



Texas Southmost College  
TRADITION • INNOVATION • OPPORTUNITY

# STUDENT HANDBOOK

*2014-  
2015*

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## Mission/Vision

### Vision Statement

Texas Southmost College will be a premier community college dedicated to student success.

### Mission Statement

Transforming our communities through innovative learning opportunities

### Role and Scope

Texas Southmost College's mission is guided by our commitment to provide:

- University transfer, career, and technical programs leading to an associate degree or certificate along with courses specializing in college preparatory and developmental education, workforce training, adult literacy, and continuing education to support the evolving needs of citizens, industry, and economic development initiatives within Cameron and Willacy Counties.
- High-quality instruction and learning opportunities in the classroom, online, and through other delivery methods; a supportive and innovative faculty and staff; appropriate technology, equipment, and learning resources; and advising and assessment services to promote transfer to a four-year baccalaureate institution, entry or advancement in the workforce, or lifelong learning.
- A learning-centered, service-oriented environment that celebrates diversity and inclusion; facilitates growth and development; fosters social responsibility, critical thinking, communication, and innovation; and empowers and engages students, faculty and staff to achieve personal and professional goals.
- Institutional effectiveness that embraces individual accountability, data-driven decision making, change, and an unending pursuit of excellence.

### Values

To successfully fulfill the vision and mission, Texas Southmost College is consciously committed to:

- **Integrity** by respecting the ideals of social responsibility, academic honesty, trustworthiness, personal ethics, and the courage to act.
- **Access** by reaching out to our diverse communities, expanding linkages with industry, and strengthening our partnerships with area ISDs and universities to create accessible and affordable educational pathways for our students, faculty and staff.
- **Service** by encouraging and recognizing collaboration, teamwork, compassion, and service to others.
- **Excellence** by providing relevant, high-quality educational experiences and a supportive learning environment to advance knowledge, to promote understanding and to achieve the academic and workforce potential of students, faculty and staff.
- **Innovation** by embracing emerging technologies to enhance and expand teaching, learning and service opportunities for students, faculty and staff.
- **Success** by empowering, engaging and educating students, faculty and staff to achieve their personal and professional aspirations for graduation, academic transfer, employment, and other educational goals

### Institutional Goals

In response to the region's challenges and to achieve this vision and mission, TSC's Institutional goals will revolve around four priorities between 2012 and 2017:

#### 1. Pathways

Provide accessible, affordable, and flexible instructional delivery systems and dynamic curricula to all students, regardless of time or place, by enhancing career and technical programs that are responsive to the training needs of industry and a highly skilled workforce and by collaborating with internal and external stakeholders to improve college readiness, define outcomes, and promote multiple paths to student access, completion and success.

##### **Supporting Strategies:**

- 1.1** Systematically assess student learning outcomes.
- 1.2** Align college preparatory programs with academic and technical programs.
- 1.3** Create pathways between secondary, TSC and four-year institutions of higher education.
- 1.4** Provide affordable and accessible learning opportunities that meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce.

## 2. Success

Promote academic excellence and student learning through high-quality, learning-centered instruction and support services with a continuous focus on improving student learning outcomes that reflect the highest academic standards and that meet the needs of our communities and industry partners.

### ***Supporting Strategies:***

- 2.1** Improve student retention rates.
- 2.2** Adopt high academic standards.
- 2.3** Measure success through employment rates.
- 2.4** Align all courses, programs, and units to institutional goals and outcomes.

## 3. Community Engagement

Establish mutually beneficial public, private and community-based partnerships to expand awareness, leverage resources, and promote services and programs of the College that meet the needs of the communities in which the College serves.

### ***Supporting Strategies:***

- 3.1** Incorporate service learning experiences across the institution.
- 3.2** Establish partnerships with public and private community agencies.
- 3.3** Develop programs that meet the needs of the community.
- 3.4** Integrate wellness initiatives with community partnerships.

## 4. Institutional Effectiveness

Enhance student success by focusing on continuous improvement that is grounded on evidence-based initiatives, strategies, and processes; student, faculty and staff engagement in teaching and learning outcomes; professional development; an integrated systems approach to facilitate efficient use of college resources through fiscally sound practices; and collaboration with and service to the communities in which the College serves.

### ***Supporting Strategies:***

- 4.1** Assure compliance with accrediting agencies.
- 4.2** Provide professional growth opportunities for faculty and staff.
- 4.3** Assess program effectiveness.
- 4.4** Organize and utilize an on-going cycle of strategic planning to support continuous improvement.

## Important Phone Numbers

Admissions & Records	295-3600
Counseling	295-3409
Advising	295-3644
Learning Lab	295-3740
Transfer, Career & Employment Center	295-3414
Cashiers	295-3420
Conflict Resolution Center	295-3649
Disability Support Services	295-3587
Financial Aid	295-3625
Security	542-8256
Testing Center	295-3662
Student Life	295-3409
Conflict Resolution Center	295-3649
Student Activities	295-3419
Recreation Center	295-3710
Veteran & Military Services	295-3682
Vice President of Student Services	295-3649
Vice President of Instruction	295-3386
Dean of College Preparatory Studies	295-3375
Dean of Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics	295-3375
Dean of Health Care, Career, & Technical Education	295-3511
Dean of Humanities	295-3381

## Academic Calendar

### Fall 2014 Semester

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**March 3** / Monday

Fall 2014 Financial Aid Priority Deadline

**March 17** / Monday

Registration Begins

**August 14** / Thursday

Last Day to Submit Apply Texas Application for Fall 2014

**August 15** / Friday

Fall 2014 Registration Ends

**August 15** / Friday

Fall 2014 Registration Payment Deadline

**NOTE:** Enrollment is complete only upon full payment of tuition and fees, financial aid award, loan award (must be accepted & entrance counseling completed) or approved installment plan. Failure to make payment, payment arrangements, or complete financial aid/loan documents by the due date may cause the student to be withdrawn from all of their courses.

Students are responsible for withdrawing from courses they do not wish to attend. If a student does not wish to attend one or all of their classes, they must withdraw prior to the first day of class or they may be responsible for payment of all tuition and fees.

**August 18-20** / Monday-Wednesday

Add/Drop Period (Payment Due Same Day)

**August 22** / Friday

Last day to withdraw and receive 100% refund of tuition and fees (excludes non-refundable fees).

**August 25** / Monday

Classes Begin

**August 29** / Friday

Last day to withdraw and receive 80% refund of tuition and fees (excludes non-refundable fees).

**September 1** / Monday

College Closed - Labor Day

**September 8** / Monday

Last day to withdraw and receive 70% refund of tuition and fees (excludes non-refundable fees).

**September 10** / Wednesday

Census Day (12th Class day) - Last Day to Withdraw without Recorded Grade

**September 15** / Monday

Last day to withdraw and receive 50% refund of tuition and fees (excludes non-refundable fees).

**September 22** / Monday

Last day to withdraw and receive 25% refund of tuition and fees (excludes non-refundable fees).

**October 1** / Wednesday

Spring 2015 Financial Aid Priority Deadline

**October 20** / Monday

Spring 2015 Registration Begins

**November 14** / Friday

Last Day to Withdraw

**November 27-28** / Thursday-Friday

College Closed - Thanksgiving Holiday

**December 5** / Friday  
Last Day of Class

**December 8-12** Monday-Friday  
Final Exams

**December 13** / Saturday  
Commencement

**December 20-January 4**  
College Closed - Winter Break

### **Spring 2015 Semester**

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**October 1** / Wednesday  
Spring 2015 Financial Aid Priority Deadline

**October 20** / Monday  
Spring 2015 Registration Begins

**December 20-January 4**  
College Closed - Winter Break

**January 5** / Monday  
College Opens

**January 13** / Tuesday  
Last Day to Submit Apply Texas Application for Spring 2015

**January 14** / Wednesday  
Spring 2015 Registration Ends

**January 14** / Wednesday  
Spring 2015 Registration Payment Deadline

**NOTE:** Enrollment is complete only upon full payment of tuition and fees, financial aid award, loan award (must be accepted & entrance counseling completed) or approved installment plan. Failure to make payment, payment arrangements, or complete financial aid/loan documents by the due date may cause the student to be withdrawn from all of their courses.

Students are responsible for withdrawing from courses they do not wish to attend. If a student does not wish to attend one or all of their classes, they must withdraw prior to the first day of class or they may be responsible for payment of all tuition and fees.

**January 15-16** / Thursday-Friday  
Add/Drop Period (Payment Due Same Day)

**January 16** / Friday  
Last day to withdraw and receive 100% refund of tuition and fees.

**January 19** / Monday  
College Closed - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

**January 20** / Tuesday  
Classes Begin

**January 26** / Monday  
Last day to withdraw and receive 80% refund of tuition and fees (excludes non-refundable fees).

**February 2** / Monday  
Last day to withdraw and receive 70% refund of tuition and fees (excludes non-refundable fees).

**February 4** / Wednesday  
Census Day (12<sup>th</sup> Class Day) - Last Day to Withdraw without Recorded Grade

**February 9** / Monday  
Last day to withdraw and receive 50% refund of tuition and fees (excludes non-refundable fees).



**February 16** / Monday

Last day to withdraw and receive 25% refund of tuition and fees (excludes non-refundable fees).

**March 2** / Monday

Fall 2015 Financial Aid Priority Deadline

**March 9-13** / Monday - Friday

College Closed - Spring Break

**March 23** / Monday

Summer 2015 & Fall 2015 Registration Begins

**April 21** / Tuesday

Last Day to Withdraw

**May 8** / Friday

Last Day of Class

**May 11-15** / Monday-Friday

Final Exams

**May 16** / Saturday

Commencement

### **Summer I 2015 Semester**

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**March 23** / Monday

Summer Session I Registration Begins

**May 25** / Monday

College Closed - Memorial Day

**May 26** / Tuesday

Last Day to Submit Apply Texas Application for Summer Session I 2015

**May 27** / Wednesday

Summer Session I Registration Ends

**May 27** / Wednesday

Summer Session I Registration Payment Deadline

**NOTE:** Enrollment is complete only upon full payment of tuition and fees, financial aid award, loan award (must be accepted & entrance counseling completed) or approved installment plan. Failure to make payment, payment arrangements, or complete financial aid/loan documents by the due date may cause the student to be withdrawn from all of their courses.

Students are responsible for withdrawing from courses they do not wish to attend. If a student does not wish to attend one or all of their classes, they must withdraw prior to the first day of class or they may be responsible for payment of all tuition and fees.

**May 28-29** / Thursday-Friday

Add/Drop Period (Payment Due Same Day)

**May 29** / Friday

Last day to withdraw and receive 100% refund of tuition and fees (excludes non-refundable fees).

**June 1** / Monday

Classes Begin

**June 1** / Monday

Last day to withdraw and receive 80% refund of tuition and fees (excludes non-refundable fees).

**June 2** / Tuesday

Last day to withdraw and receive 50% refund of tuition and fees (excludes non-refundable fees).

**June 4** / Thursday  
Census Day (4<sup>th</sup> Class Day) - Last Day to Withdraw without Recorded Grade

**June 23** / Tuesday  
Last Day to Withdraw

**July 1** / Wednesday  
Last Day of Class

**July 2** / Thursday  
Final Exams

**July 3** / Friday  
College Closed - Independence Day Observed

**Summer II 2015 Semester**

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**March 23** / Monday  
Summer Session II Registration Begins

**July 3** / Friday  
College Closed - Independence Day Observed

**July 7** / Tuesday  
Last Day to Submit Apply Texas Application for Summer Session II 2015

**July 8** / Wednesday  
Summer Session II Registration Ends

**July 8** / Wednesday  
Add/Drop Period (Payment Due Same Day)

**July 8** / Wednesday  
Summer Session II Registration Payment Deadline

**NOTE:** Enrollment is complete only upon full payment of tuition and fees, financial aid award, loan award (must be accepted & entrance counseling completed) or approved installment plan. Failure to make payment, payment arrangements, or complete financial aid/loan documents by the due date may cause the student to be withdrawn from all of their courses.

Students are responsible for withdrawing from courses they do not wish to attend. If a student does not wish to attend one or all of their classes, they must withdraw prior to the first day of class or they may be responsible for payment of all tuition and fees.

**July 8** / Wednesday  
Last day to withdraw and receive 100% refund of tuition and fees (excludes non-refundable fees).

