

# *Student Handbook*

## *2023-2024*



Academics  
Campus Life  
Expectations



SOUTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL FOR  
**SCIENCE+**  
**MATHEMATICS**





SOUTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL FOR

# SCIENCE+ MATHEMATICS

## Welcome to the 2023-2024 Academic Year!

At the South Carolina Governor's School for Science & Mathematics (GSSM), the overall well-being of our community is and always will be our primary focus. We are committed to developing the total person; focusing on our students' intellectual and emotional growth with safety and wellness guiding all we do. Our goal is to assist students in becoming responsible citizens and ethical leaders. Opportunities to support leadership and character development are offered throughout the GSSM experience. This educational journey for our students is greatly enhanced when GSSM families embrace academic and community standards and partner with GSSM educators who are committed to ensuring students' success.

The faculty and staff at the Governor's School are committed to promoting and encouraging the values of accountability, commitment, compassion, fairness, honesty, respect, responsibility, safety, trust, and wellness. As a member of this community, we ask that you embrace these ideals. To support student success and an effective partnership, students (and their parents/guardians) must be familiar with the policies, procedures, and practices that govern our community. In addition to academic talent, cooperation, consideration, and civility are necessary for success at GSSM and in life. Mutual respect and collective responsibility are the foundation of this community.

Several years ago, our president began to encourage us toward a culture of kindness. How we treat each other matters and how we interact and manage ourselves makes a difference. There will be times when we disagree, when we have to have difficult conversations, and when things may not go as we prefer, but responding with kindness will make the hard things more manageable and the outcome more favorable. This year, we encourage everyone to consider the **THINK** philosophy. Before acting and speaking, we are asking you to consider if your communication is **T**True, **H**elpful, **I**nspiring, **N**ecessary, and **K**ind.

All students and families are expected to read this handbook thoroughly and in its entirety. We also recommend that you discuss it as a family and contact us if you have questions. This document is the substructure of the three-prong partnership that exists among our students, their families, and the school; and several departments contribute to its content. Students are responsible for all of the material in this book, and they are expected and required to follow all guidelines and policies contained within its pages. These policies have been designed for students' benefit and safety, and they support the best possible learning environment and outcomes for all community members. All students are bound by the Honor Code of GSSM while enrolled at the Governor's School and when participating in school sponsored activities. This applies on campus and off.

This is an important document so keep it close for reference. Also note that GSSM reserves the right to revise, create, and clarify policies and procedures as warranted.

Best wishes as we begin the school year. Please do not hesitate to let us know how we can be of assistance to you.

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# **I. INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE**

GSSM was established by an Act of the South Carolina General Assembly in 1987. The first class of juniors (approximately 65 students from across the State) began their journey in the fall of 1988. We are now at full capacity in our residential program with the ability to accommodate 288 students.

This *Student Handbook* is the official manual for GSSM students and families. GSSM is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for its students. The policies and processes included are designed to support community and students' safety and well-being. The school's Honor Code and discipline system and responses are intended to assist students in safely and successfully navigating GSSM's rigorous program always mindful of their developmental needs. Our community standards strive to support the best possible learning environment and clearly communicate expectations for members of the campus community. The values of accountability, commitment, compassion, fairness, honesty, respect, responsibility, safety, trust, and wellness are important in students' development. As leaders in the GSSM community, our faculty and staff are expected to model the behavior we ask of our students.

The Governor's School encourages students to consider how our community standards facilitate opportunities that support their success. Discipline responses include appropriate consequences intended to encourage good judgment and sound decision making. Our community standards are designed to be educational and to encourage reflection.

## **A. Mission Statement**

The mission of the South Carolina Governor's School for Science & Mathematics (GSSM) is to seek out and advance our state's most academically motivated students, offering a transforming education in science, mathematics, and engineering that cultivates joy in learning and builds the confidence to engage as ethical leaders with the world's most significant issues.

## **B. Student Development Mission**

The Division of Student Development's mission is to establish and maintain a community and living environment that is safe, comfortable, enjoyable, and accepting of diversity with an emphasis on ethical decision making. The division supports GSSM's academic goals, while focusing on the wellness and holistic development of students; nurturing them intellectually, emotionally, and ethically. Through its various departments and activities, the units that comprise student development work to make the out-of-class experience as educationally purposeful as the in-class experience.

## **C. Curriculum and the Educational Experience**

Combining rigorous class work, directed laboratory investigation, and independent research, GSSM fosters in its students the ability to create and develop ideas. In a supportive and disciplined learning environment, students are challenged to think critically and independently. The school cultivates the uniqueness of each student while encouraging the development of a community of scholars. Students learn from and teach each other in an intellectual atmosphere, which encourages the synthesis of newly-acquired knowledge and individual experience.

While emphasizing intellectual growth and maturity in science and mathematics, the curriculum also encourages thoughtful development in the humanities. Students complete an independent mentored research and inquiry project focusing on authentic, academic research, which may include laboratory or field work for universities, industry, or government. They also have access to advanced laboratories for biology, chemistry, physics, and computer science. Independent study courses under faculty guidance are also available and economics and finance are highlighted through GSSM's latest academic initiative.

Academic excellence, enthusiasm, and dedication characterize the unique faculty (about 3/4 of whom hold doctorates in their field) of GSSM. Experienced in high school and college teaching, faculty and staff members recognize the value of creative, stimulating classroom experiences supplemented by individual contact

and support. Students discover to their amazement that science and humanities teachers echo each other in their demand for clear, logical thinking and in their emphasis on integrity and ethical concerns in academic pursuits. Faculty and staff continue to develop professionally as recipients of grants for summer study and research and as participants in professional conferences.

Administrative staff working with students also reflects concern for the whole student. For example, students receive professional guidance on finding colleges that are the right “fit” academically, personally, and socially. Students are guided through the college search process, how and when to apply for merit and need-based financial aid, and how to tie their college planning to their individual aptitudes and abilities. Career exploration is also a focus.

## D. Philosophy and Expectations

A residential school is a community. Contributions made by those who reside and work in such a setting will ultimately benefit everyone through the creation of a climate that promotes purposeful learning and living. GSSM was created to provide such an opportunity. This community of scholars allows all to contribute to and learn from others the joy of discovery and the stretching of one's limits. Each member of the GSSM community is expected to respect the rights and support the responsibilities of every other person here.

The living and learning environment of GSSM is based upon the following principles and expectations, which correspond with the **Civitas** values noted in the Statement of Principle:

1. **Privilege and Right:** Attending GSSM is a privilege and not a right. While we are glad you chose the Governor's School, this privilege must continue to be earned while in attendance. The two primary criteria for continuing at GSSM are academic performance and personal citizenship in the GSSM community, which includes compliance with community standards.
2. **Responsibility:** While students have the freedom to make a number of important individual choices, they must understand that with this freedom goes responsibility. At the most basic level, students are responsible for learning and teachers are responsible for teaching. Students are expected to prepare for, attend, and participate in all of their classes and labs. Students will be held accountable for the decisions they make and for their behavior in and out of the classroom, as well as off campus.
3. **Motivation and Commitment:** We expect each member of the community to strive for excellence in their academic, social, and personal development. Students are expected to exercise self-discipline and to meet their commitments, both in and out of the classroom.
4. **Fair Play and Civility:** Everyone at GSSM deserves to be treated with respect and courtesy. Concern for one's fellow students and mutual enforcement of standards of conduct are essential in the GSSM community.
5. **Safety and Security:** We expect students to take appropriate responsibility to care for themselves, their campus, their environment, and each other.
6. **Health and Hygiene:** We advocate good physical and mental health for all members of our community. Students are expected to exhibit care for personal hygiene and community cleanliness.
7. **Honor and Truth:** We expect students to be honest with themselves, with each other, and with faculty and staff members. **Integrity is critical in one's overall success.**
8. **Personal Accountability:** It is an expectation that members of the GSSM student body will exercise a high degree of personal responsibility and accept accountability for their choices. In their studies and in their conduct, students are expected to understand the correct course of action and to follow it without relying on excuses for falling short. **They should understand and practice ethical decision-making and seek guidance before acting when the best course is unclear.**



Students at this level are expected to meet all imposed deadlines without prompting. This responsibility is required just as much outside the classroom as it is inside. It pertains to all academic assignments, scheduled meetings and appointments, college and scholarship deadlines (internal and external), as well as areas of daily life. Failure to meet deadlines in any area of individual responsibility will always result in consequences that can vary from making a negative impression, a missed opportunity, a disciplinary sanction, or more formal penalties.

9. **GSSM Email:** We expect every member of the GSSM community to check and read their school email account regularly, at least twice a day.

## **E. Importance of Community**

At the South Carolina Governor's School for Science & Mathematics, we recognize the importance of building a community within our school to promote the success of the school and its members. Because of its residential environment, the community embodies values similar to those of a family. Such a community fosters consideration, compassion, collective responsibility, support, and personal accountability. Communication within the community, leading to transparency in the functioning of the school, allows for a sense of trust and mutual understanding among the students, faculty, staff, and administration. These goals cannot be compromised, as above all, the success of the student in academics, the quality of education, and cooperation between the educator and the students command priorities of all associated with the school. With the help of all members, regardless of race, color, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, geographic location, religion, and/or other distinguishing expressions, we show respect for each other as we show respect for ourselves. As we consider diversity at GSSM, integrity should guide us in our department and interactions. Mutual respect requires that we acknowledge the reasonable requests of others and that we understand that our rights should not impose on those of other community members. GSSM welcomes diversity and is inclusive within the context of a residential high school with underage students.

## **F. Honor Code and Honor Statement**

Each member of the Governor's School community is responsible for acting with honor and integrity in every facet of academic and residential life. Every member benefits from the self-respect and pride of living in an environment of honorable people whose focus is on learning. Individuals within the community have the obligation to invoke personal responsibility and insist upon a similar manner of conduct from others. Certain actions are considered a breach of this mutual trust inherent within the system. Students are expected to adhere to the GSSM Honor Code at all times. Faculty may also require that the GSSM Honor Statement be included on assignments and modify it to fit assignments. For a full account of the role of academic integrity at GSSM, see the appropriate appendix in the most recent version of the *GSSM Course Catalog*. For a description of the consequences of violating the GSSM Honor Code, either academically or in campus life, see the Discipline and Honor Code Violations section of this handbook.

1. **Honor Code**  
*I will not commit any act of lying, cheating, stealing, academic dishonesty, vandalism, illegal Intervisitation, or action in violation of South Carolina or federal law (e.g. possession or use of alcohol or illegal substances). If I witness a violation of the honor code, I am encouraged to report the violation to a member of the administration, faculty, or staff.*
2. **Honor Statement**  
*On my honor, I have neither given nor received help on this test/assignment.*

## II. STUDENT RECORDS, RESIDENCY, AND FEES

*The Governor's School is committed to operating within state and federal laws regarding student records and ensuring that families understand our positions on these matters. Students who attend GSSM must be residents of South Carolina. There are also policies that govern the way records are managed, processes for withdrawing from the school, and fees and deposits. These important topics will be discussed in this chapter.*

### A. Notification of Rights Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to students' educational records. These rights are outlined below:

1. Parents and eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of a written request made to the President of GSSM. The request must identify the specific record(s) they wish to inspect. The President will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. Parents or an eligible student have the right to request the amendment of the student's education record that is believed to be inaccurate or misleading. They should write the President of GSSM, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. Should the President of GSSM decide not to amend the student's record, the parents or eligible student will be notified of their right to a hearing regarding the request for an amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. Upon request, GSSM will disclose education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent, the parent or an eligible student has the right to have personally identifiable information not disclosed.
  - a. If requested, GSSM will disclose without parental or eligible student consent, Directory Information (student's name and home address, photograph, weight and height of athletes, previous schools attended, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, and awards and activities) to appropriate sources unless the parent or eligible student withdraws consent to disclose Directory Information within 30 days of the issuance of this notice. Withdrawal of consent must be in writing.
  - b. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by a District or school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board of GSSM, a person or company with whom the District or school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing their tasks. Unless consent has been withdrawn, **directory information will be shared with the GSSM Foundation.**
  - c. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill their professional responsibility.

- d. A parent or eligible student has the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by GSSM to comply with the requirements of FERPA. Such complaints should be forwarded to:
- Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

## **B. Policy for Maintenance, Retention and Disclosure of Student Records**

The institution's President is the legal custodian of all student records for the Governor's School for Science + Mathematics. School records for each student shall include, at a minimum, the Student Permanent Record file and the Student Discipline Record.

Information in the Student Permanent Record file shall include the student's name, permanent address, date of birth, Social Security number, name(s) of parent(s), academic records of GSSM and sending high school (showing courses taken, grades, standardized test information, type of diploma issued, graduation or separation date). This file may also include other types of educational records or material such as photographs, health and immunization records, birth certificate (copy), admission application, general correspondence to/from parents/guardians and school personnel, and legal documents.

Information in the Student Discipline Record file shall be cumulative and will be maintained separately from the Student Permanent Record file while the student is enrolled at GSSM.

Upon receipt of a request for records from a secondary or post-secondary institution or entity, the Student Permanent Record shall be sent. Information from a Student Discipline Record shall be sent only upon receipt of a specific request from a secondary or post-secondary institution to which the student has applied.

The educational records of students shall be maintained pursuant to state and federal law, specifically, the Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA). The retention of students' records shall be in accordance with the requirements set forth in Title 30, Public Records, S.C. Code Ann. sect. 30-1-10 et seq. (1991 & Supp.) and S.C. Code of Regulations sect. 12-906.1 et seq. (1996 & Supp.) and federal law, where applicable.

**In accordance with State Law, records pertaining to expulsions from GSSM shall be retained for 75 years following separation from GSSM. Records pertaining to suspensions are retained for one year after the date of separation from GSSM. All other records in the Student Discipline Record file are destroyed upon graduation.**

## **C. State and United States Residency Requirement**

It is the policy of GSSM to consider only students whose parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have established permanent legal residency in South Carolina by January 1 of the school year in which the student applies for admission. Applicants must meet all other admission criteria of the school. The parent/guardian of a student must still be a legal resident of South Carolina and the United States on the date the student enters school for their junior and senior year. **A copy of a current state issued driver's license or identification card and/or utility bill must be provided as proof of residency.** The parent/guardian must notify the school immediately of any change in residency.

Legal residency is established when one's principle domicile is maintained in the state. One is considered a legal resident by establishing physical presence in a location determined as their permanent home for a period of indefinite duration.

## **D. Fees and Deposits**

GSSM's Board of Trustees and the school's administration are committed to the policy that **"No**

**student will be denied entrance to GSSM because of an inability to pay the Student Fee.”  
Financial assistance is available to those who qualify.**

In order to maintain its high-quality programs, GSSM students pay an annual Student Fee which goes directly to help offset meal expenses for each student. This fee, combined with a subsidy from the school to make up the difference in providing meals, is reviewed and set annually by GSSM’s Board of Trustees.

The exact amount of the annual Student Fee, along with time of payment and Financial Aid options, based on family income, will be made available before the start of each school year. Financial Aid is based on the Federal Government’s Free and Reduced Lunch family income scale.

Please remember: No student will be denied participation in the GSSM residential program for inability to pay fees. Other GSSM fees may be assessed for particular activities or special services.

### **E. Room Security Deposit**

GSSM requires a \$100 room security deposit. Any damages incurred during the year(s) will be itemized and billed. The deposit, less any unpaid expenses for damages, etc., will be refunded to the parent of a student not returning to GSSM in the fall semester.

