

Vernon College
Student Handbook
2013-2014



This handbook belongs to:

Name _____

Address _____

City/Town _____

Phone _____

Visit the Vernon College web page:
<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 distributed at orientation and registration. Additional copies are available in the Student Services office at all learning centers. The Handbook is also available online at <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 office 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

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 services.

Therefore, the college will provide:

- Technical programs up to two years in length leading to associate degrees or certificates;
- Vocational 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;
- Continuing 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;
- Workforce development programs designed to meet local and statewide needs;
- Adult literacy and other basic skills programs for adults; and
- Such other programs as may be prescribed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board or local governing boards in the best interest of post-secondary education in Texas.

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

The Vernon College Quality Enhancement Plan goal is to increase student learning through improved engagement by fostering an environment of collaboration and connectivity between students, faculty and student support personnel. The College will achieve this goal through a three-part plan: transform curriculum and instruction, provide innovative professional development opportunities, and create a technology rich environment for instructional and student support services. The Plan, also known as VCconnected, was implemented in August 2009 as part of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accreditation process.

INSTRUCTIONAL LOCATIONS

VERNON COLLEGE - VERNON CAMPUS

4400 College Drive, Vernon, Texas 76384

Programs and courses for college transfer, career and technical education and community service/continuing education are offered.

VERNON COLLEGE - WICHITA FALLS CAMPUSES CENTURY CITY CENTER

4105 Maplewood Avenue, Wichita Falls, Texas 76308

Programs and courses for college transfer, career and technical education and community service/continuing education are offered.

SHEPPARD LEARNING CENTER

Sheppard Air Force Base, Adm. Offices, Building 402, Room 305

In cooperation with Sheppard Air Force Base, Vernon College offers academic programs designed with both the military and civilian student in mind.

SKILLS TRAINING CENTER

2813 Central Expressway East, Wichita Falls, Texas 76302

In cooperation with local industries, career and technical education and continuing education programs and courses are offered at this location.

VERNON COLLEGE - DISTANCE LEARNING (Internet, Interactive Video Courses)

Courses are offered via the Internet and Interactive Video to students separated by time and/or distance from Vernon College instructional locations.

VERNON COLLEGE - OTHER LEARNING CENTERS

Selected academic, career and technical education and continuing education courses are offered at area public schools and other facilities in the Vernon College service area. A Vocational Nursing Program is located in Seymour.

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
SLC - Sheppard Learning Center
STC - Skills Training Center

	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>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	2212
Business Office	CCC	3215
CLEP Tests	200	2317
Cafeteria/Snack Bar	SUB	2282
Career Testing & Placement	100	2278
Century City Center Student Lounge	CCC	3212
Change in Class Schedule	100	2207
Change of Address	100	2207
College Catalog	100	2207
Continuing Education	100	2210
Continuing Education	CCC	3295
Counseling and Guidance	100	2278
Counseling and Guidance	CCC	3206
Degree Information	100	2278
Distance Learning	100	2297
Dorm Applications and Deposits	SRC	2319
Dropping a Course	100	2286
Employment and Job Placement	100	2278
Employment and Job Placement	CCC	3206

Faculty Offices	300	2232
Financial Aid	100	2206
Financial Aid	CCC	3330
Health Care Clinic	400	2276
Housing Information	SRC	2319
Intramural Programs	500	2285
Library	200	2223
Library	CCC	3220
Media Services	200	2221
New Beginnings Program	200	2325
Parking Permits	100	2272
PASS Center	200	2309
PASS Center	CCC	3257
Payment of Tuition and Fees	100	2212
Permission for a Schedule Overload	100	2231
Police (Vernon Campus)	100	2272
Police (CCC Campus)	CCC	3207
Posting Notices and Signs	SUB	2295
President's Office	100	2200
Public Information Office	100	2293
Refund	100	2212
Schedule of Classes	100	2207
Scheduling of Student Activities	SUB	2295
Scholarships	100	2206
Services for Individuals with Disabilities	200	2308
Special Services	200	2308
Student Government Association	SUB	2295
Student Insurance	100	2249
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
Transcript Request	CCC	3208
Use of College Facilities	100	2202
Veterans Affairs	100	2206
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 achievement as well as student participation in Vernon College clubs and organizations.

PHI THETA KAPPA INITIATION - 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 campuses 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.

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.

FINALS DINNER - As a kick-off to finals week, students are treated to a dinner served by College faculty and staff. This fall and spring event provides "brain food" and offers opportunities for relaxation.