**July 9** / Thursday  
Classes Begin

**July 9** / Thursday  
Last day to withdraw and receive 80% refund of tuition and fees (excludes non-refundable fees).

**July 10** / Friday  
Last day to withdraw and receive 50% refund of tuition and fees (excludes non-refundable fees).

**July 14** / Tuesday  
Census Day (4<sup>th</sup> Class Day) - Last Day to Withdraw without Recorded Grade

**July 30** / Thursday  
Last Day to Withdraw

**August 10** / Monday  
Last Day of Class

**August 11** / Tuesday  
Final Exams

## College Catalog

The TSC College Catalog is a guide to course descriptions, academic programs, admission, tuition, and administrative information. All students are expected to be familiar with the policies and procedures in the college catalog.

The College Catalog is available through the Office of Admissions and Records and on the College web site.

## TSC Username and PIN

User IDs and passwords provide security access to the online registration system and student email. Once a student is admitted to TSC, a default PIN is assigned. Students will then be able to log in and assign themselves a unique password.

Login with your credentials to [pwreset.tsc.edu](http://pwreset.tsc.edu). Once you login you will change your password to one of your choice. The password has to have 1 capital letter, 1 number, and a minimum of 8 characters (Ex: Mytscpwd13). It CANNOT have any part of your username or include your ID#. You can also setup your challenge questions in case you forget your password in the future.

Usernames are uniquely assigned to every student and MUST be entered in lowercase at login. They **ARE NOT** the same as UTB Online usernames. Once you are admitted to TSC, Office of Admissions and Records staff provide you with your username and default password. If you did not receive a TSC username, you can contact the Office of Admissions and Records.

By default, your initial password is your first initial (CAPITALIZED) + last initial (lowercase) + the seven digits of your student id number. Example: Name: John Doe, ID Number: 1234567 = Jd1234567

If you changed your password and setup your challenge questions in the self-service password utility site (<https://pwreset.tsc.edu>), you can go back to that site, click on the "Reset Password" link, enter your username, and answer your challenge questions. You will then be able to reset your password. If you did not setup your challenge questions and reset your password, you can use your default password.

## TSC Online

TSC Online, the College's electronic communication tool, connects current and prospective students, faculty and staff to online academic communities, delivers targeted content to diverse user groups and takes advantage of the TSC's robust information technology services to enhance learning, student services, campus life and outreach.

TSC Online provides faculty and students with access to online course content, discussion forums, journals, online tutoring, document sharing, chat, webliography postings, and live web conferencing. These enhanced TSC Online tools are available for courses; however, all courses are taught with face-to-face instruction.

Students Sign-In by following these steps:

1. Log on to Texas Southmost College main page <http://tsc.edu/>
2. Select "My TSC"
3. Select "eCollege"
4. Login sing your TSC Username and PIN

## TSC Student Email Account

Your TSC email account is the official form of electronic communication for your experience at Texas Southmost College. All campus communication, course-related information, tuition and billing information, and any additional administrative correspondence related to your enrollment and attendance at Texas Southmost College will be sent to this campus e-mail account.

You can login to your email by visiting [www.TSC.edu/MyTSC](http://www.TSC.edu/MyTSC) and clicking the email icon. You can login with your TSC username and new password. Your email address will be your (username@student.tsc.edu).

**It is your responsibility to check your TSC email account regularly. You will be held responsible for all communication sent to your TSC email account.**

## Wireless Internet

Wireless connectivity is provided to all students, faculty and staff to promote mobile learning. The college provides limited support for personal wireless technology and users are expected to understand how to configure and operate their devices accordingly. All wireless devices connecting to the TSC network are required to have current and automatically-updating antivirus software. For more information or for assistance contact the TSC Help Desk at 956-295-3800 or by e-mail to helpdesk@tsc.edu.

TSC students can access the "TSC Student" network by using the following password: **Sting13!**

## Student I.D. Cards

All students are responsible for obtaining an identification card at the time of initial registration with the college. Students should carry it at all times as it must be presented when paying fees, requesting transcripts, and utilizing library services. Student identification cards are issued to students free of charge. The identification card replacement fee is \$5. Student identification cards are available at the Office of Admissions and Records.

Students must show their Student I.D. if requested by a College official or campus security. Students who are unable or refuse to provide their Student I.D. upon request may be removed from campus and face additional disciplinary action.

## Use of Student ID Number

A student identification number is required to identify students' permanent records. The automated student information system assigns a random number, called the Student ID, to every student. The Student ID is used for all internal printed materials and provides additional protection to students' privacy. Students are urged to become familiar with their Student ID and to use it when communicating with College offices.

Students are requested to provide their Social Security Number to the College for maintenance of their student records. This number allows the College to meet federal and State reporting requirements, enables communication with financial aid providers and service agencies, allows reporting to IRS regarding eligibility for the American Opportunity Tax Credit and Lifetime Learning Credit, and substantially eases transfer of information between the College and other colleges and universities. Students who do not provide their Social Security Number risk loss of services and benefits and may encounter delays when transferring from or to other institutions. The College makes every effort to protect students' Social Security Numbers from inappropriate disclosure. Questions about College use of the Social Security Number should be forwarded to the Office of Admissions and Records.

## Educational Technologies and Curricular Innovation (ETCI)

Many students balance work and family responsibilities with their educational goals, so by offering affordable and easily accessible, web-based digital course learning materials, TSC students have more options available to them when receiving important class information and course content. The Office of Educational Technologies and Curricular Innovation (ETCI) supports the institution's teaching and learning activities providing students, faculty, and staff members with a reliable online technology platform, including:

- eTextbooks, learning materials that can be read on multiple displays - laptops, tablet readers, and smartphones
- MyLab, a personalized student learning experience
- Pearson Learning Studio, a cloud-based learning management system with advanced data analytics applications to monitor, analyze, and track trends in student performance
- Smarthinking, a live on-demand online tutorial service that offers vibrant interactive graphics
- Pearson Instructor Education services for faculty development

## Campus Parking

Students parking vehicles on TSC property are required to have a current year parking permit permanently affixed to their vehicle on the inside lower right hand corner (passenger side) of the windshield. Motorcycle permits must be placed in a clearly visible location.

The person issued a parking permit is responsible for all violations and tickets cited to that permit.

### Disabled Parking

Individuals with personal disabled permits must also display a valid Texas Southmost College parking permit to park in a handicapped space. Parking in a handicapped space without a valid Texas Southmost College permit will result in a citation.

No parking permit fees are charged for permanently disabled people or disabled veterans as defined by Articles 6675a-5e and 6675a-5e.1 of Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes.

### Types of Citations

Types of citations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- No parking permit
- Expired parking permit
- Improper display of parking permit
- Parking where prohibited (Fire Lane, Handicapped, Faculty/Staff, Visitor, Reserved, Loading/Unloading)
- Parking in a Visitor space, with or without a permit, while an employee or student at Texas Southmost College
- Parking where there is no designated parking space
- Double-parked (encroaching on another parking space)
- Parking in a handicapped space without properly displaying a valid handicap placard/license plate or disabled veteran license plate issued by the state of Texas (Placard/license plate must be issued to same individual issued a Texas Southmost College parking permit)

### Purchasing a Permit

To obtain a permit, all outstanding parking fines must be paid. You will be asked to provide your driver's license, license plate number, and the make and model of your vehicle.

- The cost of a student parking permit is \$60 annually. Each permit, additional permit, or replacement permit will cost \$60.00 annually.
- Parking permits may be purchased from the Cashier window in Tandy Hall. The Cashier window is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.
- Purchasing a parking permit does not guarantee a parking space, but does authorize parking in designated parking areas under control of Texas Southmost College.

### Permit Installation

- Parking permits must be permanently affixed to the vehicle on the inside lower right-hand corner (passenger side) of the windshield.
- Motorcycle permits must be placed in a clearly visible location.

### Temporary Permits

TSC Parking permits are designed to be transferable to another vehicle - on a temporary basis. For example, if your vehicle is being serviced and you need to drive another vehicle to campus for a few days, you can remove the permit from your vehicle and place it in the new vehicle. When your vehicle is ready, simply transfer the permit back to your regular vehicle.

For other temporary permits please visit the Cashier's window in Tandy Hall.

## **Campus Security**

The safety of students, faculty, staff and visitors is of vital concern to Texas Southmost College. Everyone in the campus community is involved in creating a safe environment and is encouraged to report all safety concerns by calling campus security.

Texas Southmost College contracts with a security agency that works closely with local police. The contact number for Security (956) 542-8256 for non-emergency situations. When calling, please identify yourself, your location and the situation so that you can be properly assisted. If you have a medical emergency, crisis or other life threatening situation needing a police officer or emergency medical responder, you should immediately call 911.

## **Lost and Found**

Texas Southmost College maintains a Lost and Found in the Security Office, located in Tandy Hall.

## Class Cancellations Due to Inclement Weather

Classes at Texas Southmost College may be cancelled due to inclement weather. Notification is made through local radio and TV stations, and on the College web site. If classes are cancelled due to inclement weather or other emergencies, attempts will be made to assure that classroom hours are rescheduled. Students will be notified through the Texas Southmost College Web site and through their TSC email account.

## Transcript Request

Students may request official transcripts at the office of Admissions and Records. Once processed, transcripts will be sent as requested. A fee may be charged.

In compliance with FERPA regulations and TSC procedures, transcripts may only be released to the student of record.

TSC will not mail via overnight services; fax to other educational institutions, students, employers or other third parties; or accept students' personal requests for transcripts via email or phone.

A registration hold will prevent processing and release of a student transcript. Transcripts may be withheld if students have not settled all admissions requirements (e.g., submitting official transcripts from all institutions attended) and satisfied all financial obligations to TSC.

Students are responsible for withdrawing from courses they do not wish to attend. If you do not wish to attend one or all of your classes, you must withdraw prior to the first day of class or you may be responsible for payment of all tuition and mandatory fees, including incidental fees. Students who withdraw after classes begin may receive a partial refund, based upon the TSC tuition and fee refund schedule.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Federal regulations require all students applying for financial assistance to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress in order to receive aid. The progress standards that students are required to meet in order to maintain financial aid eligibility are:

- A minimum 2.0 ("C" or better) overall GPA;
- Successful completion of 70% of all coursework attempted; and
- Timeframe to complete declared program of study.

Compliance with SAP must be met in order for a student to retain their financial aid eligibility. Students are advised to check their status through their TSC Online account.

Final Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) rules were published in the October 29, 2010 Federal Register to be effective July 1, 2011. The revised current regulations clarify, standardize, and strengthen provisions on school evaluations of the qualitative (grades and academic standing) and quantitative (pace of completion) aspects of a student's progress in a program for Title IV funding purposes.

The information below describes each status in more detail:

## Good Standing

Students are considered to be in Good Standing with Financial Aid if they meet all three (3) standards of progress outlined above. These students may participate in any financial aid programs provided they meet all other eligibility criteria, subject to availability of funds.

## Warning Status

Students who fail to meet the grade point average requirement, the completion rate requirement, or attempt 85% or more of the 1.5 times the minimum number of credits required for a degree program, will be placed in Financial Aid Warning Status for the following semester. Students will be notified via email of their warning status.

## Financial Aid Suspension

Students in Financial Aid Warning status who fail to meet SAP requirements for the next semester will not be eligible to receive financial aid and will be placed in Financial Aid Suspension. These students are sent a financial aid suspension notice and can continue to enroll but at their own expense.

## Appeal Process

Students may appeal their suspension status. The appeal should include a personal statement (with appropriate documentation) detailing the circumstances that resulted in their failure to meet the required standards and a plan detailing actions the student will take to achieve and maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress. Those who have been suspended due to timeframe must submit a declared degree plan, signed by an academic advisor, clearly showing courses earned towards the program, courses still needed, and the anticipated graduation date. Appeal Packets, complete with forms and instructions, are available in the Financial Aid Office and online. Completed appeal packets must be submitted to the TSC Financial Aid Office.

If the appeal is approved, student will be placed in Financial Aid Probation and eligibility is reinstated subject to program requirements. Progress is reviewed at the end of the semester to make sure that the student is meeting the standards and following the degree plan. Failure in either of these criteria will again result in financial aid suspension.

If the appeal is denied, no financial aid of any kind may be awarded. Students can continue to enroll but at their own expense. A re-appeal is acceptable after students have completed at least one (1) semester (preferably 2 semesters) and believe they can make a case for getting back on track academically. The TSC Financial Aid Appeal Committee's decision is final and may not be appealed further.

