STUDENTS’ RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS

1. The right of students to be treated with dignity, courtesy, and fairness.

2. The right to miss, without penalty, class meetings held at hours other than their regularly scheduled times.

3. The right to consult with an assigned advisor for a reasonable time to complete the advisement necessary for the student's present semester as well as for future planning.

4. The right to transfer core curriculum within the University system.

5. The right to consult with faculty outside of classroom time during regularly scheduled office hours or by appointment.

6. The right to have access to campus facilities of which use is required to complete course assignments and objectives, i.e., computer lab, any academic building.

7. The right to receive at the beginning of each semester, for each course, a syllabus which outlines course objectives and requirements. If changes to the syllabi are made during the semester, students should be informed of these changes in writing.

8. The right to receive access to any and all of their own personal records.

9. The right to have access to standards of grading and evaluation.

10. The right to be informed of the grade appeals process.

In order for the goals and objectives of the University to be realized, students are guaranteed certain freedoms and rights. At the same time, students must accept commensurate responsibilities. The principles and procedures contained herein have been adopted by Georgia Southwestern State University in order to create and perpetuate an optimal environment within which students may exercise fully their freedom and rights as citizens of the University community, and be protected against infringements on such freedoms and rights by other members of the University community, or by members of the society at large.

Georgia Southwestern State University students and members of the academic community enjoy the same freedom of speech, right to peaceful assembly, right of petition and other rights accorded by the Constitution of the United States of America and the State of Georgia. As members of the academic community, they also are subject to the obligations that accrue to them by virtue of this membership.
Georgia Southwestern State University is a community of persons from diverse cultural, racial, ethnic, educational and social backgrounds. The University community is unique in that its members strive to learn from one another in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Georgia Southwestern State University holds each member of this community to explicit expectations concerning respect for and behavior toward each other.

The members of the University community are individually and collectively responsible for their behavior and are fully accountable for their actions. They must take individual responsibility for their own learning and awareness about racism, sexism, and other forms of injustice. Bigotry is unacceptable within this university community. No one has the right to denigrate another human being on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, age, handicap, national origin, or any other factor. By their conduct and expressions, all members of the University community are expected to comply with the University policy of non-discrimination. Verbal, gestural, or written abuse, threats, harassment, intimidation or other forms of violence against any member or groups of members of this community will not be tolerated.

In this context, abuse of alcohol or illegal substances will not be accepted as an excuse, reason or rationale for such abuse, harassment, intimidation or violence. Ignorance or “it was just a joke” also is not an excuse for such behavior. Such behavior will be subject to serious disciplinary measures. All who study, teach, live and work in the Georgia Southwestern State University community are here by choice and are committed to these principles that are an integral part of the mission and goals of Georgia Southwestern State University.

Georgia Southwestern State University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action, educational institution and as such does not discriminate in any matter concerning students, employees, or services to its community on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, disability, age or national origin. The University is in compliance with all known federal, state and local regulations regarding discrimination. By their conduct or expressions, students are expected to comply with the University policy statement regarding non-discrimination.

In the event that a student has been convicted of a civil or criminal offense, the nature of which may present a clear and present danger of serious physical or mental harm to the student or to any other member of the University community or to university property, such student may be subjected to disciplinary action of a severe nature. Appeals to disciplinary action are outlined in other appropriate sections of this document. Disciplinary action may be taken against students if they behave in a manner that directly and adversely affects the interests of the University community. In such a case the student is liable to disciplinary action within the college community that is independent of formal charges which could lead to trial by legally constituted authorities outside the college community.

The right of the student to be secure against unreasonable searches by university officials shall not be denied. However, in the reasonable exercise of its supervisory duty and in carrying out the basic responsibility of the institution regarding discipline and the maintenance of an educational atmosphere, the University may, under the direction of those institutional employees authorized by the President, conduct inspection and reasonable searches in residence halls or other facilities operated by the University. Those university employees responsible shall authorize such
inspections and searches only when they have reasonable cause to believe that criminal law or university policies are being violated. Nothing in this section shall be held to prohibit entry into residence hall rooms for necessary janitorial maintenance, fire prevention and safety activities.