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 campuses 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 New Student Group Advising Handbook as well as the Vernon College catalog. The total grading system is as shown below:

Grade	Grade Point Value
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
E - Effort or in Progress	(Not computed in G.P.A.)
F - Failed	0 points per credit hours (Computed in G.P.A.)
I - Incomplete	(Not computed in G.P.A.)
W - Withdrew Passing	(Not computed in G.P.A.)
WF - Withdrew Failing	0 points per credit hours (Computed in G.P.A.)
AU - Audit	(Not computed in G.P.A.)
P - Pass-Pass/Fail Grading	(Not computed in G.P.A.)
U - Fail-Pass/Fail Grading	(Not computed in G.P.A.)

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.

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 their 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 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 attempt to improve a grade received in a course. However, it should be noted that the last punitive grade received, which is included in the GPA, will be recognized as the permanent grade. When a course is repeated, the prior enrollments will not be included in calculating the grade point average at Vernon College, but will remain posted to the student's permanent record.

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:

<p>16-week semester 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</p>	<p>11-week semester (Summer) 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</p>
<p>8-week semester 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</p>	<p>5 1/2 week semester (Summer) 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</p>

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 will be given.

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 program's handbooks.

Students who are required to enroll in developmental courses must participate continuously in a developmental program until the student has completed all developmental sequences or until making a passing score on an approved placement test. If a student is withdrawn from a mandatory developmental course, the student will then be withdrawn from all other Vernon College courses for that semester.

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 include but are not limited to the following:

Plagiarism and other forms of scholastic dishonesty are serious academic violations that will not be tolerated. Scholastic dishonesty encompasses, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and other acts designed to give an unfair academic advantage to the student.

"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.

"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.

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

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

1. a grade of zero on an exam or assignment
2. an "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 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 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 each year at selected 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 computerized national testing program administered by the Educational Testing Service. Vernon College is a test center for CLEP examinations, and the

examinations are given by appointment to anyone who wishes to take them. Not all CLEP examinations are accepted for credit at Vernon College. For CLEP examinations accepted at Vernon College, refer to the *Non-Traditional Education* brochure available in Student Services or the Testing Center. Students should contact all colleges and universities they plan to attend to ensure that the CLEP exam is accepted by those institutions.

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.

Articulated Credit

College courses taken in grades 11 and 12 in a secondary school will be awarded credit according to an 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 twenty (20) semester hours may be awarded. Prior training hours must 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

In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), Vernon College does hereby publish its policy regarding the implementation of this act. The publication of this policy in the Vernon College *General Catalog* and in the *Student Handbook* shall be deemed to be annual notification to students and parents concerning this act.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford students certain rights with respect to their education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the College receives a request for access. Students should submit to the registrar, dean, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official, written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The College 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 college 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 or misleading. Students may ask the college to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the college official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the College decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the College will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his/her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the

College has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility. Upon request, the College 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 Vernon 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 20202-5901.

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).

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 decision 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.

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.

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 Dean of Admissions and Registrar, will be furnished to a student, an employer, or an educational institution up-on the student's written request. Grades and transcripts will not be released if the student has a "hold" on his/her records.

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

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

To accomplish the drop or withdrawal, specific procedures must be followed. Students should contact the Admissions and Records office on the Vernon campus, the Vernon College Learning Center Office at Sheppard Air Force Base, or the Century City Center to begin the drop 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 or withdrawal will be completed.

Students voluntarily dropping 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 class schedule should be used for drop and withdrawal dates.

The grade of "F" will be awarded for drops or withdrawals processed after the dates indicated in the class schedule unless an administrative withdrawal has previously been processed.

If a student is enrolled in a developmental class/program as a result of the Texas Success Initiative, the student may not drop the developmental class/program unless an approved alternative form of remediation is available and approved by the Dean of Instructional Services. Without an approved alternative form of remediation, dropping or being administratively withdrawn from all required developmental classes will be regarded as termination of enrollment at Vernon College.

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, and academic dishonesty.

GRADUATION

Vernon College awards the Marketable Skills Achievement 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 class schedule each semester.

Marketable Skills Achievement Award

Marketable Skills Achievement 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. The awards meet standards of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), but are too short to qualify as Certificates of Completion.

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. VC certificate programs are categorized into two classifications for graduation purposes: the skills certificate containing less than twenty-four (24) semester credit hours and the general certificate containing twenty-four (24) or more semester credit hours.

Associate in Arts Degree and Associate in Science Degree

These 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.

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.

Associate of Arts in Teaching

These 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 leading to a teaching certificate.

GRADUATION PROCEDURES

Application for Graduation

In order to receive a certificate or a degree, it is necessary to pay the graduation fee and apply for graduation prior to published deadlines. Candidates should file for graduation at least the semester before they plan to complete all certificate or degree course work. The graduation fee is paid at the Business Office, and the application for graduation is filed with the Office of Admissions and Records by all candidates.