## Withdrawing from College and Returning Financial Aid Funds

It is important that students know the census date for each semester or session. Although students may be awarded aid based on the number of hours they register for at the start of the semester, financial aid will be recalculated on the basis of the number of hours in which they are still enrolled by the census date(s). For example, students who are initially awarded as full-time (twelve (12) hours) will have their financial aid award adjusted to half-time if they have dropped to six (6) hours by the census date(s) that apply to the student. For some aid programs this means that the student has to pay back half of the aid received.

A drop in enrollment (but not 100% withdrawal) after the census date(s) will not impact the amount of aid received with two (2) exceptions:

1. Loans cannot be disbursed at any time in the semester when a student is enrolled in less than six (6) hours. All enrollment adjustments (drops and adds) must be complete as of the end of business on the semester census date. Pell Grant amounts may be adjusted after a census date depending on the student's program.
2. When students withdraw 100% from TSC, federal regulations require all schools to pro-rate the amount of financial aid that they have earned based on the percentage of the semester that they have attended classes. The regulations require that such a percentage be calculated up until the 60% mark of the semester. Since in most cases students are disbursed 100% of their financial aid under the assumption that they will stay in school the entire semester, withdrawing before the 60% mark means they will have to pay back a portion of their financial aid. Failure to repay these funds results in Financial Aid Holds that prevent future registration at any college or university.

Return of Title IV Fund Order:

- Federal Unsubsidized Loans/Direct Loans
- Federal Subsidized Loans/Direct Loans
- Federal PLUS Loans/Direct PLUS Loans or Grad PLUS Loans
- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal Supplemental Opportunity Grant (SEOG)
- Federal Iraqi & Afghanistan Service Grant

If a student withdraws before financial aid is disbursed, financial aid amounts will be pro-rated according to federal regulations.

State, local, and institutional grants, loans, and scholarships are also subject to evaluation to assess impact of changes in enrollment status.

## Federal and State Work-Study Program

The Federal and State Work-Study Program provides a job for undergraduate students enrolled at least half-time who demonstrate financial need to help pay for their educational expenses. The hourly pay rate is typically above current federal minimum wage. The amount of Work-Study awarded depends on a student's financial need, availability of funding, and the amount of other aid the student receives. Students may not work more than nineteen (19) hours per week. Work-Study students are paid twice (2) per month.

The State Work-Study program requires applicants to be Texas residents attending a public or non-profit independent college in Texas. The state program further requires that students be enrolled at least half-time and not be on an athletic scholarship or enrolled in a seminary or other program leading to ordination or licensure to preach.

## Attendance and Participation in College Preparatory (Developmental Education) Courses

Students taking college preparatory mathematics, reading and/or writing courses are required to attend class and to keep up with course assignments. Since attendance and participation are essential to student success, an attendance policy is strictly enforced in all CPS courses. The attendance policy is posted in all CPS course syllabi. A student who is excessively absent and/or does not keep up with course assignments may be withdrawn at the discretion of the instructor.

## Adds, Drops and Withdrawals

Students should carefully consider all options before registering and changing their schedules. The registration period ends approximately a week before the first day of the term. A schedule change period is provided each semester prior to the start of the term. From the beginning of classes through the Census Date, changes made in courses will not appear on the official transcript. Students withdrawing after the Census Date will receive a grade of "W" during the withdrawal period. Official "W" recording dates are listed in the Academic Calendar.

It is very important to consider that:

- All class schedule adjustments must be recorded and officially processed by the Admissions and Records Office and may require approval from academic departments.
- Withdrawing from a class after the Census Date may affect a student's ability to re-enroll in the course without an increase in the tuition charged for the course and/or may count toward the maximum drop/withdrawals allowed by a Texas ruling. See "Drops and Withdrawals" below.
- Adding or dropping classes, or withdrawing from all classes, can impact financial aid eligibility. Students should review the financial aid policies on withdrawing from classes. Students who receive financial aid should understand that simply notifying Student Financial Services offices of enrollment changes is not official notification to Texas Southmost College.
- No drops or withdrawals will be accepted by phone or over the Internet.

Add/Drop forms may be picked up in the Admissions and Records office. Students are responsible for following up and confirming that requests to withdraw from classes have been processed.

## Adds

Classes may only be added during open enrollment or designated add/drop periods. Once the semester/session begins, students may not add a class. See the "Academic Calendar" section of this catalog for important dates.

Students may add classes:

- During open enrollment
- During designated add/drop periods



## Drops and Withdrawals

Students may withdraw completely from the College or drop a class at any time during open enrollment or designated add/drop periods. Once the semester/session begins, students may drop a class without a recorded grade up until the official semester/session record date (census). After the official record date, students may withdraw from classes until the final semester/session withdrawal deadline. Withdrawing during this period will result in a W on the student's transcript. See the "Academic Calendar" section of this catalog for important dates.

Students may drop classes:

- During open enrollment
- During designated add/drop periods
- After classes begin, but before the official record date

Students may withdraw from classes:

- After the official record date (W on transcript)

## Faculty Initiated Drops

Faculty may process drops for non-attendance when it results in a lack of progress. The course syllabus should include any established attendance policy and students should discuss absences or issues relating to attendance with each instructor.

Students are expected to be actively engaged in learning during enrollment at Texas Southmost College, attending class on the first day and throughout the semester.

## College Initiated Drops

The College reserves the right to drop students from classes for student code of conduct violations and for non-attendance.

- Faculty at Texas Southmost College are required to take daily attendance. At the beginning of each semester/session, the College may drop students who have not attended class.
- Violations of the TSC Student Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary sanctions. These sanctions include being dropped or withdrawn from classes.

## Three-Peat (Third-Attempt) Enrollment Ruling

Texas Southmost College will charge a higher tuition rate to students registering the third (3) or subsequent time for a course. The State will no longer subsidize a student's enrollment for the third (3) or subsequent attempt. Students should meet with an advisor to determine if they are repeating a course for the third (3) time.

## Developmental Education Enrollment Ruling (27-Hour Rule)

Texas Southmost College will charge a higher tuition rate to students registering for college preparatory (developmental education) courses who have accumulated at least 27 hours of credit in developmental education courses. College preparatory courses include all courses that begin with a zero (0), with the exception of ORIN 0101.

## Six Course Drop Ruling

Students are limited to a total of six (6) course drops during their undergraduate career, including a course(s) dropped at another institution as defined in Section 51.907 of the Texas Education Code, which limits the number of courses that may be dropped under certain circumstances. A dropped course is defined as a course in which an undergraduate student at an institution of higher education has enrolled for credit but did not complete under these conditions:

- the student was able to drop without receiving a grade or incurring an academic penalty;
- the student's transcript indicates or will indicate that the student was enrolled in the course past the deadline to add and drop prior to the census date; and
- the student is not dropping the course in order to withdraw from the institution.

Students must visit the Admissions and Records Office to apply for a Six Drop Waiver. Exceptions to the course drop limit include a total withdrawal from the institution and an approved waiver drop.

Students should carefully consider the number of courses to take and the time commitment required to be successful. Students with a cumulative total of six (6) drops will be awarded the grade earned at the end of the semester.

## Official Withdrawals

A total withdrawal from Texas Southmost College is not counted in the above statute. If a student drops one or more courses during the semester before withdrawing completely, the student's individual drops will be counted in the complete withdrawal. Students may withdraw only after meeting with a faculty member or advisor.

To officially withdraw from Texas Southmost College students must:

- Resolve all financial obligations to Texas Southmost College.
- Submit withdrawal forms to the Admissions and Records office.

## Withdrawal for Military Service

Military students may want their transcripts to reflect that they withdrew due to military reasons or may request that their transcripts show no indication that they were enrolled, and the course(s) will be permanently removed from their transcript. If a student withdraws as a result of being called to active military service, Texas Southmost College, at the student's option and with proper documentation, shall:

- Grant a student who is eligible under Texas Southmost College guidelines a grade in all courses by designating "Withdrawn-Military" (WM) on the transcript, or
- As determined by the instructor, assign an appropriate final grade or credit to a student who has satisfactorily completed a substantial amount of coursework and demonstrated sufficient mastery of the course material.

Texas Southmost College shall provide a 100% refund with the presentation of military orders.

## Reinstatement to Class

A student dropped for excessive absences resulting in lack of progress may be reinstated to class at the discretion of the instructor of record only if circumstances justify reinstatement. The appropriate reinstatement form must be signed by the faculty member and submitted to the Admissions and Records Office. A reinstatement fee may apply.

## Attendance

Academic success is directly tied to the effort students put into their studies, the degree to which they interact with faculty and peers, and the extent to which they integrate into the campus life. Attendance has a significant impact on performance, and attendance during the first week is integral to success. Regular and punctual attendance in all classes and laboratories is expected of all students.

Students who are absent for any reason should always consult with their instructors. Course syllabi provide specific information regarding attendance, including, for courses involving the internet, online activity that constitutes "attendance." Also, both tardiness and early departure from class may be considered forms of absenteeism. In all cases, students will be held responsible for completion of course requirements covered in their absence. Additionally, it is the student's responsibility to drop a course for non-attendance.

Course instructors establish policy with regard to attendance in their respective syllabi and may drop a student for excessive absences. Absences are counted regardless of whether they occur consecutively. In special programs with additional accreditation or certification standards, additional attendance requirements may be enforced and faculty will clearly explain these policies in their syllabi.

Students who stop attending class for any reason should contact the instructor and the Admissions and Records office to officially withdraw from the class. Students may be required to consult with a faculty member or designee before dropping. Failure to officially withdraw may result in a failing grade for the course. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw officially from a class by submitting a completed Withdrawal Form to the Admissions and Records office.

## Grading System

Course instructors establish grading policy in their respective syllabi. Permanent grades are recorded only at the end of each semester/session. The grades used are:

Grade	Explanation	Quality Points per Semester Hour
A	90-100	4.00
B	80-89.99	3.00
C	70-79.99	2.00
D	60-69.99	1.00
F	Below 60 (Failure)	0.00
AU	Audit	Not used in computing GPA
I	Incomplete	Not used in computing GPA
P	Pass	Not used in computing GPA
CR	Credit	Not used in computing GPA
NR	No Grade Reported	Not used in computing GPA
W	Withdrawn	Not used in computing GPA
WM	Withdrawn Military	Not used in computing GPA
WS	Withdrawn, excluded from Academic Progress	Not used in computing GPA

Note: Specific programs of study may have modified grade scales based on the needs of the program to meet the programs outcomes.

## Incomplete Grades

The conditional grade of "I" may be issued to a student having a passing average on all completed coursework but for a justified reason, such as illness or death in the family or by providential hindrance, has been prevented from taking the final examination or completing other required coursework. The "I" becomes an "F" following the completion of the next long (fall or spring) semester, unless the student completes the balance of the coursework with a performance grade of "D" or higher. Re-enrollment in the course will not resolve the "I."

## Grade Availability

At the end of the term, students for whom no final grade is posted by the faculty will have a grade of NR (Not Recorded) assigned. Students should follow up with their instructor or, should the instructor not be available, the appropriate Dean regarding questions about grades.

## Grade Changes

A student has a maximum of thirty (30) days from the end of the semester or term in which the final grade was issued to request a review of the grade or petition for a change of grade. The responsibility for determining all grades and for judging the quality of academic performance in a course rests with the instructor assigned to the course. A student who believes that the grade received is incorrect should first schedule a conference with the instructor to resolve the issue. If the student is unable to reach an agreement with the instructor, the student may initiate the Texas Southmost College Grade Appeal process. When the instructor cannot be located in a timely manner by the student, the student should contact the appropriate Academic Dean.

## Grade Point Average (GPA)

The GPA is derived by dividing the total number of quality points by the total number of semester credit hours attempted (not including AU, I, P, CR, NR, W, WM, WS) for which grades have been received. The average is based on all semester and term coursework.

Calculating the GPA:

1. Multiply the number of semester credit hours each course is worth by the quality points earned.
2. Add these values.
3. Divide this sum by the number of semester credit hours attempted.

For Example:

Course	Semester Hours	Quality Points	Grade Points
BIOL 1406	4	3.00 (B)	12
ENGL 1301	3	2.00 (C)	6
SPAN 1411	4	4.00 (A)	16
PSYC 2301	3	2.00 (C)	6
KINE 1104	1	4.00 (A)	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>		<b>44</b>

$$44 \div 15 = 2.93 \text{ GPA}$$

## Repetition of Courses

Once a course is repeated, the most recent grade earned (excluding a W) will be the one recorded in the GPA. Other colleges and universities may not follow this practice. Students planning to transfer to another institution should check with that institution concerning its repeat policy for admissions criteria.

