of the student on College premises poses a substantial threat to the student, to others, or to the stability and continuance of normal college functions.

### **Formal Disposition**

Formal disposition procedures are initiated by the Vice President of Student Services. The Vice President of Student Services will prepare a written summons with a statement of allegations including documentary evidence supporting the allegation. Hearing procedures together with possible sanctions will also be included. The letter will be sent by mail, addressed to the student at his or her last known address as it appears in the records of the Registrar's Office or shall be delivered personally to the student. Failure by the student to have a current correct local address on record with the College will not be construed to invalidate such notice. The letter will direct a student to appear at a specific time and place not less than five (5) class days after the date of the letter. The Vice President of Student Services has the authority to apply sanctions against the student if the student fails, without good cause, to comply with the letter of summons.

Upon completion of the discussion with the Vice President of Student Services concerning allegations and sanctions, and unless the student opts to revert to informal disposition, the student is entitled to a hearing before the student appeals committee. A written request for review, containing the reasons why such review is being requested must be submitted to the chairperson of the student appeals committee within five (5) class days from the meeting with the Vice President of Student Services. Rules of procedure governing the student appeals committee are outlined under the student grievance procedure.

## **STUDENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Vernon College recognizes that students have the right to file a complaint when they have a grievance against college policy or personnel. Vernon College has defined "grievance" as a written student complaint submitted to the Vice President of Student Services on the Vernon College

## **STUDENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES (continued)**

Grievance Form. Vernon College has reasonable, just, and timely policies and procedures in place for the resolution of these written student complaints. All students are encouraged to resolve problems when they first arise with the parties involved. Only when problems cannot be solved informally are they moved to the formal grievance procedure. The grievance procedure is published in the Student Handbook, which is available in print and online. The Vice President of Student Services or the Dean of Student Services is available to discuss Vernon College Grievance Procedures and provide guidance in navigating the process.

A grievance must be initiated within three (3) weeks of the date of the alleged occurrence. Neither the student nor the institution is entitled or allowed to have an attorney present during any of the grievance proceedings.

Grievances against College policy or personnel are categorized into two distinct types, “academic” or “non-academic.” Prior to initiating any phase of the student grievance procedure, students must determine which category of grievance best represents their concern. Students will not be allowed to vacillate between academic and non-academic grievance determinations once any phase of the student grievance procedure has been initiated. In both non-academic and academic grievances, the term “class day” is meant to be synonymous with Vernon College business/working days. Any student having a question regarding this process should contact the Vice President of Student Services. Should the student have a grievance against the Vice President of Student Services, the student should appeal directly to the President of the College.

### **Non-Academic Grievances**

A non-academic grievance is a college-related internal problem or condition which a student believes to be unfair, inequitable, discriminatory, or a hindrance to the educational process.

A student who has a non-academic grievance against a faculty or staff member may take the following action:

1. Discuss the matter with the faculty or staff member involved.
2. The decision of the faculty or staff should be made and communicated to the student within five (5) class days of the student conference. The decision is final unless within five (5) class days after the decision, the student contacts the appropriate division chairperson, Dean of Instruction or supervisor for review.
3. The division chairperson, Dean of Instruction or supervisor may request of the student a written narrative outlining the alleged complaint.
4. The division chairperson, Dean of Instruction or supervisor has five (5) class days to investigate, reach a decision, and respond in writing to the student. The decision is final unless within five (5) class days after the decision has been made, the student completes a “Student Grievance and Appeals” form, (available in the Student Services offices) and presents it to the Vice President of Student Services for review and forwarding to the appropriate Vernon College Vice President.
5. The appropriate Vice President has five (5) class days to investigate, reach a decision, and respond to the student in writing. The decision is final unless within five (5) class days after the decision has been made the student makes a written request for review to the student appeals committee. Rules of procedure governing the student appeals committee are outlined later in this section. If assistance is needed, the Vice President of Student Services or Dean of Student Services should be contacted.



## **STUDENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES (continued)**

### **Academic Grievances**

An academic grievance is a dispute over the awarding of grades and/or any other decision based on academic program procedures.