Civility Statement
Georgia Southwestern State University views civility primarily as the demonstration of respect for others, basic courtesy, reciprocity (treating others as we wish to be treated), and behaviors that create a positive environment in which to learn, work and co-exist. While no civility statement can guarantee considerate and principled conduct, the values set forth below represent institutional ideals and should serve as guideposts:

1. Respect for the work of all persons.
2. Courteous discourse (oral, verbal, non-verbal and electronic).
3. Honest interactions and utterances.
5. Integrity and keeping promises.
6. Commitment to our campus community philosophy: Access, academic development and degree completion, career preparation, workforce development, partnering and community outreach, and good citizenship development.
7. Open professional communications.
8. Diversity, professionalism and collegiality.
9. Free expression of views without a spirit of meanness or a desire to do harm.
10. Tolerance of differing points of view.
11. Avoidance of participation in cyber misconduct [stalking, bullying, or sexual harassment].

These ideals are consistently modeled by those in leadership positions - in the administration, staff, faculty, and student body - and should provide direction for all members of our GSW community.

Dress Standard
Dress and personal appearance should be in good taste, consonant with an adult, professional atmosphere and should reflect the student's respect for her/himself and for our university.

ACADEMIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS
Students have the right to learn and to inquire. They have a right to examine and discuss questions of interest, to take stands on issues of interest to them, and to support causes, by orderly means, which do not impede the collegial process of learning.

Recognized student organizations shall be allowed to invite and to hear any person of their own choosing for the purpose of hearing that person's ideas and opinions. However, the university president has final responsibility for campus events and activities and may affirm or cancel a speaker's registration. In cases of cancellation the president shall provide the organization with a written explanation for the decision.
Students shall have the right of protection against prejudiced academic evaluation. At the same time, students are responsible for maintaining the standards of academic performance established by the faculty for each course in which they are enrolled. Any student who believes that individual academic rights have been violated may seek redress by contacting the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs for direction in filing a formal grievance.

Individual students and recognized campus organizations have the right to publish and distribute written materials provided the material is identified by the name of the student or organization, in accordance with university regulations, and follows the guidelines established by the publications committee. Student publications shall be guaranteed the rights inherent in the concept of "freedom of the press."

In all academic matters, students at Georgia Southwestern State University have a right to be governed by justified regulations. They shall be free to take reasoned exception to data and views offered in the classroom and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, without fear of penalty. Students have a right to grades that represent the instructor's professional judgment of their performance in courses, a right to professional relationships with each instructor, and a right to protection against improper disclosure of personal information. Students also have a right to clearly stated information that would enable them to determine:

1. The general requirements for establishing and maintaining an acceptable academic standing;
2. Their own academic relationship with the University and any special conditions which apply;
3. The graduation requirements for any particular curriculum and major.

Students are responsible for classroom behavior that is conducive to the teaching-learning process for all concerned, and for meeting the requirements of a course of study according to standards of performance established by the faculty. Students who engage in any prohibited or unlawful acts that result in disruption of a class may be directed by the faculty member to leave the class for the remainder of the class period. Longer suspensions from a class, or dismissal or disciplinary grounds, shall be administered through the campus student conduct proceedings. The Vice President for Student Affairs, or his or her appointee, has the right to impose temporary sanctions pending hearings, as outlined in Appendix A. AA.

Students are expected to attend all classes. If an absence is necessary, the student is responsible for reporting this fact to the instructor. Each instructor will take whatever action he or she deems necessary. Faculty members are to have made their expectations concerning absences clear to the students enrolled in their classes, preferably in writing and within the first week of class.

**STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES from the American Council on Education**

The university and the Board of Regents have also adopted the following Statement on Academic Rights and Responsibilities from the American Council on Education:

*Intellectual pluralism and academic freedom are central principles of American higher education.*
education. Recently, these issues have captured the attention of the media, political leaders and those in the academy. This is not the first time in the nation's history that these issues have become public controversies, but the current interest in intellectual discourse on campus suggests that the meaning of these terms, and the rights and responsibilities of individual members of the campus community, should be reiterated.

Without question, academic freedom and intellectual pluralism are complex topics with multiple dimensions that affect both students and faculty. Moreover, America's colleges and universities vary enormously, making it impossible to create a single definition or set of standards that will work equally well for all fields of academic study and all institutions in all circumstances. Individual campuses must give meaning and definition to these concepts within the context of disciplinary standards and institutional mission.