Damages to student rooms and suites will be charged to the occupants of the room or suite. All damages done on the hallways and to lounges will be charged to the residents of that hall. Damages to stairwells will be charged to the residents of the respective sides. All common areas downstairs (including, but not limited to, the lobby, dining hall, and classrooms) will be assessed to the entire student body.

A 24-hour time period for investigation and for the individual(s) responsible for the damages to come forward will be allowed before charges are assessed. If no one accepts responsibility for the damages, appropriate assessments will be charged. Most damage billing will be deducted from the \$100 security deposit each student paid upon enrolling at GSSM. However, some charges may be collected immediately as a form of restitution for intentional damages or those beyond normal “wear and tear.” Students will be notified when damage charges are assessed. Parents will receive a statement of room deposit deductions at the end of each year from the Business Office.

### **F. Withdrawing from GSSM**

Occasionally, a student may wish to withdraw from GSSM. The decision to withdraw concludes all activities sanctioned by GSSM, including Research and January interim courses. Since such a decision is an irrevocable one, it should be thoroughly reviewed. Anyone wishing to withdraw must:

1. Review the matter with the Vice President for Academic Affairs and/or the Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth.
2. Return all library books, textbooks, pay any outstanding fees, and return their room key and identification card to the Residence Life Coordinator who is on duty.
3. Complete the withdrawal form available from the Vice President for Academic Affairs and/or the Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth before leaving the campus.

### III. Academics

GSSM is committed to the school's mission of cultivating the joy of learning and building ethical leaders. Students at the Governor's School have the privilege of being taught by faculty who are passionate and ignite that passion in the classroom. Students interact with their teachers outside of classes during office hours and by individual appointments. The comprehensive curriculum and teachers' commitment to working with students to ensure success in their classes are important features of a GSSM education.

Collaboration with others in the school and local community is also important in the GSSM Journey. To support the school's mission, academic departments work with others across the campus to encourage a holistic educational experience fostering intellectual and principled excellence.

#### A. Academic Calendar

To see the current *Student Edition* of the **GSSM Academic Calendar**, please go to:

<https://www.scgssm.org/sites/default/files/Student%20Academic%20Calendar%202023-24%206.1.23.pdf>

#### B. Academic Requirements

GSSM awards both State of South Carolina and GSSM diplomas. To remain enrolled at GSSM and receive a GSSM diploma, students must fulfill the following requirements:

- be enrolled in a minimum of five (5) courses during each of the fall and spring semesters.
- earn a semester grade of C or better (70 or above) in each of the courses taken while at GSSM during the fall, interim, spring, and summer terms.
- earn a minimum of five (5) GSSM credits during their junior year and another five (5) GSSM credits during their senior year (*Note: GSSM courses offered for credit during the summer or interim will count toward graduation requirements but will not count toward the minimum of five (5) GSSM credits that must be earned each year*).
- complete satisfactorily the junior and senior seminars and the community engagement requirement

The table below outlines the minimum number of credits that must be completed for a GSSM diploma and a State of South Carolina diploma. Except for the Research and Inquiry experience and January Interim requirements, course credits may be earned before enrolling at, or while attending GSSM.

**Credits** are defined as the following: 0.5 credits for a semester course, and 1.0 credits for a year-long or two-semester course. If one high school unit is awarded for a semester-long dual enrolled course, GSSM reserves the right to review the curriculum to deem if the material covered meets the GSSM 1.0 credit (i.e. year-long or two-semester course) requirement listed in the table below.

Graduation Requirement	Credits
Science with a Lab ( <i>must include 1.0 credit biology, chemistry and physics at the honors level or higher</i> )	3.0
Mathematics ( <i>must include 1.0 credit of calculus at the honors level or higher</i> )	4.0 – 5.0
Computer Science	1.0
English/Language Arts ( <i>Must include ENG 111 and ENG 112, taken junior year. ENG 111 and ENG 112 together count as one credit. ENG 205 and ENG 201 together count as one credit</i> )	4.0
Foreign Language ( <i>in the same language</i> )	2.0
US History	1.0
US Government	0.5
Economics	0.5
Other Social Studies	1.0
Physical Education/ROTC	1.0

Research and Inquiry Experience	0.5
Fine Arts	1.0
GSSM January Interim Course	1.0
Electives	2.5 – 3.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Additional Graduation Requirements and Notes</b>	
<b>Research and Inquiry Program</b> Completion of a GSSM-approved, mentored research and inquiry program is required for all students. Most students complete this requirement through RES401 involving six weeks of mentored summer research & completion of a portfolio. This requirement may also be completed through a course with the research and inquiry designation.	Required for all students to earn a grade of C or better (70 or above). Research and Inquiry Designated Courses: - RES401   - BIO401   - CHE401 - CHE401   - MAT401   - EGIN401
<b>Junior Seminar Series (one hour per week per seminar)</b> Fall: <i>Life and Leisure</i> and <i>Academic Transition Seminars</i> Spring: <i>College Planning Seminar I</i> and a three-part seminar series	Required for all juniors to attend and pass.
<b>Senior Seminar Series (one hour per week per seminar)</b> Fall: College Planning Seminar II	Required for all seniors to attend and pass.
Fall: RES401 Mentored Summer Research & Inquiry (until Annual Research Colloquium)	Required for students enrolled in RES401 to attend and earn a grade of C or better (70 or above).
<b>Community Engagement</b>	All students must participate based on outlined expectations

Note: In order to receive a South Carolina high school diploma, the State requires that each student take several state assessments.

While at GSSM students are required to take a college readiness exam (either the ACT or SAT) during the school days assigned by GSSM. Students must also take the work readiness assessment on the school day assigned. A student who takes AP US History while at GSSM is required to compete the End-of-Course Examination Program test for US History and the Constitution. A student who has not completed their biology requirement before attending GSSM must complete biology at GSSM and take the End-of-Course Examination Program test for Biology 1 and Applied Biology 2.

### **C. Academic Eligibility to Continue at GSSM**

At the end of any semester, including interim or summer, a student who earns a semester grade of D or lower (69 or below) in any course will be required to return to their home high school to complete the remainder of their high school courses.

If there are extenuating circumstances, a student may appeal to the Academic Review Committee. If a student chooses to appeal, the appeal must be sent via email to the Vice President for Academic Affairs via email within five (5) days after the semester grades are communicated to the student and their family by

email, phone call, or regular mail. Parents or guardians are welcome to appeal along with their student. The Academic Review Committee will respond to the appeal and render a decision within five (5) days of receiving the appeal.

#### **D. Research & Inquiry Program**

One of the most distinctive learning experiences for GSSM students is student participation in a mentored research experience. Most students spend six weeks during the summer following their junior year conducting research under the mentorship of a professional researcher at a university, field station, government facility, or industry partner. All students, with the support of their GSSM faculty research advisor, complete a graded research portfolio to communicate their research experience and results. Students present their research presentations at both the GSSM Annual Research Colloquium and the South Carolina Junior Academy of Science.

#### **E. Community Engagement**

The Governor's School for Science & Mathematics views the Community Engagement service requirement as an appropriate and essential response on the part of GSSM students to the generosity of the state in providing an exceptional GSSM education. Service, whether within the context of the residence hall, faculty/staff assistance, or community, is emerging as one of the examples of maturity sought in college admissions and has become an important requirement of many public and private secondary schools.

Satisfactory completion of this service is a GSSM graduation requirement. Students are required to complete 50 hours during their junior and senior years for a total of 100 hours during their time at GSSM. These hours can be earned through participation in a number of approved service activities. Students should be as faithful to community engagement as they are to their classes and other commitments. The Community Engagement program is administered through the Office of the Dean of Students. Questions regarding this requirement should be directed to this administrator or their designee.

#### **F. January Interim**

As part of the GSSM graduation requirements, students are required to enroll and successfully complete two interim courses, one during their junior and senior years. The courses vary in content and cost.

Please note the following related to Interim fees:

- If a student registers for an interim course that has a fee, the student and their family is responsible for payment in full to participate in the course.
- If a student does not pay the fee, they will be moved to an interim class that has availability and no fee.
- If a student withdraws or is dismissed from GSSM prior to or during interim, the student remains responsible for paying the course fee, and fees already paid will not be reimbursed. Refunds will only be given as the tour company's cancellation policy allows.
- Students who participate in interim courses based on travel follow payment plans set by the GSSM trip sponsor and/or the outside educational tour company organizing and coordinating the travel. Cancellation terms vary by company. Typically, the closer to the date of departure, the less money a student who cancels will be refunded. Refunds are only considered for limited reasons. Students may (and are encouraged to) purchase travel insurance to give them more, though still limited, cancellation options. GSSM faculty and staff will provide detailed and specific information about the finances associated with the Interim travel courses they are coordinating.
- Students who are no longer enrolled at GSSM may not participate in interim courses or travel as a part of Interim courses.

## **G. Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is “a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to six fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage” (International Center for Academic Integrity website). GSSM is a close-knit community built on these values. Because developing ethical leaders is a core component of a GSSM education, we expect students to uphold high ethical standards. A lack of academic integrity prevents students from learning and undermines our community, and therefore, is strictly prohibited. GSSM’s academic integrity policy covers all school-related academic work, both in and out of class.

### **Remember:**

1. Each GSSM syllabus gives specific guidance on academic integrity in that course. A syllabus is a contract for every class between the students and the teacher.
2. Students are responsible for understanding how to act with academic integrity in all their academic work. If they have questions or are unsure if they are violating academic integrity, they need to ask their teacher for clarity.
3. Students may not communicate with others or consult resources during in-class quizzes, tests, or exams unless specifically allowed by the instructor. Prohibited resources include textbooks, electronic devices, notes, or personal formula sheets unless specifically permitted by the teacher.
4. Plagiarism is prohibited. Plagiarism consists of taking someone else’s work—words, images, and/or ideas—and passing them off as your own. Patch plagiarism, copying sections of a source while changing a few words, is also prohibited. When in doubt, cite your source. If you are confused about whether you are plagiarizing, ask your teacher.
5. Students may not use the work of GSSM alumni or other students.
6. Without permission, students may not obtain, consult, transmit, or share copies of quizzes, tests, projects, or prompts from current or previous years, physically or electronically. Students may not share or post class materials or assignments online.
7. Students may only collaborate on work when permitted by their teacher.
8. Teachers, working closely with their students, are the primary enforcers of academic integrity. When teachers discover that a student has violated academic integrity, they will discuss the incident with the student and then decide the consequences for the offense. In enforcing academic integrity, teachers will always work to be fair and consistent to all students and to help students learn from their mistakes. See the Discipline and Honor Code Violations section of this handbook for a full explanation of GSSM’s process for dealing with violations of academic integrity.

### **Academic Integrity and Artificial Intelligence**

Artificial intelligence is a rapidly evolving field that can transform our world, positively and negatively. AI can be a powerful tool, but it can also be a powerful temptation for students to submit work that isn’t their own. As we all work to understand how AI is impacting teaching and learning, students must work closely with their individual teachers to understand and follow when and how it is permissible for them to use AI programs in doing their academic work.

If a student violates academic integrity using AI programs, they will be held accountable by their teachers. Just as with all academic integrity, different fields and different teachers will have different policies regarding AI and academic integrity. Ignorance, as always, is no excuse. If a student doesn’t understand what they are allowed to do, they must ask their teacher.

### **Meeting the High Expectations of Being a Govie (adapted from the MIT website)**



Plagiarism	
<b>Do</b>	<b>Don't</b>
Cite the words or ideas of others, if you use them. Cite your own work if you use it in another assignment.	Purchase papers or have someone write a paper for you.
Undertake research honestly and credit others for their work.	Copy words, data, or ideas without citing your source.
Unauthorized Collaboration	
<b>Do</b>	<b>Don't</b>
Trust the value of your own intellect.	Collaborate with another student or use internet resources beyond the extent specifically approved by the instructor.
Cheating	
<b>Do</b>	<b>Don't</b>
Demonstrate your own achievement.	Copy answers from another student; don't ask another student to do your work for you. Don't fabricate results. Don't use electronic or other devices during exams.
Accept corrections from the instructor as part of the learning process.	Alter graded exams and submit them for re-grading.
Do original work for each class.	Submit projects or papers that have been done for a previous class.
Facilitating Academic Dishonesty	
<b>Do</b>	<b>Don't</b>
Showcase your own abilities.	Allow another student to copy your answers on assignments or exams. Don't take an exam or complete an assignment for another student. Don't share information about a test with other students until they have been returned to everyone.

Very often, when students fall prey to challenges around academic integrity, it is because they feel desperate. In an effort to avoid the pitfalls of academic dishonesty, note the following:

***Don't be afraid to ask for help!***

- We all need it from time to time. Asking for help is a sign of a mature, successful student.

***Talk to your teacher***

- Make an appointment to **talk to your teacher** and use their office hours. GSSM teachers are here because they are committed to helping students succeed.
- **Ask your teacher for an extension.** Teachers would much rather give you an extension or accommodate you in some other way than see you violate academic integrity.

***Get academic support***

- Issues with academic integrity often stem from struggles with time management, organization, and study skills. The Center for Academic Success can help with all three.
- For students struggling with content knowledge, our tutoring labs staffed with peer tutors are here to help.

### **Ask for advice**

- Talk to your academic advisor, who can provide insight and guidance and help you work with your teachers.
- Ask your RLC's, your RA's, your classmates, and friends for help. We're all here for each other.

### **Manage your time**

- Use what you learn in your Academic Transition Seminar to help you plan a schedule, balance your priorities, and save time. Good time management will help you stay productive, on track, and reduce stress.

### **Give your mind a break**

- Students often put pressure on themselves to succeed. Even if you're used to getting A's, that might not happen at GSSM; and that's okay. When you are feeling overwhelmed, it is important to take a break from your academic focus.
- Play a sport or do something physical. Our athletic staff offers many options.
- Be creative. GSSM offers many options for being artistic.
- Do something fun with friends. Our student development staff works with students to offer all kinds of activities you can be a part of to take a break from your work.
- Talk with our counseling staff about being stressed and to find out other healthy ways to deal with stress.

### **Consequences for Academic Integrity Violations**

1. When teachers discover that a student has violated academic integrity, they will discuss the incident with the student and determine the consequences for the offense. In enforcing academic integrity, teachers will always work to be fair and consistent to all students and to help students learn from their mistakes.
2. The teacher may choose to resolve the incident without a formal incident report if they think that is the best way for the student to learn from it. For these minor incidents, teachers can give students verbal or written warnings, reduce their grades, and/or require them to revise, rework, or retake written work or an exam. Teachers will keep records of all incidents involving academic integrity even if they do not write a formal incident report for them.
3. If the teacher considers the incident more serious, they will **complete an academic integrity incident report** and send it to the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction and the Dean of Students. At this point, the level of the charge is at the discretion of the instructor. The incident report will describe what happened, any supporting facts for the existence of a violation, and the penalty for the incident. The report will also outline how the teacher has worked with the student to understand the consequences of their actions and a plan for moving forward in the class.
4. Incident reports have three levels:
  - a. **A Level 1 incident related to academic integrity** is "failing to follow instructions" as outlined on the class syllabus and/or communicated by the teacher. As referenced in the *Student Handbook*, GSSM makes some allowances for students as they acclimate to the school and, in this case, the rigor. Minor infractions should be minimal once students adjust. Penalties may include a written reprimand and/or warning.
  - b. **A Level 2 incident** is "cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and other acts of academic dishonesty." Penalties may include a zero on the assignment. Faculty may also

give the student an opportunity to re-submit the assignment.