Attendance at Commencement

Candidates for a certificate or degree are expected to attend commencement ceremony with the exception of those receiving a Skills Certificate of less than 24 semester hours. These smaller certificates do not qualify for participation in the commencement ceremony. 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 have the right to further their education and has made available facilities that accommodate student needs.

BUSINESS OFFICE

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

BOOKSTORE

Vernon College operates two bookstores 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 (online) or by two-way interactive video (ITV) classrooms at area high schools and other selected sites.

Anyone eligible to enroll in a course at Vernon College may enroll in a distance education class. Internet courses allow students to take courses from home by accessing lessons at Vernon College via a personal computer. While class information may be obtained online, proctored testing may be required for both hybrid and/or online courses. Interactive video (ITV) courses provide real-time instruction from Vernon College to the remote site. For more information, students may access that College's distance education site at <http://www.vernoncollege.edu/DistanceEducation/>.

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, students may register at Vernon College to take distance education courses from other community colleges throughout Texas. To learn more about this service, students should access the VCT website at <https://www.vct.org/new.php#>.

ADA ACCOMMODATIONS

Vernon College provides reasonable accommodations to qualified students in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) act of 1990. Accommodations are made on a case-by-case basis. Students with special needs are encouraged to contact the **Director of Special Services** as early as possible. Early notice is required to prepare for and provide special accommodations by 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 contact the Special Services Department and 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 Special Services 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 or by emailing jshoemaker@vernoncollege.edu or dlehman@vernoncollege.edu or by calling (940) 552-6291, ext. 2307.

Vernon College Interpreter Requests

Vernon College is committed to providing timely and efficient interpreter services. The Department of Special Services 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, or to request interpreter services, please contact the Department of Special Services on the Vernon Campus.

Location: Wright Library, Room 217 on the Vernon Campus

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

Fax: (940) 552-6387

Accommodations Policy for Required Events

Vernon College students who are already documented with the Special Services Office and who need accommodations for events required by an instructor must contact the Vernon College Special Services Office **at least five (5) working days prior to the event or activity**. The student may send this request to dlehman@vernoncollege.edu or 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:

Vernon College
Director of Special Services
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 Special Services at least 5 days beforehand. Students should include their name, the name, time, and location of the event (including room number, if applicable) and the name of their Instructor. 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 for Students with Disabilities

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:

1. 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 students must submit in writing to the Special Services Director 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 Special Services Director 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. The Special Services Director
 - 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 Special Services Director will forward the decision to the Dean of Instructional Services within five class days. The Dean of Instructional Services will make a final decision and forward that decision to the Director of Special Services within five days. The Special Services Director 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 Special Services Department 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

Faculty determines class attendance policy at Vernon College. Faculty also determines policies regarding make-up work and missed exams or quizzes. An instructor is not required to fundamentally alter attendance, assignments, or testing standards for accommodation purposes.

While the Special Services Department has no authority to excuse absences from any class, it 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.

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 Special Services to request assistance in notifying instructors. The Special Services Department may require verification of the illness or emergency event.

Please contact the Special Services Department 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

Service Animal Policy

The ADA law concerning service animals defines “service animal” as “an animal that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.” The rule states that other animals, whether wild or domestic, do not qualify as service animals. Animals that are not trained to perform tasks that mitigate the effects of a disability, including dogs that are used purely for emotional support, are not service animals, and are not allowed in the classrooms, academic buildings, student lounges, or testing rooms.

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that individuals with a disability cannot perform for themselves. Some, but not all, service animals wear special collars and harnesses. The service animal must be permitted to accompany individuals with a disability to all areas of the campus. Individuals with a service animal may not be segregated from other students.

The care and supervision of the animal is solely the responsibility of his or her owner. The college will not provide any care, food, or special location for a service animal. While doing everything possible to educate students about service animals, the college cannot be responsible for others' reactions to the service animal (i.e. petting the animal, talking to the animal, etc.)

The animal must be clean, well behaved, and under the owner's control at all times while on campus. The college reserves the right to exclude a service animal when the animal's behavior has posed a direct threat to the safety and health of others or when it continually disrupts a classroom, laboratory, or clinical situation/setting.

Service animals may be permitted to live with their owner in college housing provided proper medical documentation has been delivered to the Dean of Student Services 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 Director of Special Services.
2. The decision of the Director of Special Services 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 Dean of Instruction with a written narrative of the complaint. (Alternative means of filing complaints, such as personal interviews or a tape recording of the complaint, will be made available for qualified persons with disabilities upon request.)
3. The Dean of Instruction 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 Offices) 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 Director of Special Services 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 Director of Special Services 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)
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.