Despite the difficulty of prescribing a universal definition, we believe that there are some central, overarching principles that are widely shared within the academic community and deserve to be stated affirmatively as a basis for discussion of these issues on campuses and elsewhere.

• American higher education is characterized by a great diversity of institutions, each with its own mission and purpose. This diversity is a central feature and strength of our colleges and universities and must be valued and protected. The particular purpose of each school, as defined by the institution itself, should set the tone for the academic activities undertaken on campus.

• Colleges and universities should welcome intellectual pluralism and the free exchange of ideas. Such a commitment will inevitably encourage debate over complex and difficult issues about which individuals will disagree. Such discussions should be held in an environment characterized by openness, tolerance and civility.

• Academic decisions including grades should be based solely on considerations that are intellectually relevant to the subject matter under consideration. Neither students nor faculty should be disadvantaged or evaluated on the basis of their political opinions. Any member of the campus community who believes he or she has been treated unfairly on academic matters must have access to a clear institutional process by which his or her grievance can be addressed.

• The validity of academic ideas, theories, arguments and views should be measured against the intellectual standards of relevant academic and professional disciplines. Application of these intellectual standards does not mean that all ideas have equal merit. The responsibility to judge the merits of competing academic ideas rests with colleges and universities and is determined by reference to the standards of the academic profession as established by the community of scholars at each institution.

• Government’s recognition and respect for the independence of colleges and universities is essential for academic and intellectual excellence. Because colleges and universities have great discretion and autonomy over academic affairs, they have a particular
obligation to ensure that academic freedom is protected for all members of the campus community and that academic decisions are based on intellectual standards consistent with the mission of each institution.

Other university policies regarding academic rights can be found in this excerpt from the Faculty Handbook:

**ACADEMIC FREEDOM FOR FACULTY**

The teacher is entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of his or her other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.

The teacher is entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing the subject, but he or she should be careful not to introduce into the teachings controversial matter (which – that) has no relation to the subject.

The university teacher is a citizen, a member of a learned profession, and an officer of an educational institution. When speaking or writing as a citizen, he or she should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but the university teacher's special position in the community imposes obligations. As a person of learning and an educational officer, he or she should remember that the public may judge the profession and the institution by his or her utterances. Hence, the university teacher should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraints, and should make every effort to indicate that he or she is not an institutional spokesperson.

A faculty member who believes he or she has been deprived of academic freedom by any member of the faculty or administration and has exhausted all informal means of resolving the difficulty may, in writing, file a grievance as provided in Section G, Article II of the Faculty Handbook. ([University Statutes, Article III, Section 8](#))

Faculty members should assure unimpeded intellectual diversity in their classes and avoid even the appearance that students who disagree with their views will in any way be subject to prejudiced academic evaluation. Student complaints to this effect will be addressed through the Academic Grievance Policy as stated below. If warranted, the faculty member may be subject to disciplinary action administered according to due process through the Office of Academic Affairs.

**Intellectual Property Policy for Georgia Southwestern State University**

1. **Purpose:**

A) To define the rights of creators of intellectual property and of the university in relation to such property.
B) By clearly defining and protecting the rights of creators of such property, to encourage its creation.

C) To define clearly the relative value of shared rights to such property, if such rights exist.

2. **Definitions:**

A) Intellectual Property (IP) is any creative work that is potentially protected by national and/or international patent or copyright law, whether such protection is sought or not. Ownership of the IP carries the implied sole right of deciding whether or not a patent or copyright shall be sought. Intellectual property should be understood to include, but no be limited to:

   a. Written works of any sort, whether existing on paper or in digital form.

   b. Computer programs or portions of programs, or other software, whether created for classroom, service, or scholarly purposes. Ownership of software and programs carries with it ownership of any instructional materials and/or manuals or documentation, logos, artwork, and so on, developed to accompany it.

   c. Artistic creations, whether visual, dramatic, or musical, as well as audio and/or video recordings (or digital equivalents) of existing works in the public domain, or for which rights to record have been acquired.

   d. Recorded lectures or performances, whether recorded in audio, video, or both formats, and whether created for classroom, service, or scholarly purposes.