- c. **A Level 3 incident** occurs when a student commits a second Level 2 academic integrity offense or when a violation is judged to be egregious. Level-three incidents are referred to the Judicial Council for review. Penalties may extend to expulsion from the program. See the Judicial Council section of this handbook for an explanation on Judicial Council procedures.
5. **Level 2 or Level 3 incidents will also be sent to the student's parents** in keeping with the GSSM Discipline and Honor Code.
  6. The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will review the incident report and student's permanent record to determine if a greater penalty is merited based on previous offenses. Completed academic dishonesty incident reports and subsequent actions will be placed in a student's permanent record. The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will also meet with the student to help them understand the consequences of their actions and to work on moving forward productively.
  7. Appeals:
    - a. Students may appeal to the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction if they believe that they did not violate academic integrity. The Dean will consult with the faculty member, the chair of the department, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs before deciding the appeal.
    - b. Students may appeal grade penalties by using the GSSM grade appeal process found in this handbook.

Students may appeal Judicial Council decisions using the appeal process outlined in the Discipline and Honor Code Violations section of *The GSSM Student Handbook*.

## H. Grade Appeal Policy

### Purpose

Faculty members have the right and responsibility to assign grades based on their selected methods.

These methods must follow professional and disciplinary standards, must be clearly communicated to everyone in the class, and must be equally applied to all students. Faculty members should maintain careful records of all grades and policies and ensure that the syllabus is thorough and clear.

GSSM students have the right to appeal any grade. They should be aware, however, that clear evidence is needed to successfully appeal a grade. Belief that an assignment or text was too difficult is not grounds for an appeal. A student must have clear evidence that a faculty member erred or violated a specific policy in assigning the grade, or that they treated the student in a prejudicial or unfair manner.

### Talk to Your Teacher First

GSSM students are encouraged to work directly with their teachers to resolve disputes or misunderstandings. Many grade disputes can be resolved without students filing a formal appeal. If a student feels that they have received a grade in error or unfairly, the student must contact their teacher by email **within five (5) business days** of the grade being posted or distributed. The student should include the following in their email: evidence to support the appeal and the outcome the student seeks. The student and faculty member should meet to discuss the issue within **five (5) business days** of the student contacting the faculty member. If the matter is resolved, the faculty member will write an email to the student summarizing the terms of their agreement.

## Formal Resolution

If an initial process between a student and faculty member does not resolve the dispute, a student may proceed to a formal appeal.

1. The student should first send a written appeal to the faculty member within **five (5) business days** of first meeting with the faculty member that states again their reasons and evidence for the appeal to include a statement of why the matter was not resolved during the initial process. The faculty member will respond in writing within **five (5) business days** to the student's written appeal.
2. If the student is not satisfied with this response, the student may appeal, within **five (5) business days**, to the department chair of the faculty member. If the faculty member is the department chair, the student may appeal to the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction.
3. The student must also present a written appeal to the department chair. The department chair will read the faculty member's written response. The department chair, the student, and the faculty member will then meet within **five (5) business days** after the student's written appeal has been received by the department chair. Students may have an additional faculty or staff member of their choosing at this meeting if they wish. The department chair will respond in writing to the student's written appeal within **five (5) business days** after the meeting. This response will go to both the student and the faculty member.
4. The department chair is the final arbiter of a grade appeal based on a question of academic content. If the dispute remains unresolved, however, a student may ask the Vice President for Academic Affairs for an academic hearing as a final appeal within **five (5) business days** of receiving the department chair's response. This final appeal must state in writing what procedure the faculty member has violated and/or how the student has been treated unfairly.
5. Within **five (5) business days** of receiving this written request for an academic hearing, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will create an academic response team composed of three faculty members. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will appoint one faculty member from the teaching faculty at large and one faculty member each from lists of three faculty submitted by the student and the faculty member who is involved in the appeal. None of these faculty members shall be members of the academic department of the faculty member whose grade is being disputed.
6. The academic response team will review written statements and information supplied by the student, faculty member, and department chair or dean. Both the student and the faculty member have the right to appear in person before the academic response team. The team may investigate further as is appropriate and may seek assistance or information from others. All discussions and submitted written documents will be confidential.
7. After this review, the academic response team will render a decision regarding the appeal within **five (5) business days**. This decision is the final step in the grade appeal. The academic response team will inform the student, the faculty member, and the department chair or dean of their decision in writing. Their decision will include the relevant findings of fact, conclusions, and reasons for the decision.

Note: Records of grade appeals will be kept by the department chair of the faculty member whose grade was appealed.

## Other Academic Appeals

Students may also have disputes with faculty members that do not directly involve grades. Appeals related to academics but unrelated to grade appeals will follow the same general procedures as outlined above for grade appeals. The appeal must be made in writing to the instructor, with a copy to the department chair or the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction, if the faculty member is a department chair. If the appeal is not re-

solved by working with the faculty member, the student may appeal to the department chair, and finally the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

## I. Grade Point Average Equivalencies

<b>South Carolina Uniform Grading Scale Conversions</b>				
<b>Numerical Average</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>College Prep Weighting</b>	<b>Honors Weighting</b>	<b>AP/IB/Dual Credit Weighting</b>
100	A	5.000	5.500	6.000
99	A	4.900	5.400	5.900
98	A	4.800	5.300	5.800
97	A	4.700	5.200	5.700
96	A	4.600	5.100	5.600
95	A	4.500	5.000	5.500
94	A	4.400	4.900	5.400
93	A	4.300	4.800	5.300
92	A	4.200	4.700	5.200
91	A	4.100	4.600	5.100
90	A	4.000	4.500	5.000
89	B	3.900	4.400	4.900
88	B	3.800	4.300	4.800
87	B	3.700	4.200	4.700
86	B	3.600	4.100	4.600
85	B	3.500	4.000	4.500
84	B	3.400	3.900	4.400
83	B	3.300	3.800	4.300
82	B	3.200	3.700	4.200
81	B	3.100	3.600	4.100
80	B	3.000	3.500	4.000
79	C	2.900	3.400	3.900
78	C	2.800	3.300	3.800
77	C	2.700	3.200	3.700
76	C	2.600	3.100	3.600
75	C	2.500	3.000	3.500
74	C	2.400	2.900	3.400
73	C	2.300	2.800	3.300
72	C	2.200	2.700	3.200
71	C	2.100	2.600	3.100
70	C	2.000	2.500	3.000
69	D	1.900	2.400	2.900
68	D	1.800	2.300	2.800

67	D	1.700	2.200	2.700
66	D	1.600	2.100	2.600
65	D	1.500	2.000	2.500
64	D	1.400	1.900	2.400
63	D	1.300	1.800	2.300
62	D	1.200	1.700	2.200
61	D	1.100	1.600	2.100
60	D	1.000	1.500	2.000
59	F	0.900	1.400	1.900
58	F	0.800	1.300	1.800
57	F	0.700	1.200	1.700
56	F	0.600	1.100	1.600
55	F	0.500	1.000	1.500
54	F	0.400	0.900	1.400
53	F	0.300	0.800	1.300
52	F	0.200	0.700	1.200
51	F	0.100	0.600	1.100

## J. Class Rank

GSSM **does not rank our students.** Because the student body represents a cross section of the brightest and highest-ranked students from the state, ranking is neither fair nor appropriate.

## K. Academic Advisors

GSSM students start working with the teacher who serves as their academic advisor shortly after they are admitted. Students keep the same advisor for their two years at GSSM. Academic advisors guide students through the course selection process, mentor and support the wholistic development of the student, and serve as a resource referring students to other professionals when appropriate.

Academic advisors work with their advisees, teachers, the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction, the Director of the Center for Academic Success, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth to help solve specific academic problems that arise during the school year. Advisors must also communicate with the teachers of their advisees, because they can usually provide more information and insight about them; in return, advisors can often help other teachers by sharing appropriate, non-confidential information about their advisees. Advisors may also contact coaches, residence life staff, and extracurricular advisors to get a broader insight into the advisee's attitude, behavior, and degree of success or failure and extent of cooperation.

## L. College Credit Hours for GSSM Courses

### Credit Hours at Coker University and Francis Marion University for Coursework taken at the South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Mathematics

GSSM has a dual-enrollment agreement with Coker University and Francis Marion University through which our students receive Coker University or Francis Marion University credit for certain courses.

- **Dual-enrollment courses** are those for which GSSM students simultaneously earn high-school and college credit. College credit for GSSM's dual-enrollment courses is granted by Coker University and Francis Marion University (FMU). Both are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC or SACS), which is the recognized regional accrediting body in the southeast.
- **GSSM faculty teach** our dual-enrollment courses in the same way they teach all our residential or virtual classes. GSSM faculty grade all work in the courses and assign students their grades. The courses are approved by Coker and FMU as meeting the same learning objectives as the Coker or FMU courses for which they receive credit.
- **Dual-enrolled courses taken while enrolled at GSSM receive the same GPA credit** as AP or IB courses, higher than courses designated as "honors." One 3-hour dual-enrolled course (taken in one semester) earns one unit of high school graduation credit.
- As with credits from most SACS-accredited colleges, **credits from Coker and FMU are transferrable to other similarly accredited institutions.** In addition, most schools within South Carolina have agreements in place that allow for the transferring of college credits. See the table below for how Coker or FMU courses taken at GSSM will transfer to Clemson and USC. GSSM students who receive a "C" or higher ( $\geq 70/100$ ) in their dual-enrollment courses are usually able to transfer their Coker or FMU credits to other colleges and universities in South Carolina (and, in many cases, to other institutions). Letter grades below a "C" ( $\leq 70/100$ ) are almost always ineligible for credit transfer, though they will most likely remain on the student's transcript when it is sent to the institution of matriculation. Colleges and universities set their own transfer policies, so for colleges outside S.C., students should confer with the college about its specific transfer credit policies.
- **Residential students work with their advisors to decide if a dual-enrolled course is best for them.** The registrar places them in the class just like any other GSSM class. For FMU courses, students must also fill out a short application from FMU to register them as an FMU student.
- Students follow the important dates below for GSSM dual-enrolled courses.
- **Coker and FMU will issue a transcript** showing the college credit earned at Coker or FMU for each dual-enrollment class a few weeks after final grades are submitted. Official transcripts may be requested for a small fee.
  - Follow the process here (<https://www.coker.edu/offices-services/academic-records/>) for Coker University transcripts. Note: Scroll down to How can I order a copy of my transcript? Follow the process here (<https://www.fmarion.edu/registrar/transcript/>) for Francis Marion transcripts. Note: FMU will also send students an official transcript each year.
  - Students should also be aware that grades earned in dual-enrolled courses are used in calculating eligibility for the LIFE Scholarship. Students should work with their advisors to try to avoid having GSSM dual-enrollment courses hurt their eligibility for this scholarship if they will attend college in South Carolina. See [https://www.che.sc.gov/CHE\\_Docs/student-services/life/FAQ-LIFE-3\\_2021.pdf](https://www.che.sc.gov/CHE_Docs/student-services/life/FAQ-LIFE-3_2021.pdf) for FAQ about the LIFE Scholarship.
- **If you have questions** about dual-enrolled courses, contact the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction, Matt Martin (<mailto:mmartin@governors.school>).

### Dual Enrollment Important Dates for Coker University

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>August 23</b>  | Last day to add/drop a fall course (not on transcript)   |
| <b>October 21</b> | Last day to withdraw from a fall course with a W. After this date students will earn a WP or WF on transcript. |

- January 17** Last day to add/drop a spring course
- March 17** Last day to withdraw from a fall course with a W. After this date students will earn a WP or WF on transcript.

### **Dual Enrollment Important Dates for FMU**

**By the start of fall semester**, GSSM students taking FMU dual-enrollment courses must enroll in FMU:

- Go to <https://fmlink.fmarion.edu/default.asp>.
- Click "Create New Account" and create an account following the prompts.
- Once your account is created, you'll get an email at the address you used to confirm the account.
- Click to confirm the account and then log in using the email and password you selected at the link above.
- Complete the dual enrollment application. Do not pay to submit. We will apply a fee waiver as soon as the application is submitted.
- You also need to send FMU proof of US citizenship: a copy of the driver's license (or permit), birth certificate, or passport to [BFunk@fmarion.edu](mailto:BFunk@fmarion.edu)

**August 25** - Last day of drop/add a fall course (not on transcript)

**November 10** - Last day to withdraw from a fall course with a W. After this date students will earn a WP or WF on transcript.

**January 12** - Last day to add/drop an FMU dual-enrolled course (not on transcript).

**TBA** – Last day to withdraw from a spring course with a W. After this date students will earn a WP or WF on transcript.

### **Dual-Enrollment Courses**

For a full description of Clemson transfer credit, go to:

<https://transferringcredits.app.clemson.edu/transferequivalency.php>.

For a full description of USC transfer credit, go to:

[https://banner.onecarolina.sc.edu/BannerExtensibility/customPage/page/z\\_spg\\_codes-transferequiv?mepCode=COL](https://banner.onecarolina.sc.edu/BannerExtensibility/customPage/page/z_spg_codes-transferequiv?mepCode=COL)



<b>GSSM Course</b>	<b>Coker University Course</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b>	<b>Clemson Transfer Credit</b>	<b>USC Transfer Credit</b>
CHI 101 Introduction to Chinese I	CHI 101	3	CHIN 1010	CHIN 121
CHI 102 Introduction to Chinese II	CHI 102	3	CHIN 1020	CHIN 122
CHI 201 Introduction to Chinese III	CHI 201	3	CHIN 2010	CHIN 002T
CHI 202 Introduction to Chinese IV	CHI 202	3	Pending Approval	Pending Approval
CSC 110 Computer Science I: Python for Scientist	CS 110	4	Transfer elective	ENCP001T
CSC 311 Computer Science II: C++ Application	CS 111	4	Transfer elective	ENCP001T
ENG 111 English Composition and Rhetoric I	ENG 111	3	ENGL 1999	ENGL 101
ENG 112 English Composition and Rhetoric II	ENG 112	3	ENGL 1030	ENGL 102
ENG 215D Writing in Stem	ENG 215D	3	STS 1200	ENGL 002T
ENGIN 102 Engineering Disciplines and Skills	EGR 102	3	ENGR 1050, 1060, 1099	ENCP 101
ENGIN 141 Computer Applications 1 with MATLAB	EGR 141	3	ENGR 1410	ENCP 0001T
ENGIN 208 Engineering Design and Modeling	EGR 115	3	ENGR 2080, 2999	ENCP 102
MAT 231 Calculus 1	MAT 231	4	MATH 1060	MATH 141
MAT 232 Calculus 2	MAT 232	4	MATH 1080	MATH 142

<b>GSSM Course</b>	<b>Francis Marion University Course</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b>	<b>Clemson Transfer Credit</b>	<b>USC Transfer Credit</b>
CHE 101 DE Chemistry I	CHEM 111 & 111L	4	CH 1010 & 1011	CHE 111 & 111L
CHE 102 DE Chemistry II	CHE 112 & 112L	4	CH 1020 & 1021	CHE 112 & 112L
ECON 210 Principles of Economics: Macroeconomics Concepts	ECON 203	3	ECON 2120	ECON 222
ECON 211 Principles of Economics: Microeconomics Concepts	ECON 204	3	ECON 2110	ECON 221
ENG 205 The Major Forms of Literature	ENG 250	3	ENGL 2020	ENGL 002T
ENG 201 Creative Writing	ENG 252	3	Transfer elective	ENGL 002T
PHY161 General Physics I	PHY 215	4	PHYS 2070 & 2090	PHYS 201 & 201L
PHYS 162	PHYS 216	4	PHYS 2080 & 2100	PHYS 202

## **M. Independent Studies**

Independent study courses are student-initiated and allow students to explore areas of interest beyond what is offered in the catalog. These courses are aimed at enhancing the quality of our academic program by allowing students to develop customized courses in areas of instructor expertise beyond the current course catalog.