A student who has an academic grievance against a faculty member may take the following action:

1. Discuss the matter with the faculty member involved.
2. The decision of the faculty member should be made and communicated to the student within five (5) class days of the student conference.
3. If the matter remains unresolved, the student, within five (5) class days, may appeal to the division chairperson, Dean of Instruction, or supervisor. The division chairperson, Dean of Instruction or supervisor may request of the student a written narrative outlining the alleged complaint. The division chairperson, Dean of Instruction or supervisor will investigate, reach a decision, and respond in writing to the student within five (5) class days. The decision is final unless, within five (5) class days after the decision has been communicated to the student, the student completes a "Student Grievance and Appeals" form, (available in the Student Services offices) and presents it to the Vice President of Student Services to forward to the Vice President of Instructional Services for review.
4. The Vice President of Instructional Services has five (5) class days to investigate, reach a decision and respond to the student in writing. The decision is final unless within five (5) class days after the decision has been communicated to the student, the student makes a written request for review to the student appeals committee. Rules of procedure governing the student appeals committee are outlined later in this section. If assistance is needed, the Vice President of Student Services or Dean of Student Services should be contacted.

**Time Limits:** If the student fails to meet the time limits or advise the Vice President of Student Services of a perceived hindrance prior to the deadline at any step, the grievance is automatically considered dropped. If college personnel, at any step, fail to meet the time limits, the grievance is automatically advanced to the next step.

### **Student Appeals Committee**

The student appeals committee will be appointed by the College President (or designee) and will have the authority to impose appropriate sanctions/decisions upon any student or students appearing before it. The chairperson of the student appeals committee is appointed by the President. The committee will consist of three faculty/staff members plus the chairperson and three students. The chairperson, two faculty/staff members and two students must be present to constitute a quorum and hear a case. The chairperson will insure that there is equal representation of faculty/staff members and students. To insure a fair and impartial hearing, any member of the committee who has a direct interest in the case should disqualify himself/herself from the committee, in which case the President will appoint an appropriate replacement. The chairperson of the committee may vote only when it is necessary to break a tie vote.

Upon receipt of a written request to the student appeals committee for a hearing, the committee chairperson will within three (3) class days contact the committee members to arrange a hearing date, time, and place and will advise the Vice President of Student Services of such. The Vice President of Student Services will, in turn, issue notice to the student. The student will be given at least three (3) class days notice of the date, time, and place of the scheduled hearing. The student



## **STUDENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES (continued)**

can also waive the right to three days notice of the hearing so that the hearing can be conducted quickly for time sensitive situations.

### **Hearing Procedures**

All student appeals committee hearings will be conducted in private in order to protect the confidential nature of the proceedings. The chairperson will preside at the hearing. The Vice President of Student Services or his designee will be present to make sure procedural matters are followed. At the hearing, only the committee chairperson, the Vice President of Student Services or his designee, the serving committee members, the student filing the grievance, and the Vernon College respondent shall be present. No other parties are allowed to be present in the hearing room. The hearing shall be of an informal nature and need not adhere to the rules of procedures or technical rules of evidence followed by courts of law. Likewise, deviations from prescribed procedures will not necessarily invalidate a decision or proceeding, unless significant prejudice to a student respondent or the College may result. Only one student and only one college employee shall be designated to represent during the hearing procedures. A written record of the proceedings will be kept by the committee chairperson. No audio recordings will be permitted. The record of the hearing will be filed in the office of the Vice President of Student Services and only for the purpose of appeal be accessible to the College and the student.

Hearings will proceed in the following order:

1. reading of the charges by the committee chairperson
2. the student's statement of position with respect to the charges (no more than three (3) minutes)
3. the private presentation of evidence by the respondent (no more than 15 minutes) as well as questions by the student appeals committee (no more than 10 minutes)
4. the private presentation of evidence by the student (no more than 15 minutes) as well as questions by the student appeals committee (no more than 10 minutes)
5. brief closing statements by both parties (no more than three (3) minutes) with the college respondent speaking first, followed by the student

\* The committee chair is able to reasonably extend the time for evidence or questions for either the student or respondents.

Upon conclusion of the hearing, the student appeals committee will consider the merits of the case. The appeals committee chairperson will transmit the committee's findings and determinations in writing to only the student (via registered mail), the respondent, and the Vice President of Student Services within three (3) class days. The decision of the appeals committee is final, unless within five (5) class days after the decision has been made, the student makes a written request for a Presidential review via the Vice President of Student Services.