PASS CENTERS

The Proactive Assistance for Student Success (PASS) Centers at the Wright Library on the Vernon campus and at Century City Center and at the Skills Training Center in Wichita Falls provide Vernon College students with tutoring services for most programs/disciplines offered by the College. In addition to tutoring, the PASS Centers also offer assistance with study skills, time management skills, test-taking strategies, and various life and coping skills. A wide range of audiovisual materials, including computer-assisted instruction, is offered in the PASS Center to remediate or enhance basic and workforce skills. For more information, call the PASS Centers, at (940) 552-6291 ext. 2309 (Vernon), (940) 696-8752 ext. 3257 (Century City Center), and (940) 766-3369, ext. 7100 (Skills Training Center).

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: The Vernon College Library System maintains book collections at all campus locations with over 28,000 volumes housed at the Wright Library in Vernon. Collections include reference selections and general circulating titles supporting all academic areas. Distance learners and remote 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. Students may also submit an interlibrary loan request to obtain books and other materials unavailable within the Vernon College Library System. E-books are conveniently accessible off campus from the library's online catalog.

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. Researchers may log-in with a VC student ID number and "PIN" from any Internet connection to search the databases remotely. Computer workstations at all locations facilitate electronic research, word processing, and other software applications.

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 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 Information Technology office (552-6291 ext. 2242) or to his/her instructor. Misuse includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. sharing of passwords or dial-in access account information;
2. invasion of privacy of other users;
3. unauthorized access to data belonging to other users;
4. downloading any software (i.e. newer browser versions, America Online Instant Messenger, games, add-ins, etc.) 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 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. political messages, campaign materials, or solicitation for votes;
5. information or messages encouraging the use of illegal substances;
6. abusive, inflammatory, obscene or otherwise objectionable language;
7. information or messages threatening or encouraging violent behavior;
8. 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 Kazaa and emule (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.

Electronic Mail

Right to privacy regarding the contents of e-mail has already been debated in the courts. Think of e-mail as being very similar to a postcard. It may pass through many points where it can be read before it reaches its destination. Also, remember that when you send or receive an e-mail message, a copy of it may be stored on the hard disk of a server remote from your computer. Regular backups are made of these hard disks. Even after you believe you have deleted an e-mail message, it is very possible that it still exists in a readable form on some computer. Vernon College will retain the right to examine e-mail when some compelling reason exists to do so.

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*.

STUDENT SERVICES

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 provide avenues which allow and encourage students to take an active, responsible role in decision-making processes.
2. 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.
3. To provide a program of testing and other analytical devices which offer information necessary to the educational process.
4. To provide information about community resources.
5. To provide employment preparation and job seeking skills.
6. To accommodate students in a resident hall setting which is conducive to an overall learning environment.
7. To offer health clinic services appropriate to the needs of campus students within the resources available.
8. To provide an intercollegiate athletic program that will foster and develop the physical and emotional well-being of the student athlete and promote academic standards consistent with the goals of the institution.
9. To provide a program of student recruitment that will inform 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.

STUDENT SERVICES PERSONNEL

John Hardin III
Dean of Student Services/Athletic Director

Kristin Harris
 Associate Dean of Student Services

Sjohonton Fanner
 Director of Student Activities

Clara Garza
 Counselor

Sue Wallace, R.N.
 Health Care Clinic Nurse

Jo Ann Sharp
 Counselor

Chris Bell
 Chief of Police

Jackie Polk
 Counselor

Toney Sharp
 Police Officer

Sharron Shelton
 Testing Coordinator

Brandi Brannon
 Director of Student Relations

Tony Perez
 Director of Housing

Terri Reese
 Testing Clerk

Melvin Jenkins
 Softball Coach

Kevin Lallmann
 Baseball Coach

Jacqueline Bone
 Secretary, Dean of Student Services

Chad Smith
 Rodeo Coach

Dona Crow
 Secretary, Counseling/Vernon

Cole Tallman
 Volleyball Coach

Jason Jenkins
 Athletic Trainer/Assistant Athletic Director

Kelly Peterson
 Secretary, Counseling/Century City

Renee Ritchie
 Secretary, Counseling/Century City

Rachel Winship
 Secretary, Athletics

COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE

New Student Orientation

A student orientation is required for all first-time students attending Vernon College. Students should contact the Student Services office at the appropriate campus location for dates and times. Students will receive valuable information in all areas of the College, including student services, financial aid, PASS Center (tutoring), transfer information, and college transition. New student orientation information can be accessed from the Vernon College home page.