   e. Filmstrips, overheads, charts, and any other visual aid, whether in tangible or digital form.

   f. Mask work for the creation of electronic circuitry.

   g. Novel organism varieties (such as plant varieties) that qualify for patent protection.

   h. Inventions and other creations that qualify for patent protection. Any trademarks and trade secrets that go along with such materials are part of the IP.

   i. Archival and other material created or collected in the process of creating the IP. These may include databases and other tabulations, specimens of fossil or living organisms, photographs, films, notebooks, rough sketches and drafts, voice recordings, and so on. Digital versions of any of these things are to be regarded the same as hard copies. In the case of materials that are required to be archived in a public institution (such as organism type specimens) the owner of the IP holds sole right to determine where they shall be archived.

B) **A creator** is an individual who conceives, develops, perfects, or makes some other substantial contribution to the existence of a piece of intellectual property. Co-creators are individuals who all work on a single piece of IP. **Co-creators** have the choice to retain individual rights to the IP, or to pool their rights and be considered an **institutional creator** collectively. It is incumbent upon co-creators to have an agreed upon policy in place to outline the individual rights among themselves, or within their institution, before beginning work on the IP. Such agreements can be modified as the work progresses if necessary and mutually agreeable. The university as a whole, or any sub-unit of the university (such as a school or department) can be a **plenary creator** if and only if that
institution conceives, funds, and hires labor specifically to bring the IP into existence ab initio.

3. **Determining ownership of IP.**

There exists a contractual agreement between the university and each of its employees and students that places certain responsibilities and rights on both. The following is written specifically about the relationship between the university and a faculty member, but the same or similar arguments hold true for any staff member or for any student who creates a piece of IP while at the university.

The university is expected to provide a certain level of tangible support to a faculty member. This level of customary or normal support includes, but is not necessarily limited to, office (and in appropriate cases) laboratory or studio space, office supplies, access to telecommunications and computer equipment, software, internet services, e-mail, disk memory for websites, laboratory supplies, photocopy machines and supplies, library (including e-library) access, interlibrary loan, computers, student assistants, access to secretarial services, and other such items that the faculty member is expected to use for normal teaching, service, and scholarly pursuits as part of her/his normal or customary duties. In exchange, the university profits from the students the faculty member teaches, the alumni he/she has previously taught, the prestige (at least) of his/her scholarly achievements, and the administrative value of her/his committee work, service work, and so on. Provision of these items does not entitle the university, or any part of the university, to any share in the ownership of IP created by the faculty member. It should be noted that the notion of “customary” will evolve over time. Today it is customary to provide a desktop computer for faculty. In five years a tablet might be the norm. The rule of thumb is that whatever is generally provided to most or all members of the faculty at the time a piece of IP is created is “normal and customary”.

A) **Sole ownership by an individual creator:**

Any creative work accomplished by an individual faculty member, or any IP that results from that work, is owned solely by the individual, even if that faculty member has used the customary support of the university in creating the IP. In the event that the creative work is carried out under a grant from an outside agency (which ordinarily would be granted to the institution and not the individual), the creator is still the sole owner of the IP. The university can claim no rights to it. This is true whether the grant carries indirect costs (“overhead”) or not. Acceptance of a grant on behalf of a faculty member implicitly agrees to these terms. The university may not make acceptance of a grant contingent upon being granted ownership or co-ownership, but may insist that all required labor for the creation of the IP, beyond the customary and normal, be covered in the grant funds, either as overhead or as direct costs.

B) **Co-ownership by co-creators:**

If the work leading to a piece of IP is collaborative among several individuals, those co-creators must have a clear, written agreement a priori about proportional sharing in the ownership, or agreement to function as an institutional owner. Disagreements at this stage are to be arbitrated by the IP committee. Of course any individual may enter into a priori
agreement with the university to share her or his ownership with the university, but is under
no obligation to do so.

The university may be considered a co-creator, but only if it has actively and purposely
agreed to provide (and does, in fact, actually provide) an unusual level of support, either by
providing additional funds, support staff, student assistants, release time, specially purchased
equipment or supplies, rare holdings of its library or museum which become a part of the IP
(as in digital reproduction) or otherwise provides an unusual level of support specifically for
the project. The request for such support must be made by the individual creator or co-
creators, and may not be offered or required by the university without such a request. In this
case the university cannot be the primary creator, nor can it hold a majority share in the
ownership of the IP.