## Academic Standing and Probation

Acceptable scholastic performance, also known as "Good Standing," is based upon student progress toward successful course and program completion. The components used to compute Academic Standing are GPA and course completion.

## Academic Freedom for Students

Students shall be free to be guided by scholarly research, study the substance of a given discipline, examine pertinent data, question assumptions, take reasoned exception to information and views offered in the classroom, and reserve judgment about matters of opinion.

## Good Standing

Students are considered in Good Standing if they maintain a minimum overall GPA of 2.0, including developmental courses. Good Standing is affected if overall GPA falls below 2.0 at any time (end of a fall, spring, or summer semester term).

### Academic Probation

- Students who begin any semester term in Good Standing, but fail to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher, are placed on Academic Probation. Notification of probationary status is communicated electronically through students' TSC email address.
- Students may re-enroll for one (1) semester term when placed on Academic probation, only after meeting with an Advisor.
- Student status is evaluated after each semester term. Students must earn a semester term GPA of 2.0 or higher to remain enrolled while on Academic Probation.
- Academic Probation status is removed when students earn a semester and cumulative GPA of 2.0 or better.

### Academic Dismissal (First or Second Academic Dismissal)

- If students on Academic Probation or Continued Academic Probation fail to earn a semester term GPA of 2.0 or fail to earn a cumulative GPA of 2.0 in the next semester term following the probation status, they will be placed on Academic Dismissal. Students placed on Academic Dismissal will receive an email notification to their TSC email account.
- After remaining out for one (1) semester term (fall or spring) for each of the First or Second Academic Dismissals, students may re-enter on Academic Probation only after receiving advisement.
- Students re-admitted must continually earn a semester term GPA of 2.0 or above until Good Standing is reached to remain enrolled.
- Students may re-enroll in Good Standing if minimum academic standards have been met at another accredited college or university during the period of dismissal.
- Students placed on Academic Dismissal for the third (3) time will not be allowed to enroll for one (1) calendar year.

In addition to the policies above, students may be required to reduce their course loads and/or participate in workshops or other academic success seminars designed to teach proven strategies for academic success.

Students receiving benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs who fail to maintain Good Standing will be reported to the DVA Regional Office as making Unsatisfactory Progress.

## Honors in Graduation

At the time of graduation, students earning an associate degree will be recognized for sustained scholastic excellence by graduating with appropriate honors. Honors will be based upon students' cumulative grade point average on all non-developmental undergraduate hours taken. If courses have been repeated, the last grade recorded will be used in determining grade point average. Honors are as follows:

- Summa cum laude: 3.900-4.000
- Magna cum laude: 3.700-3.899
- Cum laude: 3.500-3.699

## Graduation

Texas Southmost College confers degrees and certificates three (3) times a year, at the end of the fall, spring, and summer II semesters. Commencement is held twice a year at the end of the fall and spring semesters. Summer graduates may walk in either the fall or spring ceremonies.

Texas Southmost College offers recognition for satisfactory completion of work in the following forms:

- Associate of Arts Degree
- Associate of Science Degree
- Associate of Arts in Teaching
- Associate of Applied Science Degree
- Certificates

## Graduation Application

To be awarded a degree or certificate, students should request preparation of a degree audit and file an Application for Graduation form after the completion of forty-five (45) semester credit hours toward a specific degree or at least fifteen (15) semester credit hours toward a certificate at Texas Southmost College. All candidates should list the catalog edition under which graduation is requested when completing the Application for Graduation form. One application is required for each degree or certificate requested.

## Deadlines

To be awarded a degree or certificate, students must apply for graduation by submitting an Application for Graduation form. Applications submitted after the deadline are processed with the next graduating class and diplomas/certificates reflect that date.

## Commencement Exercises

All candidates for degrees and certificates are encouraged to participate in commencement exercises. Candidates need not be enrolled during the semester that the Application for Graduation form is submitted or during the semester in which the degree is conferred. For example, a fall graduate may elect to participate in the graduation ceremony the following May or a candidate for graduation may participate in the May graduation ceremony preceding Summer completion. Participation in the graduation ceremony, however, does not ensure automatic fulfillment of requirements or that a degree will be awarded.

## Academic Advising

First-time college students must meet with an academic advisor for individual advising. Transfer students must meet with an academic advisor if they have successfully completed less than 12 credit hours or if they are on academic probation or suspension.

All students are encouraged to seek academic advising before the registration process begins to consider program options and understand the academic requirements to include prerequisites for courses, degrees and programs, and transfer institutions. Having a goal and understanding what is required to achieve the goal can save time and money.

Advising is required for:

- All first-time college students, including those who have earned college dual enrollment credit as high school students.
- Transfer college students with fewer than twelve (12) earned college semester credit hours.
- Students with Academic Holds.
- Students who need college preparatory (developmental education) courses.

If TSC requires advising, an admission/registration hold will be placed on the student's record until the requirement has been met.

Students are encouraged to consult with an academic advisor about courses and other educational concerns if currently enrolled and pursuing a two-year degree program, planning to transfer to another college or university, or simply taking a few selected courses. In addition to course and degree requirements, policies and procedures are subject to change. Students are encouraged to stay informed of any changes that may affect them by meeting with an academic advisor regularly.

Many students who plan to transfer to a university are advised to fulfill the lower-division requirements for the university selected for their continued education. It is the responsibility of all students to ensure that they take courses at TSC that will be accepted by the senior institutions they wish to attend.

It is important that all students visit with an Academic Advisor on a regular basis. Your advisor will provide assistance with:

- Academic and admission advising
- Degree and certificate planning
- Assessment interpretation
- Information on academic programs
- Course placement and selection
- Registration assistance
- Assistance with dropping or withdrawing from a course
- Graduation requirements
- Referral to on-campus student services
- Referral to community services
- Change of major

## Testing Center

Texas Southmost College requires assessment for each student in reading, writing, and mathematics to determine proper placement into college entry courses. The TSC Testing Center is committed to the success of our students and surrounding community by offering a variety of testing services that advance students' higher educational goals.

Testing Services Include:

- TSI Assessment testing on-campus and off-campus
- ESOL Accuplacer testing
- Pre-Assessment Activity session
- Proctor Distance Learning exams
- Coordinate TSI Assessment with Disability Services office
- Enter valid and official placement scores
- Enter valid and official credit by exam scores
- Evaluate TSI College-Ready from Official transcripts
- Refer to on-campus and community services

Test Office Requirements:

- Always have a Photo-ID
- Student must have a TSC ID number in order to test or to submit scores for entry in their Colleague account. \*TSC ID number is created for student after student successfully submits an application on ApplyTexas.
- Student must register in person.
- In order for students to test with TSI Assessment, the student must complete a Pre-Assessment Activity or have previous experience with placement tests. Placement tests examples: TSI Assessment, COMPASS, ACCUPLACER, THEA, or ASSEST
- TSI Assessment registration must take place at least 1-day in advance and by scheduled appointment.
- Official test scores must be requested 1-day in advance by submitting Official Test Score form.
- Students interested in scheduling a Proctored exam must submit a Proctor Request form.
- Students requesting Credit-by-Exam scores to be entered must submit an AP/CLEP Score request form.

## Transfer, Career and Employment Center

One of the best ways to ensure career success is to establish a clear focus on the career path you wish to pursue. Transfer, Career and Employment Center staff can guide you through college transfer planning, the career planning process, and securing employment upon graduation.

### Transfer Planning

During their enrollment at Texas Southmost College, students are advised to fulfill the lower division requirements for the college or university program. Students wishing to transfer into a baccalaureate or professional degree program should obtain an undergraduate catalog of the university to which they plan to transfer and consult with a representative from the Transfer, Career and Employment Center. Texas Southmost College makes every effort to aid students wishing to transfer; however, the student must consult with the senior college or university to ensure appropriate courses are taken at Texas Southmost College.

Transfer, Career and Employment Center staff also provide students with information concerning university admission requirements, degree program requirements, scholarships, housing, and university contact information. A transfer fair is held annually that provides students an opportunity to visit with university recruiters; and university transfer advisors from select institutions are scheduled each semester to advise prospective transfer students.

### Career Planning

Career planning is an on-going process that takes time, energy, and commitment. It involves developing an awareness of your skills, abilities, values, strengths, interests; and learning about the various types of occupations that exists and what is required to accomplish your goals. The Transfer, Career and Employment Center offers career assessment tools to help match your skills, interests, personality, and values with various careers. Students who are undecided in their major are strongly recommended to start the career planning process early in their educational career.

### Job Readiness

The Transfer, Career and Employment Center provides job readiness services to students and alumni. Students receive individualized services to develop job readiness skills, including effective resume writing, developing interviewing skills, employment referrals, and job market information.

## **Counseling Center**

Many students face life challenges that can make accomplishing their academic goals difficult. The Counseling Center is available to assist with those challenges by encouraging personal and academic growth to help each student successfully meet life's challenges.

Enrolled students are eligible for personal counseling services, and there is no fee. The counselor respects the confidential nature of discussions to the limits provided by law. No record of a student's visit is made on any academic file.

## **Disability Support Services**

Disability support services are provided to qualified students with learning, physical, developmental, mental and emotional disabilities who are attending Texas Southmost College. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, a person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities. Reasonable accommodations are provided by the College to ensure access to all courses, programs, services, jobs, activities and facilities.

Support Services Include:

- Testing accommodations for placement testing and academic tests.
- Adaptive Technology: screen magnification, speech synthesized software, voice activated software, hearing amplification systems (FM systems), and more.
- Adaptive furniture.
- Readers, Scribes (writers), and Sign Language Interpreters.
- Campus and community referrals.
- Other appropriate academic modifications and disability-related information.

Individuals need to be eligible for accommodation services before the services will be approved and provided. To become eligible, an individual will need to:

- Complete a Request for Services form.
- Provide current documentation for the disability for which services are requested. Documentation must be from a competent and qualified source capable of making that diagnosis within their profession.
- Arrange an intake appointment with Disability Support Services. Be prepared to spend at least one hour to meet with a counselor and complete the initial intake appointment.
- The counselor will determine if the student meets the criteria to receive accommodations, and if so, what accommodations are appropriate.

Approved accommodation services may be provided each semester if the eligible student informs Disability Support Services that services are needed for the current term. Requests to continue approved services must be in writing. Hand-written notes or e-mail requests to Disability Support Services are not acceptable.



## Student Activities

Texas Southmost College is committed to providing a campus climate that encourages students to participate in programs that promote academic and personal enrichment through the merging of classroom instruction and campus involvement. Through campus involvement, students gain valuable experiences and develop skills in leadership, management, interpersonal communication, problem solving and collaboration.

### Student Organizations

Student Organizations assist students in developing a connection and commitment to Texas Southmost College while promoting leadership development, self-confidence and effective group participation. Student Organizations provide students with the opportunity to supplement classroom work with activities that meet personal needs for recognition, growth, companionship, civic involvement and creative effort.

### Student Government Association

The Student Government Association provides a forum for free and open discussion of matters affecting students at Texas Southmost College. The Student Government Association promotes the general welfare of the student body by serving as an advocate for student issues and presenting the student perspective to campus administration, faculty, and college committees.

### Campus Activity Board

The Campus Activity Board fosters the personal growth of individuals and promotes the development of socially responsible citizens and leaders by encouraging and ensuring the active participation of students and student organizations in the planning, implementation and evaluation of programs and organizational activities that meet the wide variety of student needs and interests and enhance the sense of community at South Texas College.

## Veteran and Military Services

Texas Southmost College welcomes all veterans and active duty military personnel and their families. TSC is absolutely committed to maintaining an environment of academic success and professional development for all of its students. TSC thanks you for your service to our country and we hope to provide a level of service and atmosphere that conveys our appreciation. The mission of the Veteran's Office is to support veterans and family members by providing resources to facilitate the transition from military to academic life; and to provide an environment where veterans can gather to share experiences and support one another through the educational process.

## Library

The Library is a shared service between Texas Southmost College and The University of Texas at Brownsville. The Library provides services and collections in support of research, teaching, and learning. The Library [web site](#) provides access to thousands of scholarly journals and e-books, all available to students, faculty, and staff 24/7 from any location worldwide. The physical library holds a wide array of print books, DVDs, archives, and more, as well as 20 study rooms that are available to be checked out for both group and individual study. Librarians are available to assist students with research in-person, via phone, chat, text, or email.