Each student new to Vernon College must attend a mandatory New Student Orientation session prior to registration. Sessions are offered at two Vernon College locations at a variety of times. Students are unable to register for coursework until they attend a New Student Orientation session. Students are provided a current catalog, class schedule and New Student Orientation Handbook at these sessions.

Course Schedule Advising

In addition to the New Student Orientation session, all new students to Vernon College must meet with a Course Schedule Advisor for assistance in planning their course of study prior to being cleared for registration. Those students who are “college readiness clear” must meet with a CSA in the CSA Center or in individual faculty offices during posted hours. CSA centers are available at Vernon and Century City campuses. Dates and times the CSA centers are open are posted in the class schedule. The Course Schedule Advisor will help a student choose courses and answer any advising questions not answered by the New Student Orientation session. Students who are “not college readiness clear” must have their schedules approved by a CSA in the Vernon College Counseling office prior to each registration. Students can call the counseling office at their location to set an appointment. While meeting with a Counselor/CSA, an individual developmental plan outlining a student’s developmental responsibilities will be created. Returning students who are “college readiness clear” are encouraged to meet with a CSA during posted faculty office hours or in the CSA Center. All students are encouraged to pay close attention to course prerequisites when developing their schedules. Students who register for a class and fail to meet a required prerequisite can be administratively withdrawn from that class without full refund of tuition or fees.

Career Counseling

Career counseling helps students learn more about themselves through interest and personality inventories, enables them to clarify and evaluate their career and educational goals, provides them with direction and career information on the job market, helps them develop a strategy to reach their career goals, and assists them in the career decision-making process. Students interested in utilizing this service should contact the counseling office at the appropriate instructional location.

Group and Individual Counseling

Confidential and professional counseling assistance is available for all Vernon College students. Counselors provide individual and group counseling for social and academic concerns. Specific areas may include stress management, study skills, time management, personality assessment, and test anxiety. In situations where more intensive counseling is required, the counselors in Student Services will assist the student with appropriate referral.

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, PN-ADN Mobility, HESI A2, TEAS, 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. Aptitude testing and interest inventories are available through the Vernon College Counseling Offices.

JOB PLACEMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

Students are encouraged to take advantage of the online Employment Opportunity Centers that exist for the purpose of aiding all Vernon College students in the search for employment. Beginning at the start of a student's college experience and continuing through the completion of a program, certificate, or degree, services are available which provide insight into the world of work. Assistance is available for writing resumes and letters of application, completing applications, preparing for interviews, and conducting a job search.

Many off-campus, full-time and part-time job openings are listed with the online Employment Opportunity Centers. Resources are available to aid students in locating potential employers. The Employment Opportunity Centers provide equal opportunity referral services for all students at Vernon College.

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 current job postings and a free resume builder.

COLLEGE SECURITY

Vernon College strives to maintain a safe and secure atmosphere for members of the student body, faculty, staff, and the general public so that 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 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 campuses may be subject to electronic surveillance. In case of emergency, a Vernon College Dean or campus site manager 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 or by contacting Student Services at (940) 552-6291 ext. 2203.

Vernon College Police/Security

Vernon College employs a Director of Campus Police and a Wichita Falls Century City Campus police officer. Patrol Services are conducted at both the Vernon Campus and Century City Center. A student is encouraged to contact a Vernon College Police Officer with any safety concerns or problems. Security at the Sheppard Learning Center is deferred to SAFB Security Forces. Security at the STC location is provided by an outside contracted security service. The Director of Campus Police can be reached at ext. 2272.

Parking

Parking is provided for students, staff, and faculty. 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 bottom left 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 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.

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 the Dean of Student Services. 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.

COLLEGE HEALTH SERVICE

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 registered nurse. A family practice physician is also at the clinic on a scheduled basis. 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.

CLINIC HOURS OF OPERATION

Fall and Spring Semesters
Monday-Friday, 8:00 to 10:00 a.m.

Summer Semesters
Tuesday-Thursday, 8:00 to 10:00 a.m.

STUDENT INSURANCE

Health insurance policies for students are available. These policies are issued by private agencies authorized by the College. Policy brochures 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, cafeteria, and faculty/staff lounge. The Director of Student Activities office is also located in the Colley Student Center.

Cafeteria and Snack Bar (Vernon Campus)

Great Western Dining Hours of Operation

Fall and Spring semesters

Monday – Friday

Breakfast - 7:15 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.

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

Dinner - 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Summer semester

Limited Schedule - TBA

VC Café (Wichita Falls Century City Campus)

Quiznos Hours of Operation

Monday – Thursday

7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Friday

7:00 a.m. to 1:00 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 campuses.