Students wishing to enroll in an independent study course must wish to extend knowledge in a discipline where all relevant existing courses have been completed with a grade of 90 or above or with the permission of instructor and Curriculum Committee approval. The Curriculum Committee reserves the right to determine if all relevant courses have been taken in an area of study in order to warrant an independent study course. In some cases, it will be advised that a student take an existing course instead of an independent study course.

Independent study course content (as evidenced by course description, syllabus and any supporting material) must be approved by the Curriculum Committee. Proposals should be completed and submitted to the Department Chair no later than December 1st for a spring course and May 1st for a fall course.

Please note:

- Independent study courses are student-initiated and are considered to be a course contract between the student and faculty member to complete the course of study.
- Faculty members are under no obligation to teach an Independent Study.
- Independent study course proposals will typically be considered for 0.5 Carnegie unit (with a time commitment equivalent to a regular semester-long course).
- Independent study courses are overload courses and cannot count towards the 5 course/semester minimum without approval from the Vice President for Academics.
- No student may take more than two independent study courses per academic semester.
- No faculty member may teach more than two independent study courses per academic semester.
- If a student is going to drop a class, the independent study class should most likely be the course dropped.

## **N. Attendance, Absences, and Makeup Policy**

To receive the full benefit of the academic experience at GSSM, students must attend all of their classes and labs at GSSM unless they have excused absences. Online Excused Absence Forms must be submitted three days prior to the planned absence.

1. Students who are absent from class or other mandatory activities must make up all missed work. For excused absences, the following makeup work policy applies:
  - a. Students should email their instructor reminding them or informing them in case of an unexpected absence, they will be absent.
  - b. Before returning to class, students should check their online excused absence submission for instructor comments, directions, assignments, etc. Students should also find out what was covered and what was assigned.
  - c. Work assigned prior to the excused absence and due the day of an excused absence must be turned in within two (2) class meetings from the day the student returns to class. The first of those two days is the day the student actually returns to class.
  - d. Work assigned during a class period when a student is absent must be completed within five (5) calendar school days (Monday – Friday) from the day the student returns to class. The first of those five days is the day the student actually returns to class.
  - e. If a student is excused for three (3) or more consecutive classes in a course, the student must meet with the instructor to determine an appropriate time frame to complete work due during the classes missed as well as new assignments. This meeting should occur before or on the day the student returns to class. The appropri-

ate Department Chair and/or the student's academic advisor can assist in coming up with an appropriate plan if necessary.

- f. Long-standing assignments should be submitted prior to the excused absence. When this is not feasible, work should be submitted on the first class meeting when the student returns to class. A long-standing assignment is defined as one that is assigned two weeks or more in advance of the date of the student's first day of an excused absence.
- g. The instructor has the discretion, but not the obligation, to work with the student to extend any of these make-up policies. It is in the student's best interest to communicate with the instructor as quickly as possible during times of planned excused absences or times of illness or other unexpected absences.

## 2. There are four categories of absences:

- a. **Category I:** This category includes absences for illness, doctor appointments, events sponsored by GSSM, scholarship interviews, funerals, and other situations that GSSM staff see as similar. Although we have no official limit for this type of absence, students should avoid missing classes whenever possible.
- b. **Category II:** Students may take up to five academic days for college visits during their two years at GSSM. Please use long weekends, holidays, and summer breaks whenever possible for college visits.
- c. **Category III:** Students may use up to three days each year for family and personal matters, including court dates and other family activities. Save these days for unanticipated events whenever possible.
- d. **Category IV:** Unexcused absences include but are not limited to over-sleeping, skipping, extra-curricular activities, club meetings, and absences related to part-time/full-time jobs. (GSSM students are not permitted to hold jobs while attending GSSM due to the academic rigor.) If an absence is denied by an instructor and the student still chooses to miss that class, the absence will be considered unexcused. Absences in this category should be rare at GSSM.

## 3. Online Excused Absence Form Procedures

### a. Anticipated Excused Absences

- i. Students must complete the online excused absence form through GSSM's student portal at least 3 full class days prior to the scheduled absence.
- ii. Instructors will approve/deny requests and may post comments/instructions with their approval/denial. Excusing non-medical absences is at the discretion of the instructor and failing to submit the absence form on time could result in an absence request being denied.
- iii. Instructor comments may include, but are not limited to, reasons why an absence is not approved, instructions/assignments for the missed class, instructions to visit office hours, or simple well wishes.
- iv. Weekend leave submissions, required for any overnight absence, must also be submitted and reviewed through REACH and signed off on as part of the excused absence.
- v. The Vice President for Academics or the Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth has final approval for excused absences.
- vi. Once an absence is approved, attendance will be recorded.
- vii. Students can see the status of any request for an excused absence by looking up the request forms on the GSSM Student Portal.
- viii. Note: Students should check their spam or junk mail folders to look for GSSM-generated emails about excuse absent requests.
- ix. Students must turn in medical notes to the nursing staff on the day of they return to GSSM.

### b. Unanticipated Excused Absences

- i. If students are sick, they must see the school nurse, a Residence Life Coordinator, or the Dean of Students before missing a class, or their absence will be unexcused.

- ii. If a student is in class and becomes ill, the student should ask permission from the instructor to see the nurse.
  - iii. If the nurse determines the student needs to see a doctor, they, in consultation with the student's parent/guardian, will schedule an appointment for the student.
  - iv. For bereavement and family emergencies, students should complete the online excused absence form if there is time. If there is not time, the student's parent/guardian should send an email to the Academic Affairs Coordinator.
  - v. Any questions about absences or the excused absence process should be sent to the Academic Affairs Coordinator or the Program Coordinator for Student Development and Professional Growth.
4. This same process applies for field trips, academic competitions, athletic events, missing academic Saturdays, etc. For any Friday and/or Monday absences that will include a weekend not designated as a long weekend, a weekend leave request must be submitted through REACH in addition to the Online Excused Absence Form. (See Weekend Leave Request section of this handbook.).
  5. Excused Absence Requests not submitted on time may not be processed, and the absence(s) may be recorded as unexcused regardless of instructor and parental approvals. Advanced notice will be waived for emergencies only.
  6. Teachers may assign academic penalties for unexcused absences based on the missed opportunity for learning in the particular course, lab, or presentation (e.g. Colloquium) as outlined in the syllabus for the course or lab. Teachers may impose penalties not to exceed the following:
    - a. First absence: The teacher may warn and counsel the student about missing class.
    - b. Second and each subsequent occurrence: Reduction of up to 3 points on the UGS for the semester may be imposed by the teacher.
    - c. Missed quizzes, tests, late work or required presentation: A reduction of up to 3 points on the Uniform Grading Scale (UGS) for the semester grade. Daily work (e.g. pop quizzes) will be made up at the discretion of the teacher as described in the course syllabus. Make-up of major tests and labs is mandatory. Note that participation in Colloquium is required and attending it should be prioritized. Providing make up opportunities for Colloquium may be difficult; and the academic penalties for not participating significant.
    - d. The combination of penalties stated above for missing a class and for graded work during the same class may not exceed 4 points on the UGS.
    - e. Attendance policies for junior seminars are outlined in the syllabus for each seminar.
    - f. Absences in excess of the limit in each category will be recorded as unexcused. For a few academic days (e.g., Colloquium) Category II and III absences are not permitted. Such days will be announced well in advance to parents and students.
    - g. Students will not earn credit for a course in which they have more than 10 absences (excused and/or unexcused) for scheduled meetings. In extraordinary circumstances, parents/guardians may ask the Vice President for Academics for a waiver from this policy.
    - h. Students are expected to be on time for all scheduled classes. Tardies adding up to 20 minutes during the semester may be counted as an unexcused absence.
    - i. A deficiency form will be mailed to parents if a student has three unexcused absences in a course or two unexcused absences in a science lab during a semester.

## **O. General Course Policies**

### **Add/Drop**

The last day for adding a course is seven school days after classes have begun. The last day to drop a course without it appearing on the transcript is four weeks. Courses may be dropped until midterm with a notation of withdrew passing (WP) or withdrew failing (WF) on the transcript. These dates are listed on the GSSM Academic Calendar.

## **Auditing**

Students can audit a class, with prior approval of the instructor and consent of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, without receiving a grade or credit, provided there is space available. Specific requirements about completing homework, projects, tests, etc. are at the discretion of the teacher.

## **Tests and Assignments**

Tests requiring the entire class period should be announced to the class in advance of the test date. No student is required to take more than three full-period tests on any day. Short (less than 20 minutes) quizzes may be given without prior notification. Major paper assignments and due dates should also be announced in class well in advance of the due date.

Faculty members should assign only a minimum amount of homework over a long weekend or after a major school event (all-day trip, convocation, prom, etc.). If at all possible, these assignments should be made well in advance of the weekend or event. No assignments should be made over vacation breaks, such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, winter, or spring break.

No quizzes or tests should be given on the first class after a long weekend or vacation break.

## **Course Instructors and Course Times**

Students cannot select instructors or course times. It is important to learn how to learn in all situations and from a variety of teaching styles. Learning from our diverse and talented instructors will prepare you for learning in the college setting and beyond. In order to provide the best educational experience, we try to have a similar number of students in each class. Since a number of our courses are taught in one semester and since we allow students to add and drop courses at the beginning of semesters, we sometimes need to rebalance classes for instructors at the beginning of each semester and sometimes after a few weeks into a semester.

## **Course Placement**

Every effort is made to place juniors in courses that are at the correct level based on their previous academic experience. Occasionally, a student may be misplaced. In such cases, the Senior Vice President for Academics, in consultation with the subject teacher and faculty advisor, may shift a student to a different level course. The deadlines and recording rules noted above are waived in these unusual circumstances.

## **Grade Reporting**

Grades are given to students and sent home to parents after the mid-term of each semester and after semester exams. Instructors are encouraged to provide feedback, especially for juniors, throughout the year. At any time, students can ask their instructors about their grades; however, we encourage students to take responsibility for knowing what their grades are in courses by recording them and referring to the syllabi for their courses.

## **Instructor Absence**

In case of an unplanned absence by an instructor, a note by a faculty or staff member will be posted on the classroom door and/or through email. If there is no note and an instructor has not arrived for class within 5 minutes of the start time, one student should verify that the instructor is not in their office and then inform the Vice President for Academics or another member of the staff. All students will remain in the classroom until a staff member has given them further instructions or dismissed them.

### **Meetings with Instructors**

If a teacher requests a meeting with a student, the student is expected to attend the meeting. A missed meeting will result in a level 1 offense (k. Missing an appointment or required meeting).

### **Semester Exams**

Exams are given in most courses in December and May. A few courses do not lend themselves to final exams, and a project or final paper may be assigned in lieu of an exam. For seniors with A's in a course, a teacher may elect to exempt them from the May exam only.

### **Textbooks**

GSSM provides textbooks for all students. Students are responsible for returning the books in good condition at the end of the course. Damaged or lost books will be charged to the student. No grades or transcripts will be available to a student until all outstanding financial obligations are met. Books borrowed from the Coker University library are similarly the responsibility of the student.

### **Transfer Credit**

GSSM gives credit for all courses on the home school transcript. After entering GSSM, students may not take summer or online courses in lieu of GSSM requirements or for credit on the GSSM transcript without permission from the Senior Vice President for Academics.

## **P. Meetings and Assemblies**

Unexcused absences from required meetings and assemblies will be considered an infraction and will be sanctioned accordingly. Decorum for attendance at meetings and assemblies includes the following:

- Students may not wear hats/baseball caps.
- Students must remain awake and alert for the entire program.
- Students must exhibit courteous and appropriate behavior that includes, but is not limited to, no talking, eating, drinking, whispering, passing notes, or feet up on chairs or railings, etc.
- Students may not wear or use headphones and should not bring electronic devices to an assembly meeting.
- Students are expected to attend all mandatory assemblies and to be on time.
- Any faculty and/or staff members may cite a student for inappropriate behavior during an assembly.

## IV. STUDYING ON CAMPUS AND LIBRARY USE

*GSSM students devote significant time to their studies beyond the classroom. Our Academic Transition Seminar for juniors helps students develop effective time management and study skills to successfully navigate their rigorous academic schedules. We have also built school-wide study time into the daily GSSM schedule to help students establish and maintain regular study habits; additional time is also set aside for students needing extra guidance.*

### A. QUEST

**Q**uality **U**nterrupted **E**ngaged **S**tudy **T**ime (QUEST) is required for all students from 8:00pm –10:00pm, Sunday – Thursday. Non-academic activities may **not** be held during QUEST. During QUEST, quiet co-ed study is allowed in the dining hall, B186 (if available), North Lobby, and South lobby. Students may also QUEST quietly in the residence hall rooms and lounges.

All students should do academic work during QUEST. The entire GSSM campus should be like a library so the environment helps everyone study thoroughly and efficiently. Students can study quietly alone or in groups as long as they don't disturb those around them. Students are also encouraged to use peer tutoring labs available during QUEST.

An Academic Success Coordinator and members of the residence life staff monitor QUEST. Any faculty or staff member on campus during this period is also expected to help ensure that the campus is conducive to studying and focused on academic activities during QUEST.

Students who choose to stay in their rooms during QUEST must study. Residence hall room doors should be at least halfway open to let the staff monitor and ensure they are studying and focused on academic obligations.

Students must wear headphones if listening to music. Students may not text or talk on phones, watch videos, television or movies, play games, etc. when they are QUESTing. Activities distracting to others (playing music audibly, socializing in hallways, etc.) are not permitted. Students are allowed to do laundry during QUEST, as long as the time spent in the laundry room is limited to starting or removing laundry. Students may not QUEST off campus.

**Optional QUEST** is a senior privilege during spring semester earned through grades. More information about Optional QUEST can be found under the Senior Privileges section of the handbook.

Studying takes precedence over all social activities during QUEST (e.g. senior privileges during spring semester). If someone asks you to be quiet, turn off TV/game, or move loud study groups, you must comply. This requirement applies to all lounges, classrooms, and public areas.

### B. ConQUEST (CONcentrated QUEST)

ConQUEST guidelines are in effect each semester from 8:00 pm on the last day of classes until all students have finished exams. These guidelines are in addition to the regular QUEST guidelines above.

1. 'Lights Out' is suspended for study purposes only during ConQUEST. If one roommate is sleeping, the other must go to the lounge to study to allow 'lights out' in the room for sleeping. **'Lights out' may be reinstated if the noise level gets too loud and students are not able to get sleep or study.** (See Lights Out section of this handbook)
2. The computer network is available during the same hours as academic nights during the semester.
3. The only time acceptable for NORMAL noise level is from 7:00 - 8:00 pm and 10:00 - 10:30 pm.