All currently enrolled students at Texas Southmost College may access Library content via the Library [web site](#) or in person, with their TSC student identification card.

## Learning Labs

The Learning Lab facilitates academic success by offering student-centered peer tutoring from caring and supportive peer tutors. Students may work with tutors in a one-on-one setting or in groups. Study rooms are also available at no charge. The Learning Lab is located upstairs in the Oliveira Student Services center.

## Open Computer Lab Usage

Texas Southmost College offers several open use computer labs where students can access TSC Online and Pearson Learning Studio, check their email, and work on class assignments. There is no charge to utilize open lab computers; however, there may be a charge to print documents.

## **Intramural and Recreational Sports**

Intramural and Recreational Sports provides opportunities for individuals to engage in recreational sports and activities in a supportive and safe environment that enhances personal development, increases physical and mental health and encourages social interaction. Programs and services are designed to be responsive to the needs of students, and to educate participants on practices associated with physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being and the development of lifetime patterns for healthful living and positive use of leisure time.

Intramural and Recreational Sports offers opportunities for students to participate in basketball, volleyball, flag football, chess, table tennis, softball, racquetball, weight lifting, aerobic and fitness classes, and soccer.

## **Recreation Center**

The Recreation Center provides quality programs, facilities and services in a safe environment, that promote a sense of community and encourage the pursuit of a healthy lifestyle to a diverse student population.

## **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

Texas Southmost College encourages the intellectual, personal, social and ethical development of members of the College community in an open and supportive environment that promotes honesty, integrity and respect for the rights of all individuals. Students at Texas Southmost College are encouraged to exercise personal responsibility and self-discipline as they engage in the rigors of discovery and scholarship. Texas Southmost College assumes that each student has an earnest educational purpose and possesses a level of maturity necessary to assume obligations of performance and behavior reasonably imposed by the College relevant to its lawful missions, processes, and functions.

Texas Southmost College recognizes that student success is a shared responsibility between the student and the College. Students attending Texas Southmost College are expected to accept and adhere to the following responsibilities:

1. Student attendance and participation is the key to academic success. Regular and punctual attendance in class and laboratories is expected of all students.
2. Students are expected to exercise personal responsibility and self-discipline as they engage in the rigors of discovery and scholarship. Inappropriate behavior may result in disciplinary action against the student.
3. Students attending Texas Southmost College are responsible for adhering to standards of academic integrity. Academic dishonesty may result in disciplinary action against the student.

In support of the rights of its students, Texas Southmost College is committed to:

1. A consistent and fair evaluation of student performance and an impartial process for grade appeals that allows students to appeal academic decisions or actions which they consider unjust or incorrect.
2. Ensuring that students are treated with fundamental fairness and personal dignity that includes an impartial process for students to appeal disciplinary sanctions imposed by the College or to file a complaint or grievance when they believe that they were unjustly or improperly treated by the College, College employees, or other students.

Detailed information regarding Texas Southmost College's expectations for students is presented in the Student Code of Conduct. The Student Code of Conduct is an articulation of Texas Southmost College's commitment to maintaining an environment that recognizes and supports the rights of its students and provides a guide for defining behaviors the College considers inappropriate.

## Classroom Expectations

Student attendance and participation is vital to academic success. Regular and punctual attendance and participation in class and laboratories is expected of all students.

It is the student's responsibility to communicate with the faculty member concerning any absence as specified by the respective course syllabus. Whenever possible, students' should notify their instructor in advance.

The student may be required to present evidence to support an absence and make-up work for class absences will be permitted only as specified by the faculty in the course syllabus.

A syllabus is a document that an instructor distributes to provide students with an overview of a college course. The syllabus is usually distributed on the first day of class and contains the following information:

- Course name and meeting times
- Name of instructor and their contact information
- Expectations for behavior
- Attendance policies
- Required texts and topics and chapters covered
- Test dates and other relevant dates
- Grading policy

The syllabus is your key to success. Make sure you read the syllabus completely and refer to it regularly.

## Student Discipline in the Classroom

Texas Southmost College supports the right of faculty to maintain discipline in the classroom. When a student is being disruptive in a classroom, clinical or other academic setting, the course instructor or clinical supervisor may temporarily or permanently remove that student from class according to the following procedures.

When a student exhibits inappropriate behavior in the classroom, clinical or other academic setting, the course instructor may temporarily or permanently remove that student from class according to the following procedures:

### Step 1

Upon the first occurrence, the course instructor will:

- a. Speak with the student and inform them that they have violated appropriate standards of classroom behavior.
- b. Verbally warn the student that a repeat occurrence may result in permanent removal from the class.
- c. Obtain a commitment from the student that the inappropriate behavior will cease.
- d. If the infraction is serious enough to warrant immediate removal from class, the course instructor may go directly to Step 2.
- e. Document the situation and the conversation with the student.

### Step 2

Upon the second occurrence, the course instructor may:

- a. Withdraw the student from class and assign a grade of "W" or "F."
- b. Document the situation and the conversation with the student.
- c. Notify the office of Student Conduct Administration. Student Conduct Administration may impose additional sanctions, up to and including suspension or expulsion from the College.

## Appeal Process

The student may appeal the decision of the course instructor to the appropriate Program Director/Chair or, in the absence of a Program Director/Chair, to the Division Dean. This appeal must be made in writing and received in the Program Director/Chair/Dean's office within 5 working days of the student's receiving notice of the course instructor's decision.

1. Upon receipt of the appeal, the Program Director/Chair/Dean shall review the appeal, hear witnesses if he/she so chooses, and render a decision. The decision of the Program Director/Chair/Dean is final.
2. An appeal may result in one of the following:
  - a. Affirm the action of the course instructor.
  - b. Dismiss, reduce, modify, or increase the penalty imposed by the course instructor.
3. The student will be notified of the decision through their TSC email address.

## **Student Code of Conduct**

The Student Code of Conduct is an articulation of Texas Southmost College's commitment to maintaining an environment that recognizes and supports the rights of its students, while providing a guide for defining behaviors the College considers inappropriate. When students fail to act in accord with the rules and regulations of the Texas Southmost College community, the College must hold them accountable for their actions.

The purpose of the student conduct system is not solely to punish students for transgressions, but to help them understand and accept their obligations as citizens of an academic community. Whenever possible, sanctions for violations of the Student Code of Conduct will be educational in nature.

The office of Student Conduct Administration has primary authority and responsibility for the administration of student discipline.

### Preamble

Attendance at Texas Southmost College is optional and voluntary and choosing to join the Texas Southmost College community obligates each member to a code of civilized behavior. This means practicing personal and academic integrity; respecting the dignity of all persons; respecting the rights and property of others; discouraging prejudice and intolerance while striving to learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions; and demonstrating concern for others, their feelings, and their need for conditions which support their work and development.

The goals of the student discipline system are (1) to promote a campus environment that supports the overall educational mission of the College; (2) to protect the College community from disruption and harm; (3) to encourage appropriate standards of individual and group behavior; (4) to foster ethical standards and civic virtues.

### Article I: Definitions

1. The term "College" means Texas Southmost College.
2. The term "student" includes all persons taking courses at the College, either full-time or part-time. Persons who withdraw after allegedly violating the Student Code of Conduct, who are not officially enrolled for a particular term but who have a continuing relationship with the College or who have submitted an application for admission are considered "students." This Student Code of Conduct applies at all locations of the College.
3. The term "faculty" or "faculty member" means any person hired by the College to conduct classroom or teaching activities or who is otherwise considered by the College to be a member of its faculty.
4. The term "College official" includes any person employed by the College, performing assigned administrative or professional responsibilities.
5. The term "member of the College community" includes any person who is a student, faculty member, College official or any other person employed by the College. A person's status in a particular situation shall be determined by the Vice President of Student Services.
6. The term "College premises" includes all land, buildings, facilities, and other property in the possession of or owned, used, or controlled by the College (including adjacent streets and sidewalks).

7. The term "organization" means any number of persons who have complied with the formal requirements for College recognition.
8. The term "Student Conduct Board" means any person or persons authorized by the Vice President of Student Services to determine whether a student has violated the Student Code of Conduct and to recommend sanctions that may be imposed when a rules violation has been committed.
9. The term "Student Conduct Administrator" means a College official authorized on a case-by-case basis by the Vice President of Student Services to impose sanctions upon any student(s) found to have violated the Student Code of Conduct. The Vice President of Student Services may authorize a Student Conduct Administrator to serve simultaneously as a Student Conduct Administrator and the sole member or one of the members of the Student Conduct Board. The Vice President of Student Services may authorize the same Student Conduct Administrator to impose sanctions in all cases.
10. The term "Appellate Board" means any person or persons authorized by the Vice President of Student Services to consider an appeal from a Student Conduct Board's determination as to whether a student has violated the Student Code of Conduct or from the sanctions imposed by the Student Conduct Administrator.
11. The term "shall" is used in the imperative sense.
12. The term "may" is used in the permissive sense.
13. The Vice President of Student Services is that person designated by the College President to be responsible for the administration of the Student Code of Conduct.
14. The term "policy" means the written regulations of the College as found in, but not limited to, the College Policy Manual, Student Code of Conduct, Student Handbook, the College web page, the College computer use policy, and the College Catalog.
15. The term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) use of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (3) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the College faculty or staff; (4) engaging in any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion.
16. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.
17. The term "Accused Student" means any student accused of violating this Student Code of Conduct.
18. The term "Complainant" means any person who submits a charge alleging that a student violated this Student Code of Conduct. When a student believes that he/she has been a victim of another student's misconduct, the student who believes he/she has been a victim will have the same rights under this Student Code of Conduct as are provided to the Accused Student, even if another member of the College community submitted the charge itself.

#### Article II: Student Conduct Code of Conduct Authority

1. The Vice President of Student Services shall determine the composition of Student Conduct Boards and Appellate Boards and determine which Student Conduct Board, Student Conduct Administrator and Appellate Board shall be authorized to hear each matter.
2. The Vice President of Student Services shall develop policies for the administration of the student conduct system and procedural rules for the conduct of Student Conduct Board Hearings that are consistent with provisions of the Student Code of Conduct.
3. Decisions made by a Student Conduct Board and/or Student Conduct Administrator shall be final, pending the normal appeal process.

### Article III: Unacceptable Conduct

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

The College Student Code of Conduct shall apply to conduct that occurs on College premises, at College-sponsored activities, and to off-campus conduct that adversely affects the College Community and/or the pursuit of its objectives. Each student shall be responsible for his/her conduct from the time of application for admission through the actual awarding of a degree, even though conduct may occur before classes begin or after classes end, as well as during the academic year and during periods between terms of actual enrollment (and even if their conduct is not discovered until after a degree is awarded). The Student Code of Conduct shall apply to a student's conduct even if the student withdraws from school while a disciplinary matter is pending. The Vice President of Student Services shall decide whether the Student Code of Conduct shall be applied to conduct occurring off campus, on a case-by-case basis, in his/her sole discretion.

#### B. Conduct Rules and Regulations.

Any student found to have committed or to have attempted to commit the following misconduct is subject to the disciplinary sanctions outlined in Article IV: Student Code of Conduct Procedures.

1. Acts of dishonesty, including but not limited to the following:
  - a. Cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty.
  - b. Furnishing false information to any College official, faculty member, or office.
  - c. Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any College document, record, or instrument of identification.
2. Disruption or obstruction of teaching, research, administration, disciplinary proceedings, other College activities, including its public service functions on or off campus, or of other authorized non-College activities when the conduct occurs on College premises.
3. Physical abuse, verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment, coercion, and/or other conduct which threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person.
4. Sexual misconduct that involves:
  - a. Deliberate touching of another's sexual parts without consent or deliberate sexual invasion of another without consent. This includes any sexual act that occurs without the consent of the victim, or that occurs when the victim is unable to give consent.
  - b. Deliberate constraint or incapacitation of another, without that person's knowledge or consent, so as to put another at substantially increased risk of sexual injury.
  - c. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that expressly or implicitly imposes conditions upon, threatens, interferes with, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or demeaning environment for an individual's (I) academic pursuits, (II) College employment; (III) participation in activities sponsored by the College or organizations or groups related to the College, or (IV) opportunities to benefit from other aspects of College life. This includes unwanted, unwelcome, inappropriate, or irrelevant sexual or gender-based activities or comments.
  - d. Obscene or indecent behavior, which includes, but is not limited to, exposure of one's sexual organs or the display of sexual behavior that would reasonably be offensive to others.
5. Attempted or actual theft of and/or damage to property of the College or property of a member of the College community or other personal or public property, on or off campus.