I.D. 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 MasterCard 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 office. Requests for facilities are made through the appropriate dean. Use of classroom space is approved through the Dean 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, Dean 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. Exhibitors are responsible for notifying Student Services (940) 552-6291 ext. 2250, at least 24 hours in advance of canceling a reservation.

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 Dean 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 AND PARTICIPATION IN INSTITUTIONAL DECISION MAKING

Vernon College acknowledges the importance of involving students in institutional decision-making. The College's mission 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 in the Student Government Association and Student Forum.

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 Associate Degree Nursing Student Association; the Chaparral Singers; the Chaparral Christian Fellowship; Phi Theta Kappa; the Student Government Association; the Student Forum; and the Surgical Technology Student Association. 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. 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 Dean 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 Relations.

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

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, will be filed in the Office of Student Relations after being submitted to and approved by the following groups.
 1. The Student Government Association
 2. The Dean 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 Dean 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 Director of Student Activities 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 Statement of Purpose. 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.
- F. The president of the club or organization shall send to the Office of Student Relations 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 Association. Through this organization, students may receive practical experience in the art of self-government. The SGA will act as a forum in aiding the institution in the development of future goals and policies. The election for SGA representatives is held each fall. The officers of the SGA regulate campus social activities within the structured policies of the College. Involvement in the SGA will help prepare students for their ultimate role as participating members of society-at-large.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The Student Government Association plans activities for Vernon campus students. Yearly activities may include dances, concerts, and movie nights. Students also sponsor various civic and charitable projects for the community. Projects may include blood drives, canned food drives, and participation in the Texas Adopt-A-Highway Program.

STUDENT FORUM

The Student Forum, representing the student bodies of Vernon College-Wichita Falls, has been established to facilitate communication within the college community, to coordinate student activities in exploring ways and means to serve the interests and welfare of the student body, and to act as a forum in aiding the institution in the development of future goals and policies. For further information, students should contact the counseling office at the appropriate center location.

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 Student Activities.

Use of Sports Facilities

The King Physical Education Center includes the natatorium, main gymnasium, weight room, training room, and dressing rooms. Equipment is available on a checkout basis. Four tennis courts are located near the Student Residence Center.

To provide quality sports facilities for practice and games, some restrictions or conditions are necessary. If there are questions concerning the use of Vernon College facilities not covered by the following procedures or guidelines, please contact the Dean of Student Services/Athletic Director.

King Center Procedures

To use the King Center, the following guidelines must be followed:

1. All participants must be either community recreation members or Vernon College students, faculty, or staff.
2. All participants must be able to show proper identification before entering the facility.
3. Guests must pay a fee at the front desk before using the facility.
4. Non-members attending recreational activities as spectators in the gym should remain in the bleachers.
5. All small children must be supervised by an adult.
6. Any equipment checked out from the equipment room must be used appropriately and returned before the participant leaves the facility.
7. No food, drink, smoking, or tobacco products are allowed in the training room, dressing rooms, sauna, weight room, gymnasium, or natatorium.
8. Pool policies are posted at the entrance to the natatorium.
9. Participants must wear non-marking, rubber-soled shoes (no cleats) in the gymnasium.
10. Participants must not hang on the volleyball or basketball nets or standards.

11. Vernon College is not responsible for personal items. Participants are encouraged to safeguard them.
12. Vernon College is not responsible for personal injury due to accidents.
13. No disruptive, unsportsmanlike, or unruly behavior will be allowed in the King Center facility. Participants must adhere to all posted rules and regulations.
14. Community recreation directors, supervisors, or other College officials may suspend anyone from the facility who does not adhere to King Center procedures. The suspension will be for a specified period of time.

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 Dean of Student Services/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 Dean of Student Services/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 Dean of Student Services/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 Dean of Student Services/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 Campus Police patrol the residence centers routinely. The housing facilities are also staffed by officials who 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 Resident 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 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*.

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, writes, 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

1. Any physical, mental, or verbal act 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 firearms, 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. Use, possession or distribution of controlled substances or alcoholic beverages, or public intoxication while on College premises or while attending a College sponsored activity.
5. Furnishing of false information to the College, forgery, unauthorized alteration or the unauthorized use of any College document or instrument of identification.
6. 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.
7. Unauthorized use of computer hardware or software.