4. All games and outdoor activities must be held away from the building in the grassy area behind the building so that other students are not disturbed or distracted.
5. Any noise that can be heard outside an individual room (with the door open or closed) or is distracting is not permitted. This includes loud talking, music, computer games, video games, physical activity, etc. Areas include (but are not limited to) hallways, lounges, the lobby, stairways, and in front or in back of the building.
6. Studying takes precedence over all social activities during ConQUEST. If someone asks you to be quiet, turn off TV/game or move loud study groups, you must comply. This requirement applies to all lounges, classrooms, and public areas.
7. Students may not watch TV during normal QUEST hours and after 10:30 pm or before 6:00 am.
8. Students listening to music in the lounge must use headphones with the volume low enough so another person cannot hear the music.
9. Lounge and cell phones should not be used during normal QUEST times.
10. Violation of ConQUEST is an infringement of another's right to study and will be sanctioned appropriately.

## C. Pre-QUEST

Pre-QUEST is additional study time before QUEST starts for a select group of students.

### 1. Procedure

- a. After each grading period (six weeks, mid-terms, final grades), all students with one grade at or below 70 and/or two or more grades at or below 75 are placed on Pre-QUEST.
- b. Instructors or the Director of the Center for Academic Success may also place students on Pre-QUEST at any time.
- c. Students receive emails telling them they are on Pre-QUEST. Parents are also notified via grade reports.
- d. Appropriate faculty and staff members are also told when necessary.

### 2. Effective Dates

Pre-QUEST begins the week after grade reports are issued and continues for four weeks. Pre-QUEST after fall semester will begin the first night of spring semester after interim and continue for four weeks. For returning seniors, Pre-QUEST begins during the second full week of classes the next fall semester. Pre-QUEST is not held during GSSM events such as long weekends, holidays, interim, or school-wide activities. It resumes once the normal GSSM schedule resumes.

### 3. Requirements

- a. Students are on Pre-QUEST for four (4) consecutive weeks, Monday through Thursday for one hour sometime between 4:00 and 8:00 based on the schedule set by the Director of the Center for Academic Success and the Success Coordinators.
- b. Students are excused from Pre-QUEST to attend teacher office hours or teacher-led study sessions. Teachers should turn in students' names to the Academic Success Coordinator in advance with date, time, and location of such sessions.



#### 4. **Limitation of Activities**

Academics take precedence over extracurricular activities and athletics at GSSM. Therefore, students on Pre-QUEST may have these activities limited. If a student is allowed to continue participation while on Pre-QUEST, the opportunity may be revoked if the student does not make significant academic progress or fails to comply with the guidelines outlined here.

**Athletics:** Students on Pre-QUEST who are GSSM athletes work with the Academic Success Coordinator to miss as little study and class time as possible because of athletics. These students may not miss Pre-QUEST to attend team practices or meetings. They may attend home games. Participation in away games is at the discretion of the Director of the Center for Academic Success in consultation with the Athletic Director, coaching staff and the Academic Success Coordinator. These students should work with the Student Success Coordinator to make up any missed Pre-QUEST sessions.

**Clubs/Organizations:** Students on Pre-QUEST may not miss these study sessions to attend club meetings or activities. They may attend competitions with the permission of the Center Director.

**Community Engagement:** While service is a graduation requirement, students on Pre-QUEST who have made community engagement commitments that conflict with academic requirements may have to adjust their participation on class days. Coordination needs to be reviewed with the Center Director for Academic Success and the Dean of Students if such conflicts arise. These students should work with the Student Success Coordinator to make up any missed Pre-QUEST sessions.

### **D. Guided QUEST**

Guided QUEST is monitored study time within the Pre-QUEST time block assigned by a student's teacher or the Director of the Center for Academic Success for a specified number of days. Guided QUEST is a reserved hour in a designated class room during which a student will do assigned homework, study, or otherwise prepare for a course in which a teacher has determined additional attention is required. Guided QUEST is designed to ensure that students are devoting enough time and effort to successfully complete the designated course.

### **E. PUG QUEST**

**Potential for Unsatisfactory Grade Reports (PUGs)** are issued by the faculty any time between four weeks before final exams and the beginning of final exams. These reports are sent if a faculty member is concerned that a student may not earn a satisfactory (passing) grade in a class. Students who receive one or more PUGs will attend PUG QUEST: designated study time in the late afternoon or early evening in the weeks prior to final exams. PUG QUEST is not designed to be punitive. Rather, it is set up to ensure that students are devoting enough time and effort to successfully complete and receive credit for the designated course.

**Students on PUG QUEST may not participate in any organized athletic team or club activities, competitions, or other extracurricular events Monday – Thursday during PUG QUEST.** Students may petition the Director of the Center for Academic Success for an exception to this rule. If the petition is granted, it can be rescinded if the student fails to abide by the conditions set forth in the agreement with the Director. In addition, any student on PUG QUEST may work to complete only the minimum number of community engagement hours during this time frame.

### **F. QUEST Violations**

Failure to comply with the guidelines for any version of QUEST results in a **QUEST violation**. A penalty for the violation will be determined after the student meets with the Academic Success Coordinator or the Director of the Academic Success Center. Penalties may include making up the missed QUEST days, making up double the QUESTs missed, QUESTing on the weekends, and/or notification of parents. Penalties begin as Level 1 violations but can increase to Level 2 violations.

## **G. Lights Out Extensions**

Students may request Lights Out Extensions for group study or to study outside of their rooms. Students may request up to 12 extensions per semester. To get a Lights Out Extension, students must email the RLC on duty directly or sign up for an extension in the RLC office before 11:15 p.m. on the night they wish to receive the extension. If granted, the student will be allowed to stay up until a designated time as long as they do not interfere with the roommate's sleep or prove disruptive to other residents. Extensions may be granted until 1:00 or 2:00 am. Students with approved Lights Out Extensions may study in the common areas on the residence hall floors and outside of their rooms in the hallway. Group study must be held in the common areas so as to not disturb other students. Once the extension is over, the student must turn out all lights and follow all guidelines for Lights Out. If students feel they need more than the allotted number Lights Out Extensions a semester, they should meet with their teacher, academic advisor, or the Director of the Center for Academic Success for academic or time management counseling.

## **H. Library Use**

GSSM students may use the Charles W. and Joan S. Coker Library-Information Technology Center at Coker University for research and other academically related purposes. This 40,000 square foot facility hosts an expanded print collection, electronic databases, Wi-Fi, computer kiosks, and a café. Instructors and/or advisors are to communicate to the campus life staff when their classes/students are approved for Coker Library use. This generally applies to specific assignments, but is not limited to them.

Research librarians are available at the Coker University library during mornings and afternoons to assist with locating resources and devising research strategies. Students are encouraged to use this valuable resource in the early phases of their research projects.

GSSM students may use all print and electronic resources in the library. Up to five items may be checked out at any time, with the exception of DVDs, CDs, and reference materials, which must be used in the library. Students may renew checked out items once, but all materials must be returned to the library by their due date and prior to the end of the GSSM semester in which it was borrowed.

An extensive collection of research databases and electronic catalogs are available online in the library and via the internet. Accessing these resources via the internet requires a username and password provided by the school.

Students may use library computers for research and catalog access, but may not use them to compose or edit assignments. However, students may bring their own computers for this purpose. See the library staff at the circulation desk for information about how to connect to the college's wireless network.

Students visiting the Coker Library represent GSSM and should conduct themselves accordingly. All GSSM rules concerning conduct remain in effect when visiting the library. Coker University rules and policies are also applicable to visiting GSSM students. Coker University may deny access to its library facilities to anyone who violates their published rules and policies.

GSSM students will exercise care with all library materials and will return all materials checked out when they are due. Students are responsible for paying any fees or fines assessed by the library. Coker's circulation policies may be found online at <http://www.coker.edu/library>.

Students who visit the library will observe GSSM policies regarding walking off-campus described in Chapter VII, Leaving Campus, in this handbook.

As with most colleges and universities, internet access at Coker University is not filtered to prevent access to pornographic or other inappropriate content. GSSM rules prohibiting student access to pornographic or other inappropriate content also apply when using the Coker University library or any other college or university library when the student is representing GSSM.

## I. Academic Wing Access

Access to the academic wing is limited in the evenings and on the weekends. After 5:00 pm and any time on the weekends, students are not allowed on the second floor of the academic wing unless they are meeting with teachers in a classroom or lab.

After 5:00 pm on school nights and on the weekend, student access to the first floor is limited to going to and from QUEST, the computer lab, tutoring centers, and scheduled meetings with teachers or other staff members. **Unauthorized access to the academic wing will be considered a Level 2 offense (unauthorized entry into/use of facilities or equipment).**

## **V. LIFE ON CAMPUS**

*The residence hall (GSSM Houses) is your home away from home at the Governor's School. Students are expected to keep their living areas and the common areas clean. Each student shares responsibility for maintaining these spaces. The information outlined in this chapter focuses on health and safety in the Houses and building a sense of community in the residential environment as well as the campus.*

*Living in a residence hall offers students the opportunity to learn to balance their personal wishes and those of others. Learning to compromise and negotiate in various situations is an important part of the GSSM journey. Every student contributes to the spirit of the House where they reside through cooperation, consideration of others, and civility.*

### **A. Residence Life Staff**

The Residence Life staff members, who live in the residence hall, are responsible for supporting the school's mission by directing, guiding, and supervising the students, particularly in areas of non-academic development. Their mission is to support the students' academic efforts and to guide their mastery of the art of combining rigorous work with a rewarding, healthy, and balanced life. The staff provides emotional support and social and recreational opportunities. They also respond to student concerns, set standards for acceptable behavior, interpret and enforce school policies, respond to problems and conflicts, and administer discipline when necessary. The residence life staff is in charge of the day-to-day operation of the residence life program and, with administrative support, has responsibility for decision-making in this area.

The Residence Life Coordinators (RLCs) are professional full-time staff members who live in the residence hall. They participate in faculty/staff meetings and are charged with representing the concerns of students regarding residential life. In addition to the professional staff, Resident Assistants (RAs) serve as mentors, plan hall activities, help enforce guidelines, and act as liaisons between the students and staff. RAs are local college students and are chosen for their maturity, leadership, communication skills, and interest in working with teenagers.

### **B. Room Check**

Room check occurs Sunday – Thursday at 10:30 pm and Friday and Saturday at 12 midnight. The following are the guidelines for room check:

1. Students must be at their room door for room check. (This applies to the first few weeks of school. After convocation students may be at their suitemates' door.)
2. Students must stand at the door for room check until the Resident Assistant verifies their presence.
3. Students who go to sleep prior to room check must put a note on the door for the RA. RAs will verify that the student is indeed in their room asleep.
4. Information on students who are late for room check will be documented by the Residence Life Staff. This is a violation of GSSM policy and will be handled accordingly.
5. Students will be asked to present their student identification cards during the first two weeks of the school year. Afterwards, student IDs may be checked periodically during the day. Whenever asked, students are required to present the cards upon request.

### **C. Lights Out**

Lights Out begins at 12 midnight and ends at 6:00 a.m. the following morning on Sunday through Thursday. Students may not be outside of their rooms during these hours, and it is the expectation that rooms be in a state conducive for sleep (e.g. overhead and obtrusive lights out, music off, etc.). All students are expected

to respect the rights of community members regarding sleep and quiet. Students are also reminded of the importance of getting proper sleep and its impact on their health and overall wellness. They are strongly encouraged to be in bed during these hours. GSSM acknowledges that there may be occasions when a student's academic workload requires that they work beyond midnight. With proper time management, these occasions should be rare and generally avoidable. Students are encouraged to maximize their time between classes, planning ahead and not waiting until the last minute or QUEST to begin their out-of-class academic preparation.

Again, students are not allowed out of their rooms after midnight, and it should be completely quiet in the residence hall. Exceptions will be Lights Out Extensions, which can be requested through the residence life staff on duty any evening (see page 24).

If students are found outside of their rooms without authorization, being loud, and not maintaining the spirit of Lights Out as outlined above, staff will address this conduct. Additionally, if reports are made that indicate that students are not adhering to this policy (e.g. complaints from other students, concerns regarding class attendance, tardiness, lack of engagement, etc.) from community members including parents, members of the staff will follow up and periodically check on them, exercising GSSM's responsibility to address policy violations in keeping with the school's honor code. Students who have been reported by community members will be notified prior to this follow up.

Internet and email access are turned off Monday through Friday from 1:15 a.m. until 5:30 a.m. There is no "off" time from Friday at 5:30 a.m. until Monday at 1:15 a.m.

#### **D. Quiet Hours and Consideration Hours**

During Quiet Hours, students are to be quiet and residents undisturbed, specifically from 12 midnight to 6:00 a.m. **This also includes QUEST and the time between Room Check and Lights Out.** All other hours of the day, 6:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. are Consideration Hours where everyone is expected to be respectful and considerate of their neighbor, including those on the hall and in areas above and/or below student rooms. Students socializing in lounges and other common areas are expected to be mindful of Quiet Hours and Consideration Hours.

#### **E. Student Visitation**

GSSM students are welcome to have guests visit them in keeping with the Guests on Campus section (H, pp. 39-40) noted in the chapter on Safety and Security. Guests, including alumni, must be properly signed in and out. The visitation hours for students are as follows:

**Sunday through Thursday – Noon to 7:00 p.m.** Students may not have guests when they are scheduled for classes, residence hall meetings, QUEST, and other GSSM sponsored and/or required events.

**Friday and Saturday – Noon to 10:00 p.m.** Students may not have any in hall visitors in their room past 12am. Students may not have guests during certain scheduled and/or required events.

**Students may not stay overnight in another student's room/suite. This is for any day of the week, Monday-Sunday. On the weekends, students may not have any visitors in their room past 12 midnight. This includes other campus residents.**

Parents are always welcome, but should be mindful of students' class schedules and other commitments. They too must check in at the front desk.

#### **F. Residence Hall and Common Area Shared Housekeeping Responsibilities**

1. Each student is responsible for the upkeep of the residence hall floors, including rooms, hallways, bathrooms, and lounges.

2. Students will be placed on a “suite rotation” for common areas upstairs. Areas to be cleaned on a rotation include the stairwells and elevators, lounges, hallways, and laundry rooms.
3. Clean common areas are the responsibility of all GSSM residents. Lounges determined to be excessively dirty or “trashed” (i.e., food remnants not properly thrown away, scattered newspapers, dirty dishes left in the lounge) will be closed for no less than 24 hours. The lounge may be closed for longer periods as deemed appropriate by the RLC or RA on the floor. While suite rotation is assigned to the lounges for general clean up, residents are expected to clean up after themselves.
4. Students’ personal items left in the hallway should be moved by midnight. Any items left after Lights Out may be picked up by staff and students might be required to assist with hall cleaning or other community chores before items are returned.
5. The Clean Campus Committee (CCC) shall oversee the tidiness of the downstairs area of the GSSM campus, as well as to raise student awareness concerning the need to take responsibility for personal belongings and to maintain clean surroundings.
  - a. If a student assigned CCC duty for leaving an item downstairs misses the night after their item(s) was (were) found, they will have to complete two nights of CCC duty. Students will be informed by the RLC on Duty each evening via email if they have been assigned CCC.
  - b. If a student assigned CCC duty for leaving an item downstairs misses two nights after their item(s) was (were) found, they will have to complete three nights of CCC duty.
  - c. If a student assigned CCC duty for leaving an item downstairs misses three nights after their item(s) was (were) found, a Level 1 will be given to them for failure to follow instructions.
  - d. Special cases
    - i. If a student assigned CCC duty falls ill, is not at the school during the designated time when CCC is to be performed, or is being disciplined in some way that impedes them attending CCC, the student will not be punished, but will be allowed to complete their duty the first night they are free from the aforementioned restrictions. If they fail to attend, they will be subject to the consequences mentioned above.
    - ii. If a student who has missed one or two nights of CCC completes their duty, yet their belongings are found the same night, they shall again be required to complete CCC duty, with the same consequences for missing nights.