C) Sole or primary ownership by the university as plenary creator:
There exists only one instance in which the university can be the plenary or the primary
creator/owner of a piece of IP. In this case, the university must conceive the idea of creating
the IP, must instigate work on the IP, must supply all funding during development of the IP,
and must hire labor ab initio whose entire function is to create the IP. Furthermore, if any
single new hire can be identified as the primary contributor of creative intellect to the work,
that individual must be considered a co-creator and co-owner. The proportional ownership in
this case is to be agreed a priori by mutual consent or by decision of the IP committee.
Existing faculty, students, or staff may not be recruited unless they are offered creator and
owner status commensurate with their contributions, and it would be expected that at least
one of them would become the primary creator and owner. If the university fully meets the
definition of plenary creator it may be sole owner of the resulting IP. At its discretion, the
university (as plenary creator) may offer individuals hired to do the labor a share in the
ownership of the IP, but is under no obligation to do so. Any sharing of ownership in this
case must have clear a priori written agreement about the proportional ownership of the IP.

4. Administration of the IP policy.

The university president shall appoint a committee (the IP committee) to oversee
administration of this policy. The chair of this committee shall be a faculty member whose
primary responsibility is teaching. Each college and division on campus shall be represented
by a faculty member, again with a primarily teaching appointment. One member shall come
from the Business and Finance office. Additional members may be appointed as applicable
to individual cases from other areas – staff, students, the Library, additional specialists from
certain departments or offices, etc.
This committee should ordinarily meet only to review an agreement about proportional
ownership of IP, to settle disputes about proper allocation in such an agreement, to settle
other disputes over the use of the IP, or to assure that the university has sought and has
received a proper co-ownership in any case where the university’s interest is a consideration.
All decisions made by the committee shall be made after formal consultation with the
creators of the IP, and are binding.
The Faculty Handbook includes a section on Grants and Contracts that includes certain
responsibilities of individuals that might be considered creators of IP. Anyone intending to
initiate a funded project that might lead to creation of IP should review this document and follow its requirements.

5. **Guidelines for distributing the university's income or share of income from a piece of IP.**

In the event that IP is created by an individual or a set of individuals without the university holding any vested interest in the IP, the university also has no responsibility for the legal and/or administrative aspects of the project, beyond those that a granting agency (if one is involved) ordinarily requires. If the university does hold any vested interest, then 20% of the annual gross income generated by that IP is to be held by the university to cover any and all legal and administrative costs, which the university thus assumes. If the university can demonstrate that its actual costs exceed this amount, the IP committee can allocate additional monies from the income to cover the additional costs. The remaining income (ordinarily 80% of the gross) is referred to hereafter as the net income.

As a guideline, it is recommended that the university’s share of the interest in income from IP be 15% of the net, if there is an individual primary creator or set of individual co-creators. If the university is the plenary creator, it is entitled to the entire net income unless it has agreed to share with co-creators recognized a priori, and has formally agreed upon the proportional ownership.

Because the university’s share in the income from a piece of IP results from the creative work of its employees, a substantial amount of the income should be employed stimulating additional creative work. As a guideline, any university income up to $500,000 per year should be used to support research, innovation, or new teaching materials and initiatives instigated by faculty members. Existing Faculty Development Grants or Faculty Instructional Grants, for example, might be enhanced, or new ways of supporting the creative work of faculty, students, and staff might be created. Of the funds thus dedicated, 15% should be allotted to the creator’s department (or departments, if there is more than one creator, in proportion to their ownership of the IP. An additional 15% should be allotted to the school(s) or division(s) of the creator(s) in the same way. The remaining 70% should be administered at the university level. Annual income above $500,000 reverts to the general budget of the university.

Variations from these guidelines are permissible upon review by the IP committee, which also mediates any disputes over the allocations from any piece of IP.