8. All forms of academic dishonesty.
9. Unauthorized possession, use or the abuse, destruction, or theft of property of the College or any of its members or guests.
10. Failure to comply with the direction of College officials acting in performance of their duties.
11. Failure to comply with classroom behavior as outlined in the course syllabus provided by the instructor.
12. 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.
13. Participating in or inciting a riot or any unauthorized or disorderly assembly.
14. Gambling, conducting or holding a raffle or lottery on college premises or at any College function except in cases of specific approval by the Dean of Student Services.
15. Unacceptable standards of common decency in mode of dress.
16. Use of smokeless tobacco on all College premises or smoking of tobacco products in other than designated smoking areas.
17. Self-inflicted harm or the intent to physically harm others.
18. 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.
19. Selling, peddling or soliciting with literature on campus except in cases of specific approval by the Dean of Student Services.
20. 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.
21. 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.
22. Inappropriate and/or disruptive use of cell phone.
23. 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)

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 Dean of Student Services or his 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 Dean of Student Services has primary authority and responsibility for the administration of student discipline at the College. It is 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.

Preliminary Procedures

Upon investigation and before initiating disciplinary procedures, the Dean 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 Dean 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 Dean 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 Dean, 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 Dean of Student Services, then the procedures for "formal disposition" will apply.

Interim Disciplinary Action

The Dean 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 Dean of Student Services. The Dean 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 Dean 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 Dean 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 Dean of Student Services. Rules of procedure governing the student appeals committee are outlined under the student grievance procedure.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Vernon College believes that students have the right to be heard in matters where they feel they have a grievance against college policy or personnel. Vernon College has accepted the terminology "grievance" to mean written student complaint. 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 written grievance procedure. The grievance procedure is published in the Student Handbook, which is available in print and online. The Dean of Student Services or the Associate 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 Dean of Student Services. Should the student

have a grievance against the Dean 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 or an ADA 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 or supervisor for review.
3. The division chairperson or supervisor may request of the student a written narrative outlining the alleged complaint.
4. The division chairperson 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 appropriate dean for review.
5. The appropriate dean 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 Dean of Student Services or his designee should be contacted.

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. The division chairperson or supervisor may request of the student a written narrative outlining the alleged complaint. The division chairperson 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 Dean of Student Services to forward to the Instructional Dean for review.
4. The Dean 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 Dean of Student Services or his designee should be contacted.

Time Limits: If the student fails to meet the time limits or advise the Dean 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 Dean of Student Services of such. The Dean 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.

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 Dean of Student Services or his designee will be present to make sure procedural matters are followed. At the hearing, only the committee chairperson, the Dean 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 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 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 7 minutes) as well as questions by the student appeals committee (no more than 5 minutes).
4. the private presentation of evidence by the student (no more than 7 minutes) as well as questions by the student appeals committee (no more than 5 minutes).
5. brief closing statements by both parties (no more than three (3) minutes) with the college respondent speaking first, followed by the student.

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 Dean 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 Dean 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.

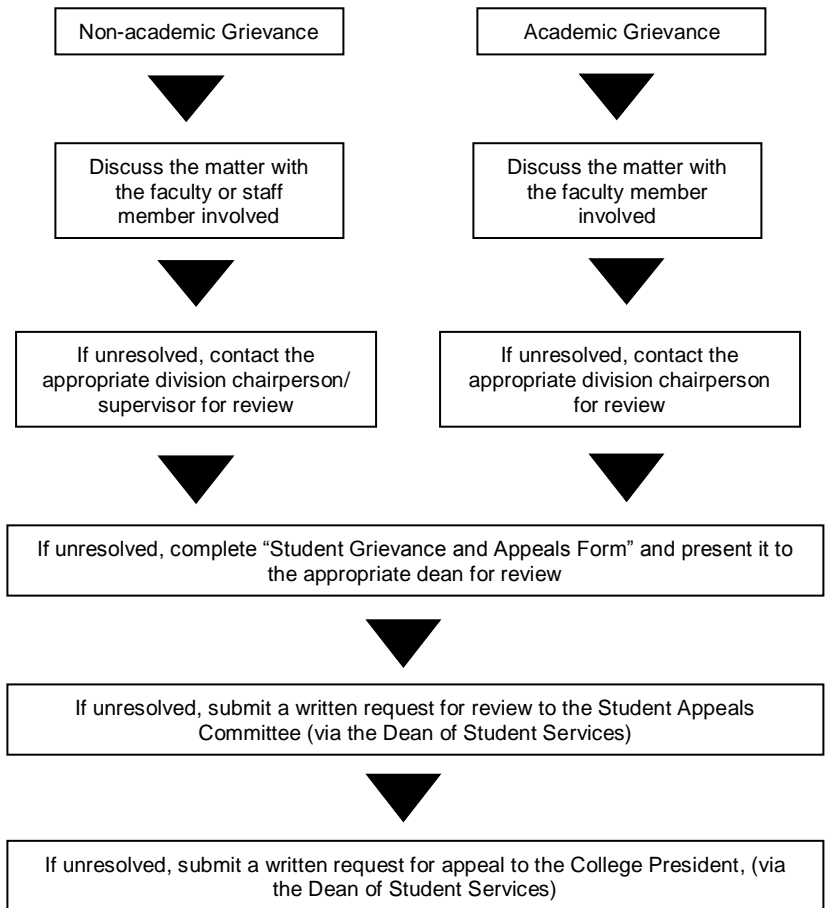
Appeals to Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges

Vernon College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The Commission reviews complaints submitted by students, faculty, and other members of the public about its member institutions. As outlined in the SACSCOC complaint policy, it is the responsibility of the complainant first to attempt to resolve the matter with the institution. The complainant is responsible for providing evidence that all remedies available at the institution have been exhausted. Information, forms and instructions on how to file a complaint with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges is available from the Dean of Student Services Office.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE CHART

Students have the right to be officially heard in matters where they feel they have a grievance against College policy or personnel. All students are encouraged to resolve problems when they first arise and with the parties involved. Only when problems cannot be resolved informally in conference with the faculty or staff member involved should the student resort to formal grievance procedures. 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 Dean of Student Services.

If the grievant fails to meet published time limits or advise the Dean 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.



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

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. 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.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

A student who has a complaint of sexual harassment against any member of the College community should contact the Dean of Student Services. The Dean, with the permission of the complainant, will inform the alleged offender of the complaint, investigate, and if both parties desire, arrange a meeting to try to resolve the issue.

In the event that an attempt at informal resolution of the complaint is unsuccessful, or if the complainant deems that informal resolution is undesirable, the Dean of Student Services will assist the complainant in referring the matter to the affirmative action officer to file a complaint. A complaint must be addressed to:

1. the Dean of Student Services and the affirmative action officer, if the alleged offender is a student; or
2. the Dean of Instructional Services and the affirmative action officer, if the alleged offender is a faculty member; or
3. the affirmative action officer, if the alleged offender is a supervisor, an administrator, or a non-faculty employee.

A formal complaint shall be made in writing by the complainant, addressed to the appropriate College officers as listed above, stating in detail the nature of the complaint, any relevant dates, and the names of any potential witnesses.

The appropriate dean and the affirmative action officer's investigation will include interviews with all relevant persons including the complainant, the respondent, and other potential witnesses. The appropriate dean and the affirmative action office will review their findings with the complainant at the conclusion of the investigation. If the investigation reveals the complaint to be valid, immediate and appropriate corrective action will be taken by the College to stop the harassment and prevent its recurrence.

If upon completion of the discussion with the appropriate dean and the affirmative action officer, the complainant believes the issue to be unresolved, or is dissatisfied with the

resolution, he/she is entitled to a hearing before the student appeals committee. Once the matter is under the student appeals committee, all applicable procedures therein will apply.

All Vernon College employees with a complaint of sexual harassment should contact the Director of Human Resources.

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.

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.

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), 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.

Vernon College has a Pandemic Influenza Response Policy, which can be found at www.vernoncollege.edu listed under "other important information". 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 campuses.

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

Beginning in January 2012, all first-time college students and returning students who did not attend Vernon College (VC) in the fall 2011 must be immunized against bacterial meningitis, according to the Jamie Schanbaum and Nicolis Williams Act.

All incoming freshmen, transfer students and returning students who did not attend in the fall 2011 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 30 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 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 Affidavit 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.

All Vernon College Residence Hall occupants are required to have the Bacterial Meningitis vaccination.

More information about Bacterial Meningitis is available on the Vernon College Website.

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 Human Resources page at 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.

Standard Response Protocol

All of Vernon College campuses 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: Director of Housing 940-552-6291 x.2319 (office) AND 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.
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 Relations 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 Relations 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 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.

EADA 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 or by contacting Student Services at (940) 552-6291, ext. 2203, 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 property.

VERNON COLLEGE 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 process
- Implementation of policy that is consistent with policy outlined in the Vernon College Catalog, Vernon College Class Schedule, and Vernon College Student Handbook
- Accurate academic placement based on student readiness 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.

COLLEGE CALENDAR
2013-2014
16 wk. semester, Fall & Spring

September 2	Labor Day Holiday
October 17	Vernon College Sports Day
November 27-30	Thanksgiving Holidays
December 14	Commencement (No Ceremony)
December 21 –January 5	Winter Break
January 20	Martin Luther King Holiday
March 16-22	Spring Break
April 18-19	Easter Holiday
May 17	Commencement & Nursing Pinning
May 26	Memorial Day Holiday

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

Notes