## **G. Room Inspections and Cleanliness**

1. Room and Hall inspections will be conducted at least once a week to ensure student rooms and halls meet the health, safety, and cleanliness standards established by the school and health and fire safety authorities.
2. Students are required to pass these inspections. They will be scheduled on a regular day and time to be determined at the beginning of each school year. Students on each hall will be informed as to whether or not they passed inspection in a manner to be determined by the hall staff at the beginning of the school year. Students may review the inspection records if they have questions about past inspections. Whenever possible, they will not conflict with suite rotations. Closed areas and refrigerators may be opened for visual inspection (see Room Inspection Form). Note that failure to pass room inspections may be subject to disciplinary action.
3. For reasons of health and safety, GSSM reserves the right to conduct inspections in students’ rooms during any vacation period (see details in #5 below).
4. Roommates and suitemates are responsible for their shared living areas. When individual responsibility cannot be easily determined, students will be held equally responsible for substandard cleanliness or illegal items in their living areas. If a student is aware of a problem in their shared living area, they should notify a Residence Life Staff member promptly.

5. Pre-inspections will occur on the evenings prior to breaks for all residents. All items on the Room Inspection Form will be reviewed. Custodial closets will also be checked.
6. White glove inspections will occur during Long Weekends and the closing day for all other breaks. Resident Assistants will conduct the inspections after all students have left for Long Weekend or break. Requirements for white glove inspection extend beyond what students must complete for routine room inspections.

## H. Residence Hall Room Decorations and Furnishings

1. The names of room occupants must be clearly displayed on the room doors during the entire year with the nametags furnished by Residence Life.
2. Arrangement of furniture must meet basic safety requirements and guidelines established by the Residence Life staff. All furniture must remain in the room and on the floor at all times. No cinder blocks are allowed in the rooms.
3. No obscene, offensive, or pornographic materials may be displayed.
4. Road and/or building signs are not permitted in student rooms or common rooms and will be confiscated if found.
5. The Residence Life staff reserves the right to determine appropriate decoration of rooms, doors, and hallways. Community-wide posters and notices are to be mounted on bulletin boards only.
6. Lounge, lobby, activity room, and classroom furnishing must not be moved from their designated areas.
7. Command Strips, thumbtacks, or push pins are to be used to hang posters, photos, etc. on room walls. It is not recommended that thumbtacks or push pins be used to place short-term things on walls or doors (e.g. notes, etc.). Heavy duty tape like Duct Tape or nails should not be used on the walls or doors. This includes other adhesives. **Note that LED Lights (string lights) are no longer permitted due to the damage caused by their removal. We advise that you not bring these to campus.**
8. Thumbtacks, push pins, or nails should not be used in the hallway. Command Strips can be used in the hallway.
9. Televisions are provided in the student lounges. Students may not move TVs from the common areas. Student may opt to use TV monitors versus a computer monitor. If students elect to use TV monitors, note that the purpose of this monitor is primarily academic and not designed to be recreational.
10. Nintendo, PlayStation, XBOX, Wii consoles, etc. may be hooked up to televisions in the TV Lounge; students should avoid leaving their equipment unattended.
11. Each student is permitted to have a refrigerator, but it must be no larger than a "dorm size" or personal refrigerator.
12. Stereo equipment is allowed, and students are encouraged to bring headphones to avoid noise violations.
13. Residence hall rooms are not to be used for music practice. Amplifiers should never be used in the residence hall rooms. GSSM does not provide storage for musical instruments; however, some arrangements may be considered for larger instruments.
14. Students are allowed to keep and use personal computers in the residence hall; however, monitors are limited to 36 inches and only two monitors (e.g. the monitor associated with a notebook

computer and one additional monitor) are permitted per student. Requests for exceptions to this expectation must be made in writing to the Vice President for Academic Affairs who will consult with the chair of the math and computer science department for consideration. An explanation as to why a larger and/or multiple monitors is/are necessary for academic purposes will have to accompany the request. Approval is necessary and required before this equipment is brought to campus. The senior academic officer will communicate any exceptions to this requirement and approvals of additional equipment to the Dean of Students.

15. Fish and small fully aquatic animals are the only pets permitted for students living in the residence hall. They are restricted to living in a 10-gallon aquarium and **must be taken home over long weekends and breaks**. These pets must be incapable of surviving outside of their bowls or tanks. Pets must be registered with Residence Life and qualify based on the criteria outlined above. Students' personal pets cannot be stored or maintained in science laboratories or in any place on GSSM property. GSSM reserves the right to not allow certain fully aquatic animals based on what might be necessary to maintain them. Additionally, both roommates must agree to share their living space with a fish or other qualifying pet.
16. High lofts are not allowed. Bunking and low lofting the beds as they are designed is permitted with the use of steel pins provided by the Residence Life Coordinators. In bunking beds, two pin openings above the level at which the bed is bunked must be left.
17. Athletic and recreation equipment (including, but not limited to, footballs, baseballs, water guns, nerf guns, potato guns, and basketballs) cannot be used inside the building.
18. Candles, incense, irons, heating elements (e.g. hot plates, woks, coffee makers, hot pots, etc.), electrical appliances, halogen lights without protective screens over the bulb, or any kind of open flames producing device are not allowed in the residence hall.
19. Students should not cover more than 10% of any one wall with printed materials. Posters and other printed materials may not be placed in the hallways.
20. Sprinkler systems, smoke detectors, or light fixtures must be left free of things hung on them or covering them.
21. Curtains and other wall hangings may be used for decorative purposes, but must be treated with a fire-retardant solution before hung in the residence hall. Black out curtains are not permitted and will be confiscated upon discovery.
22. Ceiling tiles should not be removed, and items are not to be stored in the ceiling.
23. The use of empty alcohol containers or drug paraphernalia as decorations is prohibited.

## I. Cell Phones

GSSM students are allowed to have cell phones for personal use. All students are responsible for following the cell phone guidelines established by GSSM.

1. All cell phone numbers must be reported to the Residence Life Staff to keep on file in case of an emergency. GSSM staff may call students on their cell phones when necessary. In addition, GSSM's emergency notification system may send voice and SMS messages to student cell phones during emergencies and drills. Contacting students via cell phone is necessary for student safety; therefore, if such calls and alerts cause students to incur additional cell phone charges, GSSM will not provide reimbursement.
2. Responsibility for appropriate use of cell phones lies with the student; responsibility for monitoring use for appropriateness lies jointly with the GSSM staff and parents of the student.



3. Possession of a cell phone on the GSSM campus is a privilege that may be lost if abused.
4. The right of a student to have a telephone conversation is subordinate to the rights of other students to have quiet and undistracted times for study and sleep. Therefore, cell phones may not be used in classrooms, during QUEST, or during sleeping hours. Cell phones may be used outside, or in rooms or common areas if those areas are not in use by others for incompatible purposes. Cell phones are not to be used after midnight Sunday through Thursday in keeping with GSSM's "Lights Out" policy.
5. Telephone conversations are private and may not be monitored, as governed by state or federal law.
6. Without being unduly intrusive into residence hall life, GSSM cannot monitor all cell phone usage. Therefore:
  - a. GSSM is not responsible for loss or theft of cell phones.
  - b. GSSM is not responsible for unauthorized use of a cell phone.
  - c. Cell phones are the financial responsibility of the student and their parent or guardian.
7. Most parents are well aware that teenagers sometimes feel the need to have extremely long telephone conversations, even at the expense of sleep or study time. GSSM is also aware that students can be very persuasive; they may get roommates to tolerate these conversations, even though the roommate gives up sleep or study time as well, to the detriment of the health and good academic standing of both. For this reason, parents are urged to monitor the monthly cell phone statement, to determine the times at which calls are placed. A timely discussion with the student can prevent academic difficulties before they start. Students should also be coached on how to get help if a roommate persists in inappropriate behavior.
8. Cell phones are not allowed in classrooms during instructional time unless authorized by the instructor. Violation of this rule is a Level 2 offense. If a cell phone is discovered during a test or quiz, the student may also be found in violation of our Honor Code, as it may not be clear whether the student was using the phone to share or store information related to the test.
9. Students who are QUESTing may not use their cell phones.
10. **Students should not use their cell phones or similar devices to provide Internet access to themselves or others after Lights Out, or otherwise circumvent the school's Appropriate Use Policy (AUP).**
11. Violation of cell phone use is categorized as a Level 2 offense. These matters will be addressed in keeping GSSM's Discipline and Honor Code.

## J. Mail Service

GSSM students will receive mail and packages at the GSSM campus. You must use your given name in the address. Improperly addressed mail, including use of parents' names, etc., will not be delivered. Your address will be: Student Name, GSSM, 401 Railroad Avenue, Hartsville, SC 29550

Each room is assigned a USPS mailbox, which will be shared with their roommate. USPS mailboxes are located in Room A141 near the Nurse's Office. US mail will be delivered to boxes once a day. If you receive a package, you will be notified by email. You may also check the package delivery list at the front desk for any received packages.

## K. Personal Finance

Students are encouraged to open a personal bank account with one of the banks in Hartsville. Local merchants may not accept out-of-town checks, and there may be other occasions where a local account would

be beneficial to the student. Students are **strongly** encouraged not to keep large sums of money in the residence hall. Students with significant financial concerns are encouraged to discuss their concerns privately with a Residence Life Coordinator, the Dean of Students, or the Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth.

## L. Public Displays of Affection

Inappropriate public displays of affection (PDA) are not permitted because they are embarrassing to students, faculty, and staff members who have to view them. Engaging in inappropriate displays will result in disciplinary action. Ordinarily, students will not be permitted to sit in public areas or student rooms with the lights off. Public areas include, but are not limited to: all lounges, classrooms, the lobby, the activity area, or any area visible to the public. During Intervisitation, student room doors must be open completely and a major light source must be on. A major light source (excluding televisions and computer monitors) must also be on in all lounge areas. The following guidelines are not all-inclusive, but are to be used as a guide for permissible behavior. While violation of PDA guidelines is a Level 1 offense, subsequent recurrences of PDA violations may result in more severe sanctions than listed as Level 1, and some displays of affection may rise to higher levels of offense with correspondingly more severe sanctions (see **Discipline**). Inappropriate PDAs include:

- Petting or caressing.
- Prolonged kissing.
- Inappropriate massages (any area other than the back, shoulders, and neck).
- Being in a horizontal position with another person.
- Having your head on or in someone's lap. Sitting on someone's lap.
- Any kind of physical contact that may be perceived as sexual in nature.
- Sharing a blanket with another student.
- Any other type of unlisted display that causes the viewer discomfort or embarrassment is considered inappropriate.

## M. Sunbathing

GSSM does permit students to sunbathe on the campus. Sunbathing is limited to the area behind the building, which is the soccer field. The front and sides of the building are not designated for sunbathing. Cover-ups (t-shirts and/or shorts) must be worn at all times when not sunbathing, including walking to and from the building and inside the building. In the case of cover ups, the GSSM dress code is applicable. Students are not permitted to play sports or activities while wearing swimwear on the GSSM campus. Additionally, policies related to Public Displays of Affection are also applicable when sunbathing.

## N. Movies and Video Games

The GSSM Board of Trustees, Administration, Faculty, and Staff are committed to providing a wholesome atmosphere for everyone in the GSSM community, as well as complying with laws related to age for viewing movies and other similarly rated material. GSSM students may not view "R" or "Unrated" materials or play "M" rated video games in public areas. These materials may not be viewed in the dining hall, television lounges, or the Student Activity Center. R-rated material may be used in the classroom if the instructor deems such material appropriate for the course or during a program sponsored by Residence Life. The instructor or staff member will be present at the viewing of all R-rated material.

Parents are encouraged to give students who are 17 years or older guidance on viewing R-rated movies on their personal computers, in television lounges, or at local theaters, as well as the use of M-rated video games on their personal computers. **THE VIEWING OF X AND AO RATED VIDEO MATERIAL IS PROHIBITED.**

In addition, GSSM recognizes the potential for a student to play video games excessively, to the detriment of the student's academic standing and good health through loss of study time, exercise, and sleep. Parents are encouraged to keep video game consoles at home, and to prohibit students from loading games onto

their personal computers. GSSM does not disallow video games; we will encourage students to monitor themselves and others to support healthy, limited use of these leisure activities.

## **O. Employment**

Due to the rigorous curriculum, students may not hold full or part-time jobs while attending GSSM.

## VI. SAFETY AND SECURITY

*Our top priority is the safety of our students. In addition to the information reviewed in the previous and subsequent chapters related to safety, this section includes information on emergency procedures, fire safety, building security, and guests on campus. It is important that all students understand how to respond in various situations.*

### A. Emergencies and Parent Contact

**In case of an emergency**, parents should contact the Residence Life Coordinator cell phone at **843-858-1603**, 24 hours a day while school is in session. Depending on the emergency, you may also contact our on-duty Security Officer at **843-992-0377**. All parents and GSSM students should enter these emergency contact numbers in their cell phones in case they are needed. For non-emergencies the Residence Life Coordinator on duty can be contacted at 843-383-3901, extension 3931 from 9 am to 12 midnight on weekdays and 6 pm to 12 midnight on weekends.

1. Throughout the year, the Residence Life staff and/or the Dean of Students will contact parents when appropriate. For example, parents might be contacted if a student receives medical attention beyond what is provided by the GSSM nurse or if there is a gross violation of the disciplinary code.
2. Students are expected to communicate with their parents on a regular basis to keep them informed on personal, academic, social, and discipline issues. We encourage all parents to set up a calling schedule with their student so there are clear expectations set prior to attending GSSM. At times, it may be necessary to contact the RLC on duty to request that your child call home, but this should be done on a very limited basis.
3. GSSM uses an emergency contact service to communicate critical safety information to students and parents if needed. It is important that students and parents notify the school of changes to home, work, and cell phone numbers so they can be informed in the event of a campus emergency.

### B. Emergency Actions and Drills

#### 1. Crisis Intervention Procedures

It is vitally important that every student knows what to do in the event of an emotional crisis or medical emergency. You are to follow the procedures as outlined below:

- a. The most important priority is to get help for the victim. Send someone for help or use your cell phone to call for help. Don't leave the person unattended unless there is no other means of getting help. It is vital to the individual's health and safety that they not be left alone.
- b. You must get in touch with the Nurse, Residence Life Coordinator on Duty, the Dean of Students, or the Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth. As soon as one of the above or their designee arrives, you are released.

#### 2. Fire Drills/ Fire Alarm Procedure

Fire drills will be held monthly. The Residence Life staff will provide detailed instructions. Respond seriously and promptly to these emergency procedures. Students should familiarize themselves with the fire alarm procedure as posted on their door. When the fire alarm sounds, students should do the following:

- a. Immediately exit the building using nearest stairwell and report to the front of the building.
- b. Neilson (B-side) residents should report immediately to the grass near the C Wing.

- c. Daniels (A-side) residents should report immediately to the grass close to the student parking lot.
- d. Students with mobility issues who cannot or should not use the stairs should communicate with Security via the intercom. Someone will be designated to assist to them.
- e. Remain at your designated location until a member of the Residence Life staff takes roll and gives you further instructions.