### **Appeals to the President**

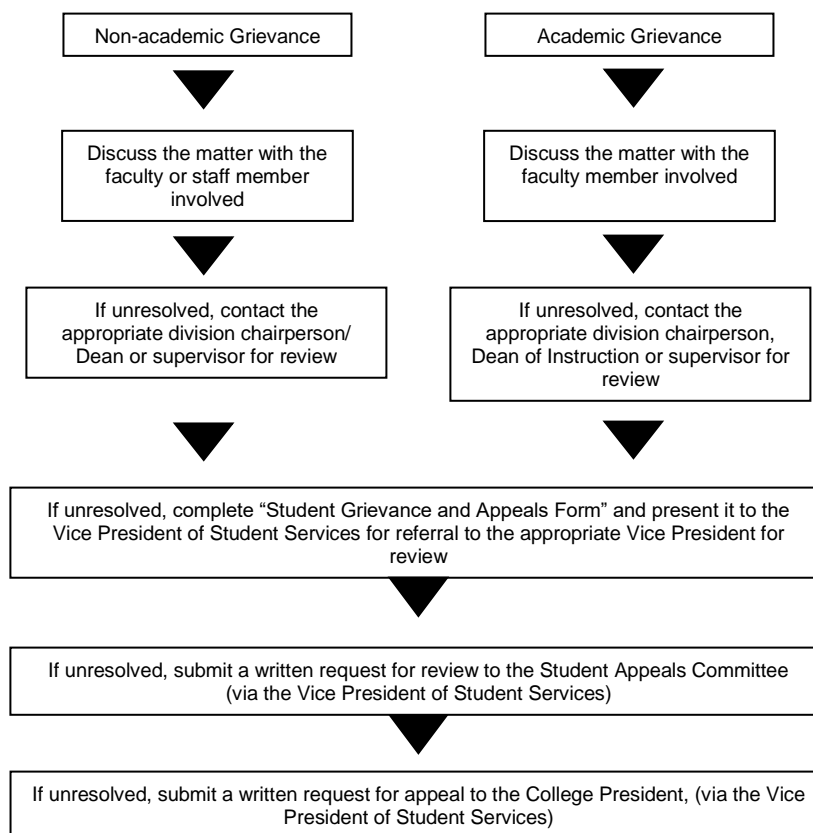
Within five (5) class days after the decision has been made by the student appeals committee, either or both parties may submit a written request for appeal to the College President. The President's review will be based on the record of the hearing. Both parties may, at the discretion of the President, submit oral or written arguments to support their position. The President may approve, reject, or modify the decision in question. The President may require that the original hearing be reopened for the presentation of additional evidence and reconsideration of the decision or for correction of a procedural error.

## STUDENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES (continued)

### Student Grievance Procedure Chart

Vernon College recognizes that students have the right to file a complaint when they have a grievance against college policy or personnel. Vernon College has defined “grievance” as a written student complaint submitted to the Vice President of Student Services on the Vernon College Grievance Form. Vernon College has reasonable, just, and timely policies and procedures in place for the resolution of these written student complaints. All students are encouraged to resolve problems when they first arise with the parties involved. Only when problems cannot be solved informally are they moved to the formal grievance procedure. Prior to initiating any phase of the student grievance procedure, students must determine which category of grievance represents their concern. Students will not be allowed to vacillate between academic and non-academic grievance determinations once any phase of the student grievance procedure has been initiated. Any student having a question regarding this process should contact the Vice President of Student Services.

If the grievant fails to meet published time limits or advises the Vice President of Student Services of a perceived hindrance prior to the deadline at any step, the grievance is automatically considered dropped. If College personnel, at any step, fail to meet the time limits, the grievance is automatically advanced to the next step.



## GUN POLICY

The College District prohibits the use, possession, or display of a firearm on College District property or at a College District sponsored or related activity in violation of law and College District regulations.

The open carry of firearms is prohibited on any College District campus or center premises, including all public driveway, street sidewalk or parking area.

The following definitions apply to the concealed carry of handguns on College District property:

- Campus: all land, buildings, and portions of buildings owned or leased by the College District.
- Campus Housing: a residential facility owned or leased and operated by the College District.
- Collegiate Sports: intercollegiate, club, and intramural athletic activities occurring on the campus premises.

**Concealed Handgun:** a handgun, which is not openly noticeable to the ordinary observation of a reasonable person.

**Handgun:** any firearm that is designed made or adapted to be fired with one hand. **Interscholastic Event:** a function or program involving elementary or secondary schools.