6. Hazing. "Hazing" means any intentional knowing, or reckless act, occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are students at an educational institution. The express or implied consent of the victim will not be a defense. Apathy or acquiescence in the presence of hazing are not neutral acts; they are violations of this rule. The term includes but is not limited to:
  - a. Any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body, or similar activity.
  - b. Any type of physical activity, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, calisthenics, or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk or harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
  - c. Any activity involving consumption of a food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug, or other substance which subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or which adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
  - d. Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism that subjects the student to extreme mental stress, shame, or humiliation, or that adversely effects the student from entering or remaining registered in an educational institution, or that may reasonably be expected to cause a student to leave the organization or the institution rather than submit to acts described in this subsection.
  - e. Any activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task which involves a violation of the Texas Penal Code Sec. 4.52.
  - f. Personal Hazing Offense. A person commits an offense if the person:
    - i. Engages in hazing.
    - ii. Solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing.
    - iii. Intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly permits hazing to occur.
    - iv. Has firsthand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident involving a student in an educational institution, or firsthand knowledge that a specific hazing incident has occurred, and knowingly fails to report said knowledge in writing to the Dean of Students or other appropriate officials of the institution.
  - g. Organization Hazing Offense. "Organization" means a fraternity, sorority, association, corporation, order, society, corps, cooperative, club, or service, social, or a similar group, whose members are primarily students at an educational institution. An organization commits an offense if the organization:
    - i. Condone or encourages hazing.
    - ii. If an officer or any combination of members, pledges, or alumni of the organization commits or assists in the commission of hazing.
7. Failure to comply with directions of College officials or law enforcement officers acting in performance of their duties and/or failure to identify oneself to these persons when requested to do so.
8. Unauthorized possession, duplication or use of keys to any College premises or unauthorized entry to or use of College premises.
9. Violation of any College policy, rule, or regulation published in hard copy or available electronically on the College website.
10. Violation of any federal, state or local law.
11. Use, possession, manufacturing, or distribution of marijuana, heroin, narcotics, or other controlled substances except as expressly permitted by law.

12. Use, possession, manufacturing, or distribution of alcoholic beverages (except as expressly permitted by College regulations), or public intoxication. Alcoholic beverages may not, in any circumstance, be used by, possessed by or distributed to any person under twenty-one (21) years of age.
13. Illegal or unauthorized possession of firearms, explosives, other weapons, or dangerous chemicals on College premises or use of any such item, even if legally possessed, in a manner that harms, threatens or causes fear to others.
14. Participating in an on-campus or off-campus demonstration, riot or activity that disrupts the normal operations of the College and/or infringes on the rights of other members of the College community; leading or inciting others to disrupt scheduled and/or normal activities within any campus building or area.
15. Obstruction of the free flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic on College premises or at College-sponsored or supervised functions.
16. Conduct that is disorderly, lewd, or indecent; breach of peace; or aiding, abetting, or procuring another person to breach the peace on College premises or at functions sponsored by, or participated in by, the College or members of the academic community. Disorderly conduct includes but is not limited to any unauthorized use of electronic or other devices to make an audio or video record of any person while on College premises:
  - a. Without his/her prior knowledge.
  - b. Without his/her effective consent when such a recording is likely to cause injury or distress. This includes, but is not limited to, surreptitiously taking pictures of another person in a gym, locker room, or restroom.
17. Theft or other abuse of computer facilities and resources, including but not limited to:
  - a. Unauthorized entry into a file, to use, read, or change the contents, or for any other purpose.
  - b. Unauthorized transfer of a file.
  - c. Use of another individual's identification and/or password.
  - d. Use of computing facilities and resources to interfere with the work of another student, faculty member or College official.
  - e. Use of computing facilities and resources to send obscene or abusive messages.
  - f. Use of computing facilities and resources to interfere with normal operation of the College computing system.
  - g. Use of computing facilities and resources in violation of copyright laws.
  - h. Any violation of the College Computer Use Policy
18. Abuse of the Student Conduct System, including but not limited to:
  - a. Failure to obey the notice from a Student Conduct Board or College official to appear for a meeting or hearing as part of the Student Conduct System.
  - b. Falsification, distortion, or misrepresentation of information before a Student Conduct Board.
  - c. Disruption or interference with the orderly conduct of a Student Conduct Board proceeding.
  - d. Institution of a Student Code of Conduct proceeding in bad faith.
  - e. Attempting to discourage an individual's proper participation in, or use of, the student conduct system.
  - f. Attempting to influence the impartiality of a member of a Student Conduct Board prior to, and/or during the course of, the Student Conduct Board proceeding.



- g. Harassment (verbal or physical) and/or intimidation of a member of a Student Conduct Board prior to, during, and/or after a Student Code of Conduct proceeding.
  - h. Failure to comply with the sanction(s) imposed under the Student Code of Conduct.
  - i. Influencing or attempting to influence another person to commit an abuse of the Student Conduct system.
19. Students are required to engage in responsible social conduct that reflects credit upon the College community and to model good citizenship in any community.

C. Violation of Law and College Discipline

- 1. College disciplinary proceedings may be instituted against a student charged with conduct that potentially violates both the criminal law and this Student Code of Conduct (that is, if both possible violations result from the same factual situation) without regard to the pendency of civil or criminal litigation in court or criminal arrest and prosecution. Proceedings under this Student Code of Conduct may be carried out prior to, simultaneously with, or following civil or criminal proceedings off campus at the discretion of the Vice President of Student Services.
- 2. Determinations made or sanctions imposed under this Student Code of Conduct shall not be subject to change because criminal charges arising out of the same facts giving rise to violation of College rules were dismissed, reduced, or resolved in favor of or against the criminal law defendant.
- 3. When a student is charged by federal, state, or local authorities with a violation of law, the College will not request or agree to special consideration for that individual because of his or her status as a student. If the alleged offense is also being processed under the Student Code of Conduct, the College may advise off-campus authorities of the existence of the Student Code of Conduct and of how such matters are typically handled within the College community. The College will attempt to cooperate with law enforcement and other agencies in the enforcement of criminal law on campus and in the conditions imposed by criminal courts for the rehabilitation of student violators (provided that the conditions do not conflict with campus rules or sanctions). Individual students and other members of the College community, acting in their personal capacities, remain free to interact with governmental representatives as they deem appropriate.

Article IV: Student Code of Conduct Procedures

A. Charges and Student Conduct Board Hearings

- 1. Any member of the College community may file charges against a student for violations of the Student Code of Conduct. A charge shall be prepared in writing and directed to the Student Conduct Administrator. Any charge should be submitted as soon as possible after the event takes place, preferably within 30 days.
- 2. The Student Conduct Administrator may conduct an investigation to determine if the charges have merit and/or if they can be disposed of administratively by mutual consent of the parties involved on a basis acceptable to the Student Conduct Administrator. Such disposition shall be final and there shall be no subsequent proceedings. If the charges are not admitted and/or cannot be disposed of by mutual consent, the Student Conduct Administrator may later serve in the same matter as the Student Conduct Board or a member thereof. If the student admits violating institutional rules, but sanctions are not agreed to, subsequent process, including a hearing if necessary, shall be limited to determining the appropriate sanction(s).
- 3. All charges shall be presented to the Accused Student in written form. A time shall be set for a Student Conduct Board Hearing, not less than five nor more than fifteen calendar days after the student has been notified. Maximum time limits for scheduling of Student Conduct Board Hearings may be extended at the discretion of the Student Conduct Administrator.

4. Student Conduct Board Hearings shall be conducted by a Student Conduct Board according to the following guidelines except as provided by article IV(A)(7) below:
  - a. Student Conduct Board Hearings normally shall be conducted in private.
  - b. The Complainant, Accused Student, and their advisors, if any, shall be allowed to attend the entire portion of the Student Conduct Board Hearing at which information is received (excluding deliberations). Admission of any other person to the Student Conduct Board Hearing shall be at the discretion of the Student Conduct Board and/or the Student Conduct Administrator.
  - c. In Student Conduct Board Hearings involving more than one Accused Student, the Student Conduct Administrator, in his or her discretion, may permit the Student Conduct Board Hearings concerning each student to be conducted either separately or jointly.
  - d. The Complainant and the Accused Student have the right to be assisted by an advisor they choose, at their own expense. The advisor must be a member of the College community and may not be an attorney. The Complainant and/or the Accused Student is responsible for presenting his or her own information, and therefore, advisors are not permitted to speak or to participate directly in any Student Conduct Board Hearing before a Student Conduct Board. A student should select as an advisor a person whose schedule allows attendance at the scheduled date and time for the Student Conduct Board Hearing because delays will not normally be allowed due to the scheduling conflicts of an advisor.
  - e. The Complainant, the Accused Student, and the Student Conduct Board may arrange for witnesses to present pertinent information to the Student Conduct Board. The College will try to arrange the attendance of possible witnesses who are members of the College community, if reasonably possible, and who are identified by the Complainant and/or Accused Student at least two weekdays prior to the Student Conduct Board Hearing. Witnesses will provide information to and answer questions from the Student Conduct Board. Questions may be suggested by the Accused Student and/or Complainant to be answered by each other or by other witnesses. This will be conducted by the Student Conduct Board with such questions directed to the chairperson, rather than to the witness directly. This method is used to preserve the educational tone of the hearing and to avoid creation of an adversarial environment. Questions of whether potential information will be received shall be resolved in the discretion of the chairperson of the Student Conduct Board.
  - f. Pertinent records, exhibits, and written statements (including Student Impact Statements) may be accepted as information for consideration by a Student Conduct Board at the discretion of the chairperson.
  - g. All procedural questions are subject to the final decision of the chairperson of the Student Conduct Board.
  - h. After the portion of the Student Conduct Board Hearing concludes in which all pertinent information has been received, the Student Conduct Board shall determine (by majority vote if the Student Conduct Board consists of more than one person) whether the Accused Student has violated each section of the Student Code of Conduct which the student is charged with violating.
  - i. The Student Conduct Board's determination shall be made on the basis of whether it is more likely than not that the Accused Student violated the Student Code of Conduct.
  - j. Formal rules of process, procedure, and/or technical rules of evidence, such as are applied in criminal or civil court, are not used in Student Code of Conduct proceedings.
5. There shall be a single verbatim record, such as a tape recording, of all Student Conduct Board Hearings before a Student Conduct Board (not including deliberations). Deliberations shall not be recorded. The record shall be the property of the College.
6. If an Accused Student, with notice, does not appear before a Student Conduct Board Hearing, the information in support of the charges shall be presented and considered even if the Accused Student is not present.

7. The Student Conduct Board may accommodate concerns for the personal safety, well-being, and/or fears of confrontation of the Complainant, Accused Student, and/or other witness during the hearing by providing separate facilities, by using a visual screen, and/or by permitting participation by telephone, videophone, closed circuit television, video conferencing, videotape, audio tape, written statement, or other means, where and as determined in the sole judgment of the Vice President of Student Services to be appropriate.

B. Sanctions

1. The following sanctions may be imposed upon any student found to have violated the Student Code of Conduct:
  - a. Warning - A notice in writing to the student that the student is violating or has violated institutional regulations.
  - b. Probation - A written reprimand for violation of specified regulations. Probation is for a designated period of time and includes the probability of more severe disciplinary sanctions if the student is found to violate any institutional regulation(s) during the probationary period.
  - c. Behavior Contract - A written agreement that details clear expectations of the student in carrying out an intervention plan. Behavior Contracts may include referral to a counselor, participation in a monitored supervision plan, signing a "no contact" order prohibiting contact with an individual or individuals, submission to random drug testing for a specific period of time, restriction from a certain campus location, loss of parking privileges, or other stipulations appropriate to the Student Code of Conduct violation.
  - d. Loss of Privileges - Denial of specified privileges for a designated period of time.
  - e. Fines - Previously established and published fines may be imposed.
  - f. Restitution - Compensation for loss, damage, or injury. This may take the form of appropriate service and/or monetary or material replacement.
  - g. Withdrawal from a course or courses with a grade of "W" (Withdrawal).
  - h. Discretionary Sanctions - Discretionary Sanctions include, but are not limited to, work assignments, essays, service to the College, or other related discretionary assignments.
  - i. College Suspension - Separation of the student from the College for a definite period of time, after which the student is eligible to return. Conditions for readmission may be specified.
  - j. College Expulsion - Permanent separation of the student from the College.
  - k. Revocation of Admission and/or Degree - Admission to or a degree awarded from the College may be revoked for fraud, misrepresentation, or other violation of College standards in obtaining the degree, or for other serious violations committed by a student prior to graduation.
  - l. Withholding Degree - The College may withhold awarding a degree otherwise earned until the completion of the process set forth in this Student Code of Conduct, including the completion of all sanctions imposed, if any.
2. More than one of the sanctions listed above may be imposed for any single violation.
3. (a) Other than College expulsion or revocation or withholding of a degree, disciplinary sanctions shall not be made part of the student's permanent academic record, but shall become part of the student's disciplinary record. Upon graduation, the student's disciplinary record may be expunged of disciplinary actions other than College suspension, College expulsion, or revocation or withholding of a degree, upon application to the Student Conduct Administrator. Cases involving the imposition of sanctions other than College suspension, College expulsion or revocation or withholding of a degree shall be expunged from the student's confidential record eight (8) years after final disposition of the case.  
  