**STUDENT EXPRESSION OF OPINION**

The right of students to freedom of speech and to peaceable assembly shall not be infringed by the University or by any of its officials or committees. Expression of opinion may go beyond verbalization and may include dramatization of their beliefs to catch the attention of the academic community. Students who avail themselves of their right to free expression shall be limited, however, by the general principle that they may not invade the rights of other citizens;
nor may they by word or deed disrupt the normal functioning of the institution. Examples of such invasions and disruptions are as follows: attempts to exclude other members of the university community or guests of the University from free movement on campus or in buildings; destruction of property; public use of speech which, by current community standards, is considered to be obscene or is so patently abusive that it would fall into the category of "fighting words". 
Non-members of the University community shall not be permitted to engage in activities that disrupt, obstruct, or in any way interfere with the pursuits of teaching, learning, campus activities, or any other university process.

The Board of Regents Policy referencing the freedom of expression by members of the University community is found in the Regent's Policy Manual and is located in the Office of Student Life.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE
Georgia Southwestern State University is committed to prompt and fair resolution of student concerns. The Student Grievance Procedure is the vehicle for resolving issues through mediation. The purpose of this procedure is to resolve grievances pertaining to academic issues or other issues resulting from actions of faculty, staff and/or administrative members. The informal and formal procedures set forth in this document described below have been formulated to insure fairness and consistency in the University’s relations with its students. This procedure is intended to provide guidance and understanding of student rights and responsibilities in the grievance procedure. The burden of proof rests with the complainant.

A student who feels he/she has a grievance should first seek to resolve the complaints informally. The effort must include discussion with the specific faculty or administrative member involved (unless the grievance involves sexual harassment, in which case the student by bypass this step). A demonstration of good faith by all parties in attempting to resolve complaints should be paramount.

If the informal procedures fail to resolve the issue, the student may file a formal grievance. A student may discontinue the grievance process anytime during the informal or formal grievance procedure. A student may resume the grievance procedure again as long as it falls within the specified deadlines. Procedures set forth in this document relate to two types of grievances: 1) academic grievances, and 2) other student grievances. See Appendix I for Academic Grievance Procedures and Appendix K for Non-Academic Grievances.

CHILDREN ON CAMPUS
Students should not bring children to campus on a regular or prolonged basis. While the University encourages students and their families to take advantage of opportunities on campus, the University cannot insure the safety of children. Children must not be in classrooms, laboratories, instructional support areas or student life areas except in the context of programs conducted specifically for children. The University campus is not an appropriate environment for children, especially when there is no supervision.
POSTING OF INFORMATION
No signs or flyers are to be posted on building exteriors, glass or painted surfaces, wood or plaster walls, fixtures, or in any place or manner that defaces the surface used or makes the removal of the material difficult.

Notices may not be posted on stair rails or doors which block or obstruct one's view. Notices must carry the name of the organization or individual responsible for the removal of the notices. The University will allow no decorations within the circular drive in front of the Wheatley Administration Building or in front of the Education Center.

Signs must be properly placed and should not impair the safety of traffic or pedestrians.

Organizations and/or individuals should be careful not to harm any campus property (including trees, flower beds, sprinkler systems, etc.) when placing signs. Should rain, wind, or other forces render a sign unreadable, or cause disrepair, the sign should be removed by the organization/individual that placed it within 24 hours following the damage.

Signs/Letters should be placed no more than seven days in advance of the advertised event and removed by the first weekday after the event has taken place. Signs/Letters not removed by the designated time may be subject to removal by physical plant or another member of the University staff. Offending individuals or organizations may be assessed a $25.00 fine per incident.

The University’s input regarding the relocation and timing of posting advertisements may be required in certain circumstances.

The University reserves the right to remove, or to request the removal of, any signs/posters/advertisements.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF STUDENTS
As members of the University community, students are expected to act responsibly with regard to their financial obligations. Students that are delinquent in their financial obligations to the University, or to any other facet of the University community, shall not be allowed to register for the next semester, to reside in the university residence alls, to transfer their credits to another school, or to graduate from the university. Fulfillment of financial obligations shall restore students to their prior status as members of the university community, except that they shall suffer whatever academic losses that naturally result from their prior financial irresponsibility.

STUDENT MEDIA
Student media and the student press are valuable aids in establishing and maintaining an atmosphere of free and responsible discussion and of intellectual exploration on the campus. They are a means of bringing student concerns to the attention of the faculty and the institutional authorities, and of formulating student opinion on various issues on the campus and in the world at large.
The editorial freedom of student editors, managers, and directors entails corollary responsibilities to be governed by the canons of responsible journalism, such as the avoidance of libel, indecency, undocumented allegations, attacks on personal integrity and the techniques of harassment and innuendo.