**License Holder:** means a person licensed to carry a handgun in accordance with law.

**Notice:** has the meaning assigned by law.

**Secure Gun Storage:** a safe, gun safe, gun case, lock box, or other device that is designed to be or can be used to store a firearm and that is designed to be unlocked only by means of a key, a combination or other similar means.

**Store:** to take steps that a reasonable person would take to prevent the access to a firearm, including but not limited to placing a firearm in a secure gun storage.

Those individuals who lawfully hold a license to carry may carry a concealed handgun on College District property unless otherwise prohibited by law or this policy. This policy does not apply to commissioned peace officers.

License holders must follow applicable state laws and College District policy and procedures.

License holders may be asked to show proof of license to a commissioned peace officer in accordance with law. No other College District employee may ask to see a license to carry.

License holders shall not be subject to prejudice for lawfully expressing the right to carry.

A person, including employees acting outside their duties, whose possession, use, or storage of a handgun results in personal injury or property damage shall be personally liable for the injury or damage.

The College District shall not provide general storage for firearms. Individuals shall lawfully store the handgun when going to a place on campus where concealed carry is prohibited.

License holders shall either carry the concealed weapon on their person or store the weapon in secure gun storage provided by the resident that has been approved by the College District's police department. The weapon should only be visible during the time it takes to transfer the weapon from their person to the locked container.

Non-resident license holders shall carry the weapon on their persons at all times and may not store the weapon in campus housing.

## **GUN POLICY (continued)**

The College President or designee may prohibit the carrying of concealed handguns in order to promote safety at any campus or center premises when appropriate. The following areas are prohibited from concealed carry:

1. At a location where a high school or collegiate sporting event or interscholastic event is taking place in accordance with law.
2. Areas where minors are present at the discretion of the College President or designee.
3. Any location where law enforcement or correctional training is conducted, unless expressly authorized by the Director of Protective Services for training purposes. In no circumstance will live ammunition be allowed in these areas.
4. All College District testing center locations.
5. The Skills Training Center Welding Lab.
6. All locker rooms.

Individuals may request that an event is temporarily exempt from campus carry in writing to the College President or designee. Individuals requesting an exemption should include specific safety issues that would exclude the event from concealed carry. The College President or designee shall respond to the request within five working days. A license holder may request review of the decision to temporarily prohibit the carry of a concealed handgun at an event. The request must be made in writing to the College President or designee. The College President or designee shall respond to the request within five working days.

The College District shall provide notice where handguns are prohibited in accordance with law. The College District police and/or the director of protective services shall provide safe campus training as directed by the College President. The College President or designee shall submit a report to the Texas Legislature describing the College District's adopted rules that regulate concealed handguns on campus and the reason for the rules. The report shall be submitted to the board of directors prior to submission to the legislature. The report shall be submitted no later than September 1, 2018 and then every even numbered years thereafter.

The College District prohibits the use, possession, or display of any illegal knife, club, or prohibited weapon, as defined by law, on College District property or at a College District sponsored or related activity, unless written authorization is granted in advance by the College President or designee. Additionally, the following weapons are prohibited on College District property or at any College District sponsored or related activity:

1. Fireworks of any kind;
2. Incendiary devices;
3. Instruments designed to expel a projectile with the use of pressurized air, like a BB gun;
4. Razors;
5. Chains; or
6. Martial arts throwing stars.

The possession or use of articles not generally considered to be weapons may be prohibited when the College President or designee determines that a danger exists for any student, College District employee, or College District property by virtue of possession or use. Employees and students found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action. [See DH, FM, and FMA] Violations of College District rules that are also violations of state law may be prosecuted criminally.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

It is the policy of Vernon College to provide an environment free from implicit and explicit sexual behavior used to control, influence, or adversely affect the well-being of any member of the College community. Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Sexual harassment of any individual is inappropriate and unacceptable and is grounds for disciplinary action.

### **Definition of Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when one of the following criteria is met:

1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the individual status in a program, course, or activity; or
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for academic decision or other decision affecting that individual; or
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or living environment.