### 3. Go to a Safe Place – Tornados, Severe Weather, and Evacuation

When dangerous weather is imminently approaching GSSM, school officials will determine the course of action by carefully monitoring weather reports. If it is determined that GSSM students could be in danger, we will announce over the school-wide intercom system to **“GO TO A SAFE PLACE.”** For these dangerous weather occurrences our designated “safe places” are the inside stairwells leading to the residential wings of our building. While not particularly comfortable, these areas are structurally among the sturdiest and they are free of window glass.

If the need for an evacuation of GSSM arises, we will announce **“GO TO A SAFE PLACE.”** The interior stairwells will serve as our staging area in the event that we must relocate to a safer location. Exceptions could occur so it is important that everyone listens to official announcements and follows instructions.

**“GO TO A SAFE PLACE”** drills are held each semester. When you hear the **“GO TO A SAFE PLACE”** announcement, you should:

- a. Immediately report to the inside stairwells. (Daniels (A-side) residents should report to the “A” side stairwell and Neilson (B-side) residents should report to the “B” side stairwell.)
- b. Roll will be taken in the stairwells.
- c. Remain calm and in the stairwells until you are given further instructions from a GSSM official.

### 4. Armed Intruder Alert

In the unlikely event that there is an armed intruder at GSSM, we must be prepared to deal with this unfortunate situation. Active shooter situations are dynamic and evolve quickly. Each person must be prepared to act quickly based on the information they have at the time. Everyone must know how to respond in case there is an active shooter in your vicinity. GSSM will utilize the US Department of Homeland Security’s protocol and respond accordingly. If anyone hears on the public address system, “Armed Intruder! Armed Intruder,” or anything that could be taken for gunshots, or if you observe anyone displaying a weapon, the following responses should be utilized immediately:

- a. **RUN** – If you are in an open area (e.g. hallways, lobbies, gym, dining hall, bathroom), the person should run with caution to the nearest exit and proceed to the YMCA. GSSM officials will reunite with you there. Leave your belongings behind and keep your hands visible when exiting the building and campus.
- b. **HIDE** – If you are in a classroom, residence hall room, office, or other lockable area, the room should be locked down utilizing the lock button or key. Everyone should, if practical, barricade the door and remove themselves from view of the door window. Lights should be turned off and those present should remain quiet, silence cellphones, and wait for help to arrive. Do not open the door! An official with a key and law enforcement will announce themselves and alert you when it is safe.
- c. **FIGHT** – This should occur only as a last resort and only when your life is in immediate danger. Attempt to incapacitate the active shooter by acting with physical aggression including throwing items at the active shooter.
- d. **CALL 911 WHEN SAFE TO DO SO!!!**
- e. **When law enforcement arrives:**
  - Remain calm and follow the officer’s instructions

- Immediately raise hands and spread fingers
- Keep hands visible at all times
- Avoid making quick movements toward the officers
- Avoid pointing, screaming, and/or yelling
- Do not ask officers for help or directions when evacuating; just proceed in the direction from which the officers are entering the premises
- When speaking with law enforcement or 911, give them all of the information you have (location of victims and shooters, number of shooters, description of shooter, number and type of weapons, and number of potential victims at the location)

Alert messages to all students' cellphones will be dispatched through our emergency notification system. Active shooter drills will be conducted at minimum, twice a year or as often as deemed necessary. An "ALL CLEAR" will be given over the public address system when the drill or event is over.

All students, faculty, and staff should remain cognizant and vigilant to potential threats. Unsolicited comments about violence, firearms, dangerous weapons, and violent crimes should be reported to GSSM public safety as soon as possible.

#### 5. **Lockout**

In the event there is a hazard or nearby threat from GSSM, students will not be allowed to leave the security of the GSSM building. A "Lockout" procedure will be executed. The procedure will consist of all students, faculty, and staff remaining inside the GSSM building with all doors and windows closed and locked. If students are outside of the building, they should get indoors as quickly as possible. Students off campus should find a secure shelter immediately. Visitors may not be allowed inside the building, depending on the event. Classes and activities inside GSSM should continue as normal, but situational awareness should be heightened. Examples of times where a "Lockout" could be utilized are: a vicious dog on the premises, a dangerous or suspicious person near GSSM, a nearby manhunt by law enforcement, or a local emergency that could compromise GSSM safety. Note that these are only examples.

The announcement that will be given out via the public address system is "Attention, Attention Please. GSSM is now in Lockout. No one should leave the building. If you are outside, please come inside promptly. Maintain normal activities." The announcement will be repeated. Alert messages via text, voicemail, and email may also be sent that are similar. If this message is given, please comply immediately. The "All Clear" will be given when the situation is deemed safe.

### **C. Campus Security**

Everyone plays a role in campus security. Students are to report any suspicious persons to a member of the faculty or staff immediately. The faculty or staff member will alert Public Safety immediately. When school is in session, a Public Safety Officer is on duty from 7:00 a.m. until 11:00 p.m. A security guard is on duty 24 hours a day 365 days a year. The security guard is posted at the desk in the main lobby and makes rounds throughout the campus monitoring the safety of the campus. Security can be reached at **843-992-0377**. All exterior doors are secured at all times. The rear fire exit stairwells are alarmed continuously. The main lobby doors are the primary and preferred means of entering and exiting the building.

Residence hall rooms should be locked unless a student is present in the room. Please note the Residence Life staff does not condone leaving your door open or unlocked for any reason. Locking your door adds to student safety and security of person and property. Students should avoid entering another student's room without permission.

A multi-camera digital recording system is installed throughout the GSSM campus for the protection of the students and to provide a safe residential environment. The system in common areas upstairs is not monitored in real-time. Access to this system is extremely limited and all students' rights to privacy are

protected. The Director of Public Safety is responsible for conducting periodic checks of the system to ensure it is operating properly. The upstairs monitoring system will be accessed if there is an event that makes looking at the footage necessary (fire alarms, vandalism, thefts, etc.). If the footage is viewed, the viewing will be only of that segment of time in which the event likely occurred. The initial review will be conducted by either a Public Safety Officer, the Dean of Students, the Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth, or their designees. The initial screening will be to determine if there are any images that need to be isolated. These frames will then be provided, as necessary, to appropriate school officials, the Judicial Council, and any students and/or parents involved when it is deemed appropriate. Should any event require the involvement of the fire or police departments, those agencies will have access to the unedited version of the images. The downstairs system is monitored in real time by Public Safety and Security.

All recordings automatically erase after a determined period of time. Videos that are saved for official use will be kept until they are no longer needed. The Director of Public Safety will periodically check saved videos in GSSM's video system and eliminate those that are no longer needed.

#### **D. Privacy, Search and Seizure**

A student's right to privacy is respected at GSSM. However, GSSM also has a responsibility to maintain standards of safety and behavior that are reflected in GSSM regulations and policies, and local, state, and federal statutes.

In the event that a staff member needs to check on a student (e.g. illness, not showing up for class, violation of lights out, etc.), staff members are permitted to enter a room to locate a student. Staff members will knock and announce themselves prior to entering the room. If there is no answer, the staff member is authorized to enter the room to locate the student.

GSSM may authorize searches, based on "probable cause" and the "reasonableness standard" applicable to public schools, of a student's residence hall mailbox, room including personal belongings, automobile, and other areas, when there is suspicion that violations have occurred. If possible, such entry and search will be made in the presence of the student or students involved, provided the students can be located in a timely fashion. When a student's room is to be searched, appropriate members of the GSSM staff will be assigned to perform the search. When such a search is deemed necessary, parents will be contacted as soon as possible.

Persons conducting the entry and search will not enter a student's room or access a student's property without first knocking on the door, identifying themselves, and announcing the purpose of their visit. If they are not admitted, a master key will be used. If the student or students cannot be located, the person authorized to do the search will be accompanied by another GSSM official and a student witness or the room will be completely sealed until contact has been made. However, it should be noted that a GSSM official may enter any GSSM premise or search GSSM property at any time when the immediate safety of persons or property is involved.

If contraband items used in criminal acts or stolen property is found during the search, it will be confiscated and a written receipt will be given to the room's occupants. Should local, state, and/or federal law enforcement officers present a duly authorized warrant, or when such officials have determined that circumstances exist which justify an unwarranted search, GSSM will cooperate in allowing such a search. A GSSM official will be present during the search unless otherwise ordered by the law enforcement officers.

#### **E. Fire Safety Regulations in the Residence Hall**

1. Candles, incense, irons, heating elements (e.g. hot plates, woks, coffee pots, water boilers, etc.), electrical appliances, halogen lights without protective screens over the bulb, and any kind of open flame or flame-producing device (including matches, lighters, lit cigarettes, cigars, or pipes of any kind) are not allowed in the residence hall.

2. Irons and ironing boards are located on each floor in the television lounges.
3. Potentially dangerous scientific equipment must be stored in the academic building under the supervision of the instructor.
4. Christmas trees and other naturally cut vegetation are not allowed in student rooms.
5. Students should avoid covering more than 10% of any one wall with printed materials and may not place anything on the walls in the hallways. Doors may be decorated; however, the 10% rule must be followed.
6. Curtains and other wall fabric hangings are allowed for decorative purposes, but must be treated with a fire-retardant solution prior to being hung in the residence hall. Black-out curtains are not permitted and will be confiscated upon discovery.
7. Nothing may be hung, placed on, or cover the sprinkler systems, smoke detectors, or light fixtures.
8. Students are permitted to have two surge protectors in their rooms.
9. Students should keep their doors locked at all times. Doors must be closed after midnight and anytime a student is not in the room. For your safety, if a door is left open and there is no occupant in the room, Residence Life staff members who are making rounds will close the door. Doors are not to be propped open with the deadbolt lock. The deadbolt should not be covered in an attempt to leave the door unlocked. Tape cannot be used to cover the deadbolt or used on the door frame to keep the door from locking when closed. Other means may not be used to "weight" the door handle preventing the door from locking. This is a violation of fire and safety regulations.
10. Hallways must remain free from obstructions. Leaving personal items such as chairs, laundry, trash, etc. in the hallways is not permitted.

## F. Building Access

Within the building, selected doors will be programmed to auto-unlock during blocked periods of time. No card is needed to access these areas at these times. The following is the schedule for open access in the building on class days (Monday – Friday):

- 7:00 am – 5:00 pm – Front and Back Doors of Main Lobby
- 8:00 am – 5:00 pm – Campus Life/Administration Wing
- 7:45 am – 5:00 pm – Classroom Hallway (off South Radius Hallway)

Students are requested to use the main lobby doors when entering and exiting the building since the sign-in/sign-out areas are at the front desk. The exterior doors in the north and south lobbies and other areas of the building are to be used after the proper sign out procedures have been followed when leaving the campus. All community members have to use their ID cards at all times to gain access to the building.

## G. Student Identification Cards

Each student will receive a picture identification card, which serves as the student's room key. This card will also need to be used to sign in and out, and access the elevator and stairwell lobby on the first floor and the main lobby after business hours. The student identification card is used to identify the student as a representative of the Governor's School on other occasions. Students should have their ID cards with them at all times. Students should **immediately** report damaged, lost, or stolen cards to the Dean of Students or the Residence Life Coordinator on duty. Replacement student identification card cost is **\$10.00**. The student identification card is the property of GSSM. Over the course of the year, staff may check periodically to ensure students are keeping up with their ID cards and that they are functional.



The identification card is non-transferable and to be used only by its owner. Improper or fraudulent use of the identification card, which includes borrowing or lending, is an infraction of the discipline code.

## H. Guests on Campus

Anyone who is not currently a GSSM student or faculty/staff member is a guest. Guests, other than members of the student's immediate family, are NOT permitted on the residence hall floors. Siblings are permitted upstairs only when parents are present. Please note that GSSM reserves the right to limit all guests in certain circumstances (e.g. pandemic).

Students are not permitted to sign in guests for other students. Students are only permitted to sign in guests they know personally. It is considered a violation of building security to sign in a guest you do not know.

### The following restrictions apply to visitation at GSSM:

1. Unauthorized guests (guests who are not properly signed in or who do not have business with a community member) are not allowed at GSSM. GSSM reserves the right to prohibit visitation by anyone other than the student's parents or guardians.
2. All guests, including their family members and GSSM alumni must register at the front desk in the main lobby.
3. Only family members as guests of students are allowed upstairs and they must always be accompanied by their student or a staff member.
4. Students may have guests on campus from noon until 7:00 p.m. Sundays through Thursdays except during scheduled classes, hall meetings, and QUEST. On Fridays and Saturdays, students may have guests from noon until 10:00 p.m. **The Residence Life Coordinator on Duty must promptly be made aware of the presence of all guests.** Guests must leave campus when their host is participating in the aforementioned activities and/or once signed out by their host. Guests must leave campus during a host's scheduled classes, QUEST, and any other time periods when the host cannot be with the guest. Hosts must gain permission from the Residence Life Coordinator on duty for guests to attend GSSM school-sponsored activities. Off campus guests are not allowed Interviz privileges or to attend informal dances.
5. Students are responsible for the actions of their guests and are accountable for any damages accrued or policies broken. Visitors are expected to abide by all rules governing student life, and it is the host's responsibility to inform the guest of all rules and regulations.
6. Students must accompany their guest(s) at all times while they are on the GSSM campus.
7. Parents are encouraged to participate in campus activities, but for reasons of privacy and personal comfort of students, parents, siblings, and friends will not be allowed to stay overnight in the residence hall. Parents are requested to consider the impact of frequent visitation on the academic demands of the students' time. Parents are welcome to visit classrooms with advance notice given to the instructor.
8. Guests whose actions are deemed inappropriate by the Residence Life staff will be asked to leave campus.
9. In consideration of hall members, parents should avoid visitation to opposite sex floors before the noon hour. Parents must request permission from the Residence Life Coordinator on duty before accessing any hall unless it is a normal check-in or check-out time.
10. Any unauthorized visitor or suspicious person in or around the residence hall must be reported to a Security Officer or Residence Life staff immediately.

11. The Residence Life staff may alter any policy concerning guests at any time that such a change is warranted. In cases when these changes impact the entire campus community, every effort will be made to communicate these changes via email and/or the posting of signs.

## **I. Visitor Sign-In Requirements**

All visitors must report to the Center Lobby desk upon their arrival to campus. The receptionist and/or security guard will welcome the visitor, inquire as to their business, and review the requirements to determine if the visitor needs a Raptor ID. If the guest is 16 or older, they will be processed through the Raptor system, which will require a government issued identification card. Once the check is completed, the visitor will be given a visitor's ID to place on their shirt or jacket.

The following individuals must be processed through the Raptor system:

- Parents of students or prospective students who are visiting on a day that is not deemed a special event.
- Anyone coming to visit a faculty or staff member, including alumni.
- Contractors who have come to bid on work or perform work.
- Prospective students.
- Prospective employees.

The following are examples of individuals who do not need to be cleared through Raptor:

- Visiting parents who are not moving beyond the Center Lobby.
- Official delivery personnel (USPS, UPS, food delivery) who will not be moving past the Center Lobby or the dining hall loading dock.
- Local police officers.
- Campus visitors participating in special events (e.g. Move-In and Move-Out Days, Convocation, Graduation, Preview Days, Interview Day, Research Colloquium, Long Weekend pick up, Athletic Events, and the like). It will be the responsibility of the person coordinating the event to ensure that the Public Safety and Security staff have information about these programs and activities. For most special events, visitors will enter through the North Lobby and will restrict their activity to that area and the radius hallway.