All university-published, broadcast and financed student media should explicitly state on the editorial page that the opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the university or the student body.

**STUDENT NEWSPAPER AND GSW-TV16**

The Sou'Wester and GSW-TV16 (Hurricane Watch) are the official Georgia Southwestern State University student newspaper and television station, respectively. The tone and content of the media are essentially determined by the student editorial and/or production staff, with the cooperation of the faculty advisors. Hurricane Watch does operate all on-air programming in compliance with its “Code of Conduct for Programming”. Faculty, students, and administrators may provide advice and criticism but shall not exercise powers of veto or censorship over news or editorial content, except as indicated below. Should a member of the University community be aggrieved by material appearing in The Sou'Wester or on GSW-TV16, such person may file with the Vice President for Student Affairs a formal complaint indicating that the publication contains material which is obscene, immoral, indecent, lacking in good taste, or seriously detrimental to the University or to a member of the University community. The Vice President for Student Affairs may use his or her discretion in judging the merits of the complaint. Upon finding cause to believe that the complaint should be investigated further, he or she shall refer the matter to the Faculty Subcommittee on Student Publications. The subcommittee shall hold a hearing and recommend to the Vice President for Student Affairs (1) that the aggrieved member does not have a complaint of a serious enough nature that disciplinary action is warranted, or (2) that the aggrieved member does have a complaint of a serious enough nature and one or more of the following actions should be taken:

1. Suspension of publication or broadcast
2. Removal of the offending staff member(s)
3. Prohibition of further contributions by the offender(s)
4. An admonishment or reprimand
5. Printed or broadcast retractions or apologies.

If the aggrieved member of the University community is a faculty member and is dissatisfied with the Vice President for Student Affairs’ decision, the Vice President for Student Affairs may appoint an ad hoc committee to act in an advisory capacity.

**OTHER PUBLICATIONS**

Students shall have maximum freedom to express opinions and communicate ideas by writing, publishing, and distributing materials. However, students involved with publications other than those authorized by the university shall be bound by the same rules of good taste cited for official university publications (and by other conditions as may be defined in disciplinary recommendations of the Faculty Subcommittee on Student
Publications, or of some other appropriate college officials). The university shall not authorize such student publications, but the publications shall be properly registered with the Division of Student Affairs-Director of Campus Life. The responsibility for editorial or other content, finance, and distribution shall lie with the sponsoring individual, agency, group or organization. The name of the sponsoring individual, agency, group or organization shall be stated in each issue of the publication. Publications not in compliance with these specifications shall not be permitted to utilize any equipment or distribution facilities of the University.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT EDITORS, DIRECTORS, & CONTRIBUTORS TO STUDENT MEDIA

A. Editors/Directors shall strive to meet the standards of good journalism: sincerity, truthfulness, and accuracy are fundamental. News shall be printed/broadcast in a factual and unbiased manner.

B. Student media shall have the freedom to aim constructive criticism at organizations, procedures, and policies, but must refrain from criticizing individuals. The possible effect of any published/broadcast matter shall be carefully considered.

C. Student media shall refrain from using obscene language, pornographic pictures, or offensive slang.

D. Student media shall serve the interests of all students, not just isolated groups within the University community. Editors/Directors shall perform editorial duties with due concern for the ultimate welfare of all students and the institution.

REVISIONS TO RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES & CONDUCT CODE
If circumstances arise which warrant amendments or revisions to this document, such changes shall be made according to the following procedure:

A. In decisions concerning amendments and revisions of this document [Weathervane], such proposals may be directed to the Faculty Committee on Student Affairs, for consideration and adoption by majority vote of the Committee. Approval and final authority rests with the Vice President for Student Affairs and the President of Georgia Southwestern State University.

B. The Faculty Committee on Student Affairs shall consider amendments and revisions proposed by its own members, The Student Government, the faculty by formal motion adopted at a faculty meeting, the President of Georgia Southwestern State University, The Vice President of Student Affairs, or any group of students who may petition independently, in writing, provided the group equals in number twenty percent or more of the Fall Semester student enrollment for that year.