Sexual harassment encompasses any sexual attention that is unwanted and can take many forms, but most sexual harassment falls into three categories: verbal, visual, and physical, and includes expression through electronic means. Examples of sexual harassment range from sexually suggestive remarks, gestures and jokes, to the display of offensive sexual pictures or photos. Other behaviors considered sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, offensive or negative comments about a person's gender and/or physical appearance; unwelcome touching; standing close to or cornering a person; unwelcome pressure for dates or sex; and spreading rumors about a person's sexual activity.

## **VERNON COLLEGE TITLE IX POLICY**

Vernon College employees strive to foster a safe and healthy learning culture. Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 is an all-encompassing federal law that prohibits discrimination based on the gender of students and employees of educational institutions which receive federal financial assistance. Sex discrimination includes sexual harassment and sexual assault. Title IX states that "no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance..."

Vernon College Title IX Coordinator (for employees)

Haven David

Director of Human Resources

4400 College Drive

Osborne Administration Building

Vernon, Texas 76384

940-552-6291

hdavid@vernoncollege.edu

## **VERNON COLLEGE TITLE IX POLICY (continued)**

Vernon College Title IX Deputy Coordinator (for students)

Kristin Harris

Dean of Student Services

4400 College Drive

Osborne Administration Building

Vernon, Texas 76384

940-552-6291

kharris@vernoncollege.edu

Vernon College's Sexual Assault Policy and Procedures prohibits sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, stalking, dating and domestic violence. Additionally, the College prohibits retaliation against any individual who brings a good faith complaint under the policy, participates in the resolution process, or assists as a bystander to prevent sexual misconduct of any kind.

Vernon College encourages all student and employees to immediately report incidents of sexual misconduct. Designated Student Services professionals, Campus Police, and the Title IX Coordinator are available as resources. Specific information for the Vernon College Sexual Assault Policy can be at <https://www.vernoncollege.edu/sexual-assault>

Vernon College's Sexual Assault Policy, the Vernon College Employee Handbook, and the Vernon College Student Handbook outline the steps for conducting investigations, leveling charges, coordinating hearings, and notifying both the complainant and the respondent throughout the process. Vernon College administration will always defer to local law enforcement during investigations involving a criminal matter as to not jeopardize legal proceedings. The respondent and the complainant involved in alleged sexual misconduct cases are entitled to be accompanied to any disciplinary hearings by a hearing advisor of their choice. The respondent and the complainant are also entitled to prompt notification of the outcome of these proceedings as outlined in procedures.

Important Resources:

[Vernon College Student Handbook](#)

[Vernon College Employee Handbook](#)

[Vernon College Sexual Assault Policy and Procedures](#)

[Vernon College Anonymous Crime Reporting](#)

The United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is in charge of enforcing Title IX. Information regarding OCR can be found at:

[https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/tix\\_dis.html](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/tix_dis.html)

Approved by the Vernon College Board of Trustees April 10, 2019

### **DRUG FREE ENVIRONMENT**

In accordance with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989, Vernon College prohibits the possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs and alcohol on College premises or as part of any College sponsored event. The College has developed this policy, not only in response to the federal drug-free legislation, but also in an attempt to provide a healthy environment by preventing the use of illegal drugs or the abuse of alcohol within the College community.



## **DRUG FREE ENVIRONMENT (continued)**

Information on the effects of specific drugs and alcohol, and drug counseling resources in Vernon, Wichita Falls, and surrounding areas is available through the Vernon campus Health Care Clinic or by contacting a counselor in the Student Services office at the appropriate campus location. The College's counselors are trained to assist students through counseling and referral to specialized substance abuse programs.

### **Legal Sanctions**

Various federal, state, and local statutes make it unlawful to manufacture, distribute, dispense, deliver, sell, or possess with intent to manufacture, controlled substances. The penalty imposed depends upon many factors, including the type and amount of controlled substance involved, the number of prior offenses, if any, and whether any other crimes were committed in connection with the use of the controlled substance. Possible sanctions include incarcerations up to and including life imprisonment and imposition of substantial monetary fines.

### **Disciplinary Sanctions**

The College will impose sanctions against individuals who are determined to have violated rules prohibiting the use, manufacturing, possession, or distribution of illegal drugs or alcohol. Individuals may be immediately removed from the College property. Sanctions for individuals using, manufacturing, or possessing illegal drugs or alcohol may include disciplinary probation and in appropriate cases, suspension or expulsion from the College. Parents or legal guardian of underage students may be notified. Individuals involved in the sale and/or manufacturing of illegal drugs will be suspended from the College and referred to the appropriate authorities for criminal prosecution.