(b) In situations involving both an Accused Student(s) (or group or organization) and a student(s) claiming to be the victim of another student's conduct, the records of the process and of the sanctions imposed, if any, shall be considered to be the education records of both the Accused Student(s) and the student(s) claiming to be the victim because the educational career and chances of success in the academic community of each may be impacted.

4. The following sanctions may be imposed upon groups or organizations:
  - a. Those sanctions listed above in article IV(B)(1)(a),(b),(d),(e),(f).
  - b. Loss of selected rights and privileges for a specified period of time.
  - c. Deactivation. Loss of all privileges, including College recognition, for a specified period of time.
5. In each case in which a Student Conduct Board determines that a student and/or group or organization has violated the Student Code of Conduct, the sanction(s) shall be determined and imposed by the Student Conduct Administrator. In cases in which persons other than, or in addition to, the Student Conduct Administrator have been authorized to serve as the Student Conduct Board, the recommendation of the Student Conduct Board shall be considered by the Student Conduct Administrator in determining and imposing sanctions. The Student Conduct Administrator is not limited to sanctions recommended by members of the Student Conduct Board. Following the Student Conduct Board Hearing, the Student Conduct Board and the Student Conduct Administrator shall advise the Accused Student, group and/or organization (and a complaining student who believes s/he was the victim of another student's conduct) in writing of its determination and of the sanction(s) imposed, if any.

#### C. Interim Suspension

In certain circumstances, the Vice President of Student Services, or a designee, may impose a College suspension prior to the Student Conduct Board Hearing before a Student Conduct Board.

1. Interim suspension may be imposed only: 1) to ensure the safety and well-being of members of the College community or preservation of College property; b) to ensure the student's own physical or emotional safety and well-being; or c) if the student poses an ongoing threat of disruption of, or interference with, the normal operations of the College.
2. During the interim suspension, a student shall be denied access to the campus (including classes) and/or all other College activities or privileges for which the student might otherwise be eligible, as the Vice President of Student Services or the Student Conduct Administrator may determine to be appropriate.
3. The interim suspension does not replace the regular process, which shall proceed on the normal schedule, up to and through a Student Conduct Board Hearing, if required.
4. The student shall be notified in writing of this action and the reasons for the suspension. The notice will include the time, date, and place of a subsequent hearing at which the student may show cause why his or her continued presence on the campus does not constitute a threat, and at which they may contest whether a campus rule was violated.

#### D. Appeals

1. A decision reached by the Student Conduct Board or a sanction imposed by the Student Conduct Administrator may be appealed by the Accused Student(s) or Complainant(s) to an Appellate Board within five (5) school days of the decision. Such appeals shall be in writing and shall be delivered to the Student Conduct Administrator or his or her designee.
2. Except as required to explain the basis of new information, an appeal shall be limited to a review of the verbatim record of the Student Conduct Board Hearing and supporting documents for one or more of the following purposes:
  - a. To determine whether the Student Conduct Board Hearing was conducted fairly in light of the charges and information presented, and in conformity with prescribed procedures giving the complaining party a reasonable opportunity to prepare and to present information that the Student Code of Conduct was violated, and giving the Accused Student a reasonable opportunity to prepare and to present a response to those allegations. Deviations from designated procedures will not be a basis for sustaining an appeal unless significant prejudice results.
  - b. To determine whether the decision reached regarding the Accused Student was based on substantial information, that is, whether there were facts in the case that, if believed by the fact finder, were sufficient to establish that a violation of the Student Code of Conduct occurred.

- c. To determine whether the sanction(s) imposed were appropriate for the violation of the Student Code of Conduct which the student was found to have committed.
  - d. To consider new information, sufficient to alter a decision, or other relevant facts not brought out in the original hearing, because such information and/or facts were not known to the person appealing at the time of the original Student Conduct Board Hearing.
3. If an appeal is upheld by the Appellate Board, the matter shall be returned to the original Student Conduct Board and Student Conduct Administrator for re-opening of Student Conduct Board Hearing to allow reconsideration of the original determination and/or sanction(s). If an appeal is not upheld, the matter shall be considered final and binding upon all involved.

#### Article V: Interpretation and Revision

- A. Any question of interpretation or application of the Student Code of Conduct shall be referred to the Vice President of Student Services or his or her designee for final determination.

The Student Code of Conduct shall be reviewed annually under the direction of the Vice President of Student Services.

### **Conflict Resolution Center**

The Conflict Resolution Center provides guidance to the Texas Southmost College community regarding Texas Southmost College protocol and procedures and assists and counsels students in resolving disputes and conflicts in a way that facilitates individual responsibility, contributes to their maturation, and promotes the development of self-advocacy skills.

The Conflict Resolution Center serves as an informal, independent, neutral, confidential, problem-solving resource for student-related issues. The Conflict Resolution Center is able to provide services as an intermediary/facilitator or to mediate when disputing parties are deadlocked. Conflict Resolution Center staff are available to listen, provide information, reframe issues, develop options, and make referrals when appropriate. Conflict Resolution Center staff will explain and clarify College policies and procedures while encouraging complainants to follow the approved policies and procedures. Conflict Resolution Center staff may conduct informal fact finding interviews when appropriate.

The Conflict Resolution Center is located within the Office of the Vice President of Student Services.

### **Student Appeal of Course Grades**

Students at Texas Southmost College may appeal final course grades which they consider unfair or inaccurate.

- The burden of proof lies with the Student and it is the Student's responsibility to provide evidence the grade should be changed. Unless the Student demonstrates compelling evidence supporting a change of grade, the final grade issued by the faculty member responsible for the course will remain on the Student's transcript.
- No appeals will be accepted with the desired resolution being anything other than a change of grade. Complaints must follow Texas Southmost College complaint procedures.
- Students who file frivolous appeals or who deviate from the approved process may have their appeal summarily dismissed.
- Students must submit appeals individually, group appeals will not be considered.
- If the Student fails to comply with the designated time frames, the appeal may be summarily dismissed.
  - Only under conditions warranting exception will the time constraint for initiating the grade appeal process be extended. Exceptions might include unexpected call to military service, extreme health issues and severe life disruption.
  - Requests for an exception to the time constraint require verifiable documentation and must be submitted in writing to the Office of the Vice President of Student Services who will grant or deny the exception.

## Grade appeal procedures:

### Step 1

It is the responsibility of the Student to initiate the grade appeal process by contacting the Course Instructor of Record, no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the semester in which the grade was issued.

1. The Course Instructor of Record may approve the appeal, deny the appeal, or work with the Student to reach a solution that is agreeable to both parties.
  - a. If the Course Instructor of Record is no longer employed at Texas Southmost College, the Student will advance to Step 2 of the grade appeal process.
  - b. If the Course Instructor of Record is still employed at Texas Southmost College but not currently teaching, the grade appeal will be delayed until the Course Instructor of Record returns to teach, as long as the Course Instructor of Record returns no later than the next full (fall or spring) semester.
2. If the Student is not satisfied with the outcome of their meeting with the Course Instructor of Record, the Student will have 10 calendar days to proceed to step 2 of the appeal process.

### Step 2

It is the responsibility of the Student to advance their appeal to Step 2 of the grade appeal process by submitting a written appeal to the appropriate Academic Dean, no later than 10 calendar days following their meeting with the Course Instructor of Record.

1. The Student must submit a written appeal, along with all supporting documentation, to the Academic Dean. The appeal must be in English and typed using size 12 Times New Roman or Arial font.
2. The Academic Dean will forward the written appeal and supporting documentation to the Course Instructor of Record; requesting a written response.
  - a. The Course Instructor of Record will have 10 calendar days to provide a written response, along with all supporting documentation, to the Academic Dean.
  - b. The Academic Dean will meet with the Student to review the response from the Course Instructor of Record. The Academic Dean cannot initiate a change of grade or offer a solution to the Student without consent from the Course Instructor of Record, unless the Course Instructor of Record is no longer employed at Texas Southmost College.
3. If the Student is not satisfied with the outcome of their meeting with the Academic Dean, the Student will have 10 calendar days to proceed to Step 3 of the appeal process.

### Step 3

It is the responsibility of the Student to advance their appeal to Step 3 of the grade appeal process by contacting the Office of the Vice President of Student Services, no later than 10 calendar days following their meeting with the Academic Dean.

1. The Student must notify the Office of the Vice President of Student Services that they would like to advance to Step 3 of the appeal process.
2. The Office of the Vice President of Student Services will contact the Academic Dean to request the following documents:
  - a. Written appeal and supporting documentation submitted by the Student.
  - b. Written response and supporting documentation submitted by the Course Instructor of Record.
  - c. Written opinion from the Academic Dean.
3. Upon receipt of the items above, the Office of the Vice President of Student Services will schedule the Student to appear before the Texas Southmost College Grade Appeal Committee at the next scheduled appeal meeting, providing the meeting is at least 15 calendar days from the date all the documents are received.

- a. The Grade Appeal Committee is chaired by the Vice President of Student Services or his/her designee, and consists of a minimum of two faculty representatives from each of the instructional divisions.
  - b. To meet quorum, a minimum of five faculty members must be present at the meeting.
4. The Grade Appeal Committee's responsibility will be:
- a. To review the Student's written appeal and evidence; to consider the written response and evidence from the Course Instructor of Record; and to consider the written opinion of the Academic Dean.
  - b. To hear testimony from the Student, Course Instructor of Record, and Academic Dean; to corroborate documentary evidence. The Student, Course Instructor of Record, or Academic Dean may decline to attend the meeting.
  - c. To inform the Student, Course Instructor of Record, and Academic Dean of their decision. The Grade Appeal Committee may initiate a grade change or offer a solution to the Student without consent from the Academic Dean or Course Instructor of Record.

The decision of the Grade Appeal Committee is final and concludes the approved Texas Southmost College grade appeal process.

## Student Complaints

The College District encourages students to discuss their concerns and complaints through informal conferences with the appropriate instructor or other campus administrator.

### Informal Process

Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level.

### Formal Process

If an informal conference regarding a complaint fails to reach the outcome requested by the student, the student may initiate the formal process described below by timely filing a written complaint form.

Even after initiating the formal complaint process, students are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns. A student whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time.

The process described in this policy shall not be construed to create new or additional rights beyond those granted by law or Board policy, nor to require a full evidentiary hearing or "mini-trial" at any level.

### Freedom from Retaliation

Neither the Board nor any College District employee shall unlawfully retaliate against any student for bringing a concern or complaint.

### Complaints

In this policy, the terms "complaint" and "grievance" shall have the same meaning. This policy shall apply to all student complaints, except as provided below.

This policy shall not apply to:

1. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on race, color, gender, national origin, disability, or religion.
2. Complaints concerning retaliation relating to discrimination and harassment.
3. Complaints concerning disciplinary decisions.
4. Complaints concerning a commissioned peace officer who is an employee of the College District.

### Filing

Complaint forms and appeal notices may be filed by hand-delivery, fax, or U.S. Mail. Hand-delivered filings shall be timely filed if received by the appropriate administrator or designee by the close of business on the deadline. Fax filings shall be timely filed if they are received on or before the deadline, as indicated by the date/time shown on the fax copy. Mail filings shall be timely filed if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline and received no more than three days after the deadline.