## **J. Property Loss**

Parents and guardians should examine their homeowner's insurance policies to determine if they cover the student's property while attending GSSM. GSSM is not responsible for and does not provide personal property insurance for students, nor is it responsible for any personal property loss or damage.

## VII. LEAVING CAMPUS

*Hartsville is a growing city that is proud to have the Governor's School as a part of its community. To fulfill our commitment to our students' parents and to support personal safety, policies related to leaving campus on a day-to-day basis and the weekends and specified walking boundaries are important to respect. It is our responsibility to be able to account for you and your cooperation is critical in facilitating this goal. We have to ensure you are accounted for in situations as necessary.*

### A. Signing Out and Campus Curfew

Any time a student leaves campus (campus is defined as the property between Railroad Avenue, Coker Avenue, Emmary Street, and Jordan Avenue), the student will record their departure in **REACH** or via the computer sign in/out process in the lobby of the residence hall. **If the technology malfunctions, students will sign out in the RLC Office with the RLC on Duty.** In this case students will legibly record the following information: full name, time of departure, expected time of return, exact destination(s) indicating whether they are riding in a vehicle with an authorized and/or approved person or walking, the name of driver (if applicable) and list all companion(s). Immediately upon return to campus, each student is to document their return by signing in with the RLC on Duty.

After campus curfew and before room check, students are permitted to be outside on the front lawn in the court year and/or on the soccer field. The designated area for the courtyard is up to the end of the academic wing and the end of the Student Activity Center, interior sides only. These perimeters are designated for "Happy Half" on Sunday through Thursday evenings and Friday and Saturday evenings after **10:00 pm** up until Room Check. **Students are not permitted to be on the Jordan Street or Railroad Avenue sides of the building during "Happy Half" or after campus curfew or past the small parking lot at the end of the courtyard.**

Students must sign in immediately upon return to campus. Students are required to be on campus at 8:00 pm Sundays through Thursdays. The curfew on Friday and Saturday nights is **11:00 pm**. These policies are designed to ensure student safety and to ensure any student can be located quickly in the event of an emergency. Violations will result in disciplinary action.

### B. Required Weekends

All students must remain on campus during any weekend when a required academic activity or school-wide function is scheduled.

1. Required weekends include, but may not be limited to, the first weekend in the fall semester, the first weekend in the January Interim and weekends during exam periods.
2. Students under disciplinary sanctions, with academic deficiency, or delinquent in their community engagement service obligations may be required to stay on campus during some weekends.
3. Juniors are required to remain on campus all weekends until the first Long Weekend and may have unlimited weekend leaves for the remainder of the year except during special academic weekends, during which students will be required to stay on campus.
4. Seniors are allowed one weekend leave before the first long weekend. Seniors may take unlimited weekend passes after the first long weekend except during special academic weekends during which students will be required to stay on campus.

## C. Long Weekends (LWE)

Long Weekends are designed to offer a much needed (required) break from academics and residence life at GSSM. Approximately once a month, a Long Weekend is scheduled. Long Weekends begin immediately after a student's last class on Thursday and end the following Sunday. **The Residence Hall at GSSM closes at 6 pm** on the Thursday of LWE and **reopens at 2 pm that following Sunday**. All students must report back to the Residence Hall by 7:30 pm on Sunday. Students who have not vacated the building by 6:00 pm are required to wait in the main lobby. Weekend leave requests (see below) are not required for LWE since it is a required leave from campus and the Residence Hall will be closed.

## D. Weekend Leave Request (WLR)

Weekend leave requests are submitted electronically by the student and approved by the student's parents or guardians via **REACH**. Once parental approval is granted, weekend leave requests are then reviewed and approved by GSSM staff. Parents who have difficulty accessing **REACH** should call the RLC office at 843-383-3901, ext. 3931 or the RLC duty phone at 843-858-1603. The RLC will advise you regarding your request. If it is necessary to confirm weekend travel plans with a parent or guardian, a GSSM staff member will be in contact by phone or email. Students who have issues with the REACH database should contact a member of the IT staff.

1. Students who are signing out for the weekend must speak to the RLC on Duty before leaving. They are expected stop by the RLC office or call the duty phone before signing out of the building.
2. After students leave campus, parents assume full responsibility.
3. It is assumed that students recognize the importance of weekend study time and will use the weekend privileges judiciously.
4. Appropriate sign-out procedures must be followed when leaving for the weekend.
5. If a student returns to campus prior to the date approved on the weekend leave, they must also notify the RLC on duty immediately and note that their weekend leave ends at that time.
6. All requests for weekend leave must be made prior to 5 pm on the Thursday before the designated weekend.
7. Parents should contact the Residence Life Coordinator on duty at the earliest convenience if a student needs to be late returning from a Weekend Leave Request, Long Weekend, etc.

## E. Off-Campus Regulations and Vehicle Riders Policy

1. GSSM does not regulate with whom a student may ride during weekends. Parents must communicate directly with the student their rules for riding in vehicles. Parents must also notify GSSM regarding who their student is approved to ride with on weekends.
  - a. Students visiting with family and friends on weekends will restrict travel to a 30-mile radius of Hartsville unless the student is on an approved weekend leave.
  - b. Policies pertaining to Signing-out/Signing-in, Campus/Town Boundaries, Student Companions, and Vehicles on Campus as found in this handbook must be followed.
  - c. Questions concerning this policy should be directed to the Dean of Students.
2. Sundays through Thursdays, students will not be permitted to travel in motor vehicles with anyone other than GSSM faculty/staff, family members, drivers contracted by GSSM, or other persons designated by the parents or guardians of the student. Students must always inform a Residence Life Coordinator of their need to leave campus in a motor vehicle.

3. By enrolling students in the school, parents extend permission for them to travel in school vehicles or in private vehicles of faculty, staff, or other adults who participate in school programs.

## F. Student Trip/Event Behavior

Student participation in any GSSM sponsored trip, event, or Interim program will be solely at the discretion of the sponsor or chaperone.

Any inappropriate behavior will be addressed with the student, the parents, the Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth, and/or the Dean of Students. When considering students for participation in future trips, events, or Interim programs, past behavior will be considered.

## G. Leaving Campus with a Family Member

Students must complete an Excused Absence Form (see someone in the Student Development wing for assistance) three days in advance if they plan to leave campus with a family member for an overnight trip or any length of time in which classes, scheduled events, or QUEST will be missed. (In emergency situations, parents may request an exception to this policy from the on-duty Residence Life Coordinator. Students are to follow the normal sign-out procedures upon leaving campus.)

## H. Student Companion Policy

The following guidelines outline the times and number of people required for walking off campus:

1. Students are strongly encouraged to walk in pairs during daylight hours. Students may walk alone within the approved town boundaries between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) and 6:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Daylight Savings Time (DST), if classes or community engagement responsibilities require it, but they must stay within the prescribed town boundaries. A map of town boundaries is provided in the back of this handbook. **NOTE: GSSM prefers that students travel in pairs/groups whenever possible, including these time periods.**
2. Sunday – Thursday evenings after 5:30 p.m. during EST, students who leave campus should sign out in groups of two or more and must return to campus by 8:00 p.m. **Students are not permitted to leave campus between 10:00 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. (“Happy Half”) on Sunday through Thursday or between 11:00 p.m. and midnight on Friday and Saturday.**
3. Friday and Saturday evenings after 5:30 pm EST and 8:00 pm DST students who leave campus must sign out in groups of two or more and are expected to return to campus by 11:00 p.m., which is the weekend curfew (Friday and Saturday evenings).
4. Students are expected to sign out when going to and from community engagement and to sign back in when they return.
5. Students are expected to remain within the GSSM campus perimeter and/or authorized walking boundaries.

## I. Walking Boundaries

1. When walking south, students can use Coker Avenue to Fourth or Fifth Street. Students must indicate specific destinations through the designated system. “Town, bank, store, ATM,” etc. are not specific destinations.

2. Students should not walk alone or in groups/pairs, to destinations which are out of walking boundaries. The only exception would be athletic training related to cross country and track practices or other athletic conditioning approved and communicated by the athletic staff.
3. Where a sidewalk is provided, it should be used. When a sidewalk is not available, one should walk on the shoulder as far as possible from the edge of the roadway. GSSM advises that students not walk in areas where there are not sidewalks or shoulders, but if you must, walk as near as possible to an outside edge of the roadway and if on a two-way road, walk on to your left.
4. When walking, please do not suddenly leave the curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle.
5. Students are not permitted on the Coker University campus unless they have official business, which might include: athletic practices or events, visits to the library, appointments related to music practices or other authorized and approved activities.
6. If students are signing out to walk and are not going to a particular location, they should list the general vicinity of their walk by using landmarks (i.e. walking toward Sonic, Wal-Mart, Downtown, IGA, around Coker, etc.). The revised sign-in/sign-out system provides specific options in many cases, but when the system is not available, please use the following:

**Street Boundaries:**

Second Ave. – South to the GSSM Campus.

Fourth St. – South to the Wal-Mart and north to Home Avenue, before dark only.

Coker Ave. – South to Fourth Street.

Fifth St. – Businesses between Taco Bell and Sonic Drive-In  
(exception: Barber shop on Sixth Street—access via Laurens Avenue off Fifth Street).

Home Avenue – West to the First Presbyterian Church and east to Second Street.

College Avenue – West to Hartsville Memorial Library.

Carolina Avenue – West to Sixth Street and east to Second Street.

## **J. Bicycling Guidelines**

Students who wish to ride a bicycle at GSSM must have a completed release from liability form signed by the student and parents and all bicycles must be registered with the Dean of Students.

1. Proper sign-out procedure must be followed. The bicycle route and direction must be documented in the sign-out book. Students are expected to ride with, not against, the traffic.
2. A helmet must be worn at all times. A water bottle, some type of ID (driver's license, GSSM ID, etc.), emergency telephone numbers, and a repair kit (supplied by you) should always be carried.
3. Students may ride anywhere within the GSSM walking boundaries (see map in the back of the handbook).
4. All riding must be completed during daylight hours prior to campus curfew.
5. No required activities or meetings may be missed.
6. Cycling is a privilege. It may be revoked for abuse or other inappropriate behavior.
7. Students are not permitted to ride outside of walking boundaries unless they have prior approval from the Director of Athletics or the Dean of Students.

8. All bikes must be stored on the outside bike racks and secured with a **U LOCK**, except over holiday breaks when they should be taken home or stored in your room.

## K. Student Vehicle Policy

Parking is a senior privilege, and preference is given to seniors first. Student use and parking of vehicles at GSSM is a privilege, which may be revoked if vehicle policies are violated. It is intended to assist parents in the task of transporting students to and from GSSM during approved weekend leaves, long weekends, and to and from interviews and other activities necessary for college application and selection. Students are not allowed to use their cars for travel to medical appointments or extracurricular activities that do not require a weekend leave request. Parents are encouraged to consider all other transportation options, including carpooling, before requesting that a student be allowed to keep a vehicle on campus. **Parents and students should plan routine doctor visits, college visits, family visits and vacations, etc., during long weekends and holidays.**

1. Parking approval is required.
  - a. Parents and students must complete and submit a Vehicle Registration/Approval Form prior to August 1<sup>st</sup> due to limited space. Forms may be obtained through the Dean of Students' Office. Parents/students will be required to remove any vehicle from campus if approval is not obtained or approval is revoked for any reason.
  - b. Should the number of requests exceed the number of spaces available, spaces will be assigned on a first come first served basis.
  - c. Once approval has been granted and fee paid, a registration sticker will be issued by the Dean of Students and must be displayed on the rearview mirror of the vehicle.
2. Only those vehicles holding a current valid student permit may be parked at GSSM. Vehicles may be parked only in the designated student parking area.
3. All pertinent GSSM rules regarding conduct and prohibited substances apply to permitted vehicles. Vehicles are subject to search when reasonable suspicion warrants. The student is usually present during the search.
4. **Parking on campus is a senior privilege.** Seniors who do not apply for spaces in May are eligible to apply for remaining spaces during the summer. Spaces will be assigned on a first come first serve basis.
5. GSSM is not liable for damages caused through natural disaster, weather-related circumstances or vandalism to any student vehicle parked on the GSSM campus.
6. Mechanical problems such as dead batteries, flat tires, locked keys, no fuel, etc. are solely the responsibility of the vehicle owner. GSSM does not provide service for such incidents, and we ask that students check to ensure that cars are operating properly before long weekends and extended breaks.
7. Students must comply with the following:
  - a. All vehicles will be parked in the GSSM designated parking area. Students may not park their vehicles off campus. This will be considered a violation of the vehicle policy.
  - b. Students may not access vehicles in the lot except when removing or returning them after approved and required leaves.

## L. Permissible Student Vehicle Usage

1. Except for long weekends and holidays, approval must be obtained prior to each use of the vehicle by the student. Student vehicles may be used for the following:

- a. To travel to and from home on free weekends, long weekends, and holidays. Loading and unloading is limited to 15 minutes at the rear of the residence hall. A Weekend Leave Form must be approved by the Residence Life Staff for vehicle use on weekends.
  - b. For approved college visits and college admissions or scholarship interviews:
    - Student must provide written confirmation for all college visits and college or scholarship interviews.
    - Visits and interviews are approved by the Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth.
  - c. For unscheduled, non-routine, and emergency situations, approval must be received from the Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth or the Dean of Students. An example would be a family matter related to illness or death. **Students may not access their vehicles for same day appointments or activities not outlined above.**
2. Vehicle pickup procedure:
- a. **Approval:** No approval is required for vehicle use on long weekends or holidays. All other use, including free weekends, requires specific approval as noted and approval must be secured before the vehicle is accessed.
  - b. **Pickup time:** For routine departures for weekends, long weekends, and holidays, the designated parking area can be accessed from 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm. Students must coordinate their departure plans to conform to this schedule.
  - c. For unscheduled or non-routine usage, students must make pickup arrangements at least 24 hours in advance with the Residence Life Coordinator on duty. Emergencies will be handled as quickly as approval can be obtained.
  - d. Once the student has picked up the vehicle, the student may drive to the rear of the residence hall to load their vehicle. The student must then leave the campus until the approved leave has ended.
3. Vehicle return/parking procedure:
- a. For routine returns on free weekends, long weekends, and holidays, the designated **parking area can be accessed from 2:00 pm – 7:30 pm on return days**. Students must coordinate their return travel times to conform to this schedule.
  - b. For any unscheduled or non-routine vehicle returns, students must make arrangements at least 24 hours in advance with the Dean of Students.
  - c. **Once a student returns to campus in their vehicle** (whether returning early or on time) **the weekend leave and driving privileges end immediately**. Therefore, students may not leave campus again in their car for any reason (i.e., a student may not drive to Wal-Mart, to a restaurant, to get gas, etc.). **Vehicles must be parked in the designated parking lot immediately upon return or prior to 7:30 pm.**

## M. Student Vehicle Policy Violations

Students who do not comply with all of the above may lose their vehicle privilege. Parking fees for the current semester are not refundable if parking privilege is lost for any reason. Violation of Vehicle Policy will result in sanctions as follows:

1. Pick-up or Return Violation – Level 2 Discipline Code Violation
  - **1st offense** – loss of vehicle privilege for one month
  - **2nd offense** – loss of privilege for the remainder of the year, including special events
2. Use of vehicle without approval – Level 2 Discipline Code Violation