At the discretion of the Chief of Police, with approval from the Vice President of Student Services, a temporary ban from college properties may be placed on individuals who violate campus policies.

## **STUDENT HEALTH ISSUES**

### **Accident Reporting**

In the event of an accident which occurs on any VC campus, a Student Accident Report Form should be submitted. The Student Accident Report Form is available online ([www.vernoncollege.edu](http://www.vernoncollege.edu)), and is to be completed by the student within 24 hours of the accident and turned in to the VC Police Department.

### **Alcohol**

The use of alcohol can lead to serious health risks, such as the loss of muscle control, poor coordination, slurred speech, fatigue, nausea, headaches, increased likelihood of accidents, impaired judgment, and possible respiratory paralysis. Heavy drinking can lead to alcoholism; damage to brain cells; increased risk of cirrhosis; ulcers; heart disease; heart attack; cancers of the liver, mouth, throat, and stomach; and hallucinations.

### **Pandemic Influenza**

A pandemic flu is defined as a global outbreak of a virulent human disease for which there is no vaccine and little natural immunity. Information about pandemic influenza is available to all Vernon College students through the Wellness Center information centers on all campuses. Further information regarding symptoms, diagnosis or transmission can be found at [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov). The College's pandemic influenza response team will work in conjunction with local, state, and federal government health officials to determine the most prudent course of action to prevent and contain a pandemic flu outbreak within the College locations.

## STUDENT HEALTH ISSUES (continued)

### Illegal Drugs

Health risks associated with the use of illegal drugs include increased susceptibility to disease due to a less efficient immune system, increased likelihood of accidents, personality disorders, addiction, death by overdose, anemia, and poor concentration.

### Bacterial Meningitis

Effective January 1, 2014, all first-time college students and returning students under the age of 22 must be immunized against bacterial meningitis, according to the Jamie Schanbaum and Nicolis Williams Act.

All incoming freshmen, transfer students and returning students, following a break in enrollment of at least one fall or spring semester, will be required to show proof of immunization against bacterial meningitis.

Documentation showing that the student has received the immunization within the last five years must be provided at least 10 days prior to the first day of the semester in order to register for classes. Students must submit one of the following in order to be cleared for registration:

- the signature or stamp of a physician (or his/her designee) or public health personnel on a form that shows the month, day and year the vaccination dose or booster was administered
- an official immunization record generated from a state or local health authority
- an official high school or college transcript that includes documentation of immunization provided by school officials (including records from other states)

After submitting proof of immunization, there will be a waiting period to allow for the processing of immunization information before a student will be cleared for registration.

The law does not apply to students:

- age 22 and over
- Enrolled only in **Online Classes** which does not include a face-to-face component.
- Enrolled in **Continuing Education** courses or programs less than 360 contact hours or Continuing Education corporate training.
- Enrolled in **Dual Credit** courses taught at a public or private K-12 facility.
- Who submit an affidavit or a certificate signed by a physician who is duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the United States, in which it is stated that, in the physician's opinion, the vaccination required **would be injurious** to the health and well-being of the student.
- Who submit an affidavit signed by the student stating that the student declines the vaccination for bacterial meningitis for **reasons of conscience**, including religious belief. A conscientious exemption form ("Affidavit Request for Exemption from Immunizations for Reasons of Conscience") from the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) must be used by students **living in on-campus housing**. The DSHS form may be ordered electronically. Allow several weeks to submit and have form approved by the Texas Department of State Health Services. Students **NOT living in on-campus housing** may use the official Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's form. Students must print the form, have it notarized, and file it with the Office of Admissions and Records.

**VC students who are required to have the vaccination will not be allowed to register until they provide proof of immunization to the Office of Admissions and Records.**

## **STUDENT HEALTH ISSUES (continued)**

### **Bacterial Meningitis (continued)**

Getting the Immunization - Students should get the bacterial meningitis vaccination from their primary care provider. If they do not have a health care provider then a community vaccinator like Walgreens or CVS is an alternative.