### Response

At Levels One, Two, and Three, "response" shall mean a written communication to the student from the appropriate administrator. Responses may be hand-delivered or sent by U.S. Mail to the student's mailing address of record. Mailed responses shall be timely if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline.

### Days

"Days" shall mean College District business days. In calculating time lines under this policy, the day a document is filed is "day zero." The following day is "day one."

### Representative

"Representative" shall mean any person who or organization that is designated by the student to represent the student in the complaint process.

The student may designate a representative through written notice to the College District at any level of this process. If the student designates a representative with fewer than three days' notice to the College District before a scheduled conference or hearing, the College District may reschedule the conference or hearing to a later date, if desired, in order to include the College District's counsel. The College District may be represented by counsel at any level of the process.

### Consolidating Events

Complaints arising out of an event or a series of related events shall be addressed in one complaint. A student shall not bring separate or serial complaints arising from any event or series of events that have been or could have been addressed in a previous complaint.

### Untimely Filings

All time limits shall be strictly followed unless modified by mutual written consent.

If a complaint form or appeal notice is not timely filed, the complaint may be dismissed, on written notice to the student, at any point during the complaint process. The student may appeal the dismissal by seeking review in writing within ten days from the date of the written dismissal notice, starting at the level at which the complaint was dismissed. Such appeal shall be limited to the issue of timeliness.

### Costs Incurred

Each party shall pay its own costs incurred in the course of the complaint.

### Complaint Form

Complaints under this policy shall be submitted in writing on a form provided by the College District.

Copies of any documents that support the complaint should be attached to the complaint form. If the student does not have copies of these documents, copies may be presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted by the student unless the student did not know the documents existed before the Level One conference.

A complaint form that is incomplete in any material aspect may be dismissed but may be refiled with all the required information if the refiled is within the designated time for filing a complaint.



### Level 1

Complaint forms must be filed:

1. Within 15 days of the date the student first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or grievance; and
2. With the lowest level administrator who has the authority to remedy the alleged problem.

In most circumstances, students shall file Level One complaints with the department chairman or student services counselor. The complaint, however, may begin at the first level at which the administrator has the authority to remedy the complaint.

If the complaint is not filed with the appropriate administrator, the receiving administrator must note the date and time the complaint form was received and immediately forward the complaint form to the College District's conflict resolution center so that it may forward the form to the appropriate administrator.

The appropriate administrator shall investigate as necessary and hold a conference with the student within ten days after receipt of the written complaint. The administrator may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

The administrator shall provide the student a written response within ten days following the conference. The written response shall set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the administrator may consider information provided at the Level One conference and any relevant documents or information the administrator believes will help resolve the complaint.

### Level 2

If the student did not receive the relief requested at Level One or if the time for a response has expired, the student may request a conference with the appropriate vice president to appeal the Level One decision.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the College District, within ten days of the date of the written Level One response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the Level One response deadline.

After receiving notice of the appeal, the Level One administrator shall prepare and forward a record of the Level One complaint to the Level Two administrator. The student may request a copy of the Level One record.

The Level One record shall include:

1. The original complaint form and any attachments.
2. All other documents submitted by the student at Level One.
3. The written response issued at Level One and any attachments.
4. All other documents relied upon by the Level One administrator in reaching the Level One decision.

The Level Two administrator shall hold a conference within ten days after the appeal notice is filed. The conference shall be limited to the issues presented by the student at Level One and identified in the Level Two appeal notice. At the conference, the student may provide information concerning any documents or information relied on by the administration for the Level One decision. The Level Two administrator may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

The Level Two administrator shall provide the student a written response within ten days following the conference. The written response shall set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the Level Two administrator may consider the Level One record, information provided at the Level Two conference, and any other relevant documents or information the Level Two administrator believes will help resolve the complaint.

Recordings of the Level One and Level Two conferences, if any, shall be maintained with the Level One and Level Two records.

### Level 3

If the student did not receive the relief requested at Level Two, the student may request a conference with the College President within five days after the written response by the appropriate vice president. The College President shall review the grievance for matters of policy and procedure only.

## **Enrollment Appeal Committee**

The Enrollment Appeal Committee (EAC) provides Texas Southmost College students with an opportunity to formally appeal an enrollment, registration or reinstatement issue resulting from a medical emergency, death in the family (parent, spouse, sibling or child), a life-changing incident or a perceived error by the College. Students must submit their appeal in writing, using the Enrollment Appeal Form, available from the Office of Admissions and Records.

## **Accreditation**

The University of Texas at Brownsville - Texas Southmost College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award certificate, associate, baccalaureate, masters, and doctorate degrees.

Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404- 679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of The University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southmost College.

## **Statement of Equal Opportunity**

No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored or conducted by Texas Southmost College on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, disability, age, or military status.

## **Rights of Individuals with Disabilities**

Texas Southmost College complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and does not discriminate on the basis of a disability in the operation of its educational programs or in its admission and employment practices. Special emphasis will continue to be placed on correcting conditions, which may inadvertently discriminate against any individual with a disability.

## **Statement on Alcoholic Beverages, Tobacco and other Substances**

Texas Southmost College forbids the manufacture, possession, sale, use, or distribution of illegal drugs and alcoholic beverages on campus and at College sponsored events, whether they occur on or off campus. Students who are found in violation will face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the College. Alcohol may be permitted at certain College-sponsored events with appropriate approval from College administration.

## **Statement on Firearms**

In accordance with the Texas Penal Code, Section 46.03, no person may carry a firearm (1) on the physical premises of Texas Southmost College, (2) on any grounds or building on which an activity sponsored by Texas Southmost College is being conducted, (3) in a passenger transportation vehicle of Texas Southmost College; unless pursuant to written regulations or written authorization of the institution. Individuals found in violation will face appropriate law enforcement action/penalty as well as disciplinary action by Texas Southmost College.

## **Sexual Harassment Policy**

Sexual harassment in the workplace and schools is an illegal Practice under Section 703 of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act as amended, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Sexual harassment of employees or students at Texas Southmost College will not be tolerated and individuals engaging in such conduct shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the College. This policy shall be applied without regard to the gender of the employee involved.

## **Smoke and Tobacco Free Environment**

Texas Southmost College, including all its facilities and grounds, is a smoke and tobacco free environment. Smoking and/or using tobacco products is prohibited in all classrooms, laboratories, offices, conference rooms, hallways, parking lots, and all other rooms in all buildings of Texas Southmost College and on all property that is owned, leased, rented, or otherwise under the control of Texas Southmost College. Law enforcement officers will issue a citation to those in violation of the policy and repeated violations may result in appropriate disciplinary action by Texas Southmost College.

## Religious Holy Days

In compliance with Texas Education Code, Section 51.911, Texas Southmost College allows a student who is absent from class for the observance of a religious holy day to make up the class work for that day within a reasonable time after the absence. Students who intend to be absent for religious holy days must notify each instructor in writing by the 15<sup>th</sup> calendar day of the semester.

## Gainful Employment

Federal Title IV regulations require all institutions of higher education to disclose completion and cost information about non-degree programs leading to gainful employment in a recognized occupation. Information about gainful employment programs is available at <http://tsc.edu/index.php/academics/degrees-and-certificates.html>.

## Students Subject to Additional Tuition and Fees

Texas Southmost College is required by law to inform students that charges may be instituted by TSC and/or may be incurred when attending other Texas colleges and universities.

### Additional Charges for Students Who Exceed 27 Developmental Semester Credit Hours

Texas Southmost College will charge a higher tuition rate to students registering for college preparatory (developmental education) courses who have accumulated at least 27 hours of credit in developmental education courses.

### Three-Peat (Third-Attempt) Enrollment Ruling

Texas Southmost College will charge a higher tuition rate to students registering the third (3) or subsequent time for a course. The State will no longer subsidize a student's enrollment for the third (3) or subsequent attempt. Students should meet with an advisor to determine if they are repeating a course for the third (3) time.

## Records and the Annual FERPA Notification to Students

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
  - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
  - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
  - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
  - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
  - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
  - Accrediting organizations;
  - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
  - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
  - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, participation in officially recognized activities, photography, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information, individuals may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may use the Federal Relay Service at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/contacts/gen/index.html>.

Or contact at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

### **Student Right to Know-Graduation Statistics**

Federal law requires that all institutions of higher education disclose graduation rates to students, applicants and potential students. Graduation rates for TSC can be provided upon request to the Office of the Vice President of Student Services.

### **Student Right to Know-Crime Statistics**

The TSC Security Annual Report can be provided upon request to the Office of the Vice President of Finance & Administration.

### **The American Opportunity Tax Credit**

Students may be eligible to claim an American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOC) against their federal income taxes. The AOC may be claimed for the qualified tuition and related expenses of students enrolled at least half time in one of the first two years of postsecondary education when enrolled in a program leading to a degree, certificate or other recognized educational credential. Eligible tuition and fees are determined by the IRS and will be offset by any grants, scholarships or refunds received. More information is available at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

### **Lifetime Learning Credit**

Students may be eligible to claim a Lifetime Learning Credit against their federal income taxes. The Lifetime Learning Credit may be claimed for the qualified tuition and related expenses of students enrolled in eligible educational institutions. If a student is claiming a Hope Credit, none of that student's expenses for that year may be applied toward the Lifetime Learning Credit. More information is available at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

### **Selective Service**

Almost all males 18 through 25 years of age living in the United States must register with the Selective Service. Almost all non-citizens also are required to register, including illegal aliens, legal permanent residents, and refugees. If a male non-citizen takes up residence in the United States prior to his 26th birthday, he must register. Additional information can be found at the Office of Veterans and Military Services.

### **Solomon Amendment**

The Solomon Amendment allows military recruiters to request certain recruiting information from institutions about students. Such information is considered directory information under FERPA or data that would normally be collected by the institution. The 1995/1996 National Defense Authorization Act and the 1997 Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act gave branches of the military access to student information including student's name, address, telephone number, age or date of birth, class, and major. The Solomon Amendment requires institutions to cooperate and comply with requests from military recruiters for student information.

### **Administrative Withdrawal**

The College reserves the right to withdraw a student from class if, in the judgment of the College officials, such withdrawal is in the best interest of the student or the student body at large.

## Change of Address

Students who change their home address or mailing address are expected to notify the College of this change immediately using TSC Online, or by contacting the Office of Admissions and Records. Documentation may be required.

## Official Communications

A request that a student report to an administrative or faculty office may be made by letter, email or telephone. Failure to comply with such a request may result in disciplinary action. Each student is responsible for monitoring his/her TSC email account for official communications.

Communications to the entire student body are considered properly delivered when they are placed on official campus bulletin boards on TSC Online and/or on the TSC website. Each student is responsible for regularly checking the bulletin boards and websites.

## Use of Legal Name

Students are required to provide their full legal name to the College. Students' permanent records, including official transcripts, are required to identify students by their full legal name.

## Access to Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (PL93-380), commonly referred to as FERPA, provides that all records pertaining to a student that are maintained by the College must be open to inspection by the student and may not be made available to any other person without the written authorization of the student. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. A "student" is defined as a person who has registered and paid for one or more Undergraduate (UG) or Continuing Education (CE) courses and who remains enrolled through the official date of record for that term. The act allows but does not mandate the release of directory information. Under some circumstances, directory information may be released without the student's written permission. Examples of these circumstances include:

1. For legitimate educational purposes within TSC
2. To officials at an institution in which the student seeks to enroll
3. To comply with a court order or subpoena
4. In connection with a health or safety emergency if necessary to protect the student and others
5. To parents of a student who is a dependent for income tax purposes
6. If it is directory information
7. To parents of a student younger than 21 years of age if the disclosure concerns discipline for violation of the campus drug and alcohol policy.

## Discrimination Complaints

Any student who believes that he or she has been discriminated against on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability by the institution or its personnel may informally discuss the complaint with the Vice President of Student Services with the objective of reaching a reasonable solution. The Vice President of Student Services shall advise the student of his or her options in the situation and notify the Director of Human Resources.

If the aggrieved student believes the complaint has not been resolved at the informal discussion, he or she may submit a written complaint stating his or her name, the nature and date of the alleged violation, names of persons responsible (where known), names of any witnesses, and requested action within 30 working days of the date of the informal discussion, to the Vice President of Student Services. The Vice President of Student Services shall ensure that the aggrieved student's rights to appropriate due process procedures are honored. If a hearing is held, the Vice President of Student Services shall conduct the hearing. If the final decision is not to the student's satisfaction, he or she may appeal the decision to the Vice President of Student Services within ten working days of the receipt of the written decision.