### **Communicable Disease Policy**

This policy defines and addresses communicable diseases, which from time to time arise in colleges among students. A communicable disease is an illness due to an infectious agent or its toxic products that arises through transmission of that agent or its products from a reservoir to a susceptible host and as further defined in the Texas Health and Safety Code, Section 81.001, et seq. Communicable diseases include, but are not limited to measles, influenza, viral hepatitis-A (infectious hepatitis), viral hepatitis-B (serum hepatitis), human immune deficiency virus (HIV infection), AIDS, AIDS-Related Complex (ARC), Avian Influenza, meningitis, meningococcal infections and tuberculosis.

This policy and other procedures developed by the College shall emphasize educating students concerning communicable diseases and managing each case individually with sensitivity, flexibility, and concern for the individual as well as for the College community. The College's decisions concerning a person who has a communicable disease will be based upon current and well-informed medical judgment that includes the nature of the disease, risk of transmission to others, symptoms and special circumstances of the person, and balancing identifiable risks and available alternatives to respond to a student with a communicable disease. Vernon College maintains authority to initiate dismissal of a student who has a chronic communicable disease or is a carrier of a chronic communicable disease from a particular program or course of study whenever such chronic communicable disease has a direct effect on the student's ability to perform or is deemed as a significant health risk to the campus population as a whole. At the request of the Dean of Student Services, qualified medical personnel may establish additional rules and regulations designed to implement this policy.

### **Discrimination/Confidentiality/Counseling**

The College will not discriminate against any student solely on the grounds that the student has a communicable disease. No student will be required to cease attending classes or participating in college functions solely on the basis of diagnosis of a communicable disease. The medical history or records of any student are considered confidential, and will not be released without the individual's consent except as otherwise provided by law. The College will make available to all students, information developed by the Texas Department of Health. College counselors will refer students to sources of testing for HIV infection and counseling upon student's request.

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POLICIES**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of these regulations is to acquaint all students with the College's policies associated with emergencies. The college provides a quick-link for emergency procedures on the homepage at [www.vernoncollege.edu](http://www.vernoncollege.edu). In all Emergency Preparedness procedures, students should take necessary steps to protect self and to feasibly warn others without putting one's self into harm's way.

### **Emergency Notification System**

Vernon College has an Emergency Notification System (ENS) called RUNsync. RUNsync is a multi-media communication tool that allows us to publish emergency information via our website, mobile

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POLICIES (continued)**

### **Emergency Notification System (continued)**

app, Facebook, and Twitter. RUNsync also generates text messages for our subscribers. It is your choice to subscribe to all provider services or you may choose to subscribe to only certain alerts.

To subscribe to the Emergency Notification System:

1. Go to [www.vernoncollege.edu](http://www.vernoncollege.edu) and in the top right corner of the homepage, click the link labeled 'Subscribe to ENS'.
2. Fill the form out completely. This will create your subscriber account in our system. Please take note of the email address and password you used. You will use that information to log in to the ENS to manage your subscription.
3. Select the type of alert mediums you prefer to ensure you are getting the emergency message in the format you prefer it.

### **Standard Response Protocol**

All of Vernon College locations use a Standard Response Protocol (SRP).

- **Lockout - Secure the Perimeter**

Lockout is called when there is a threat or hazard outside of the school building.

- **Lockdown – Locks, Lights, Out of Sight**

Lockdown is called when there is a threat or hazard inside the school building.

- **Evacuate – To the Announced Location**

Evacuate is called to move students and staff from one location to another.

- **Shelter – Using the Announced Type and Method**

Shelter is called when the need for personal protection is necessary.

On the Vernon Campus, the Director of Housing and the housing staff provide emergency disaster training each semester for student residents. In the event of a campus-related emergency, please contact: Chief of Police 940-552-6291 x. 2272 (office).

### **Tornado**

General information: The tornado is a violent storm with whirling winds of tremendous speed. It appears as a rotating funnel shaped cloud which extends toward the ground from the base of a thundercloud. Peak time for tornados is from March through June, but they could occur any time of the year. The National Weather Service issues weather warnings to the public over radio and television stations. The cities of Vernon and Wichita Falls will sound warning sirens.

Tornado Watch: Means that weather conditions are favorable for tornadoes to develop.

Tornado Warning: Means a tornado has actually been sighted or indicated on radar.

Procedures to be followed at Vernon College if a tornado warning is sounded:

1. Under no circumstances should students attempt to leave campus while the warning is in effect.
2. Classes will not be dismissed. Students will be directed to an interior hallway. Persons should lie on the floor as close to the wall as possible. Auditoriums, gymnasiums, or other free-span rooms should be avoided.

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POLICIES (continued)**

### **Tornado (continued)**

3. If the building in which a student is located is not steel-framed or reinforced concrete construction, and time permits the student should move as quickly as possible to the nearest reinforced structure. Otherwise, move to a small room in the interior part of the building, seek shelter under heavy furniture and stay away from windows.

### **Fire**

General information: In case of fire:

1. Sound the nearest alarm for building to begin evacuation.
2. Notify the campus switchboard operator who will then notify the fire department by calling 911 and then the Vernon campus police or the city police department.

### **Bomb/Terroristic Threat**

General information:

1. The fire alarm will sound to start evacuation procedures if a bomb/terroristic threat is received by college personnel.
2. Exit the building at the nearest marked exit and assemble where Campus Police, local law enforcement, and appropriate College personnel direct you. Do not reenter a building until an all clear is given by the Campus Police.
3. If you as a student receive a bomb/terroristic threat (verbal, phone, email) report it immediately to Campus Police, your instructor, or any College personnel.

### **Active Shooter or Other Assailant**

General information:

All college campuses must consider a possibility of an “active shooter”; that is, an armed person who may use deadly physical force on other persons in a continued attack. Planning for such an incident will be the best chance for surviving an active shooter or assailant incident. Be prepared by knowing your escape routes and how you will respond. Call 911 as quickly as possible and warn others as soon as it is safe to do so.

### **FIRE SAFETY REPORT**

The Office of Student Services publishes an Annual Security Report. This report will include all fire statistics, emergency response and evacuation procedures and all policies regarding fire drills and alarms pertaining to on-campus student housing. If interested contact the Office of Student Services for assistance.

### **STUDENT RIGHT TO KNOW**

The Student Right to Know Report includes information concerning completion/graduation rates and transfer out rates for the general student body as well as consumer information relating to student athletes and financial aid recipients. The SRTK may be accessed at [www.vernoncollege.edu](http://www.vernoncollege.edu) or by contacting Student Services at (940) 552-6291 ext. 2203, or by writing Government Mandated Information, Office of Student Services, 4400 College Drive, Vernon, Texas 76384.

## **EQUITY IN ATHLETICS DISCLOSURE ACT REPORT**

The Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act Report includes information concerning Vernon College athletic participation and financial support. The EADA Report may be accessed at [www.vernoncollege.edu](http://www.vernoncollege.edu) or by contacting the Athletic Department at (940) 552-6291, ext. 2285, or writing Government Mandated Information, Office of Student Services, 4400 College Drive, Vernon, Texas 76384

### **STUDENT INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

Set forth below are rights and responsibilities regarding intellectual property created as a student at Vernon College. Any intellectual property (such as research papers, essays, inventions, discoveries, creations and new technologies) conceived or first reduced to practice by a student at Vernon College as a work product (including homework assignments, laboratory experiments, special and independent study projects) of a course will be owned by the student. Vernon College does not claim ownership of such intellectual proper

### **STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS**

- Fair and impartial treatment regardless of race, ethnicity or gender.
- Accurate information about Vernon College requirements, accreditation, and course transferability.
- Unique and specific advising, educational planning, and career guidance.
- A clear and complete explanation of course/program requirements and all resulting financial obligations.
- Appropriate and accessible support services for any declared learning, physical or emotional disability.
- Access and support to explore all potential financial aid opportunities available.
- Clearly defined grievance and appeals processes.
- Implementation of policy that is consistent with policy outlined in the Vernon College Catalog, Vernon College Advising and Registration Guide, and Vernon College Student Handbook.
- Accurate academic placement based on college readiness status and in accordance with state laws.
- Qualified and able Vernon College administration, staff and faculty.

Vernon College is an affirmative action/equal opportunity educational institution and employer. Its students and employees are selected and/or assigned without regard to their race, age, color, gender, religion, national origin, or disability consistent with Titles IV, VI, and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Titles IV and IX of the Higher Education Act as amended in 1972 and 1976, and with Executive Order 11246 as amended by Executive Order 11375, Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL-93-112) and Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Individuals requiring more information on the above or wishing to register a complaint should contact the Director of Human Resources, Vernon College, 4400 College Drive, Vernon, Texas 76384-4092. Telephone number (940) 552-6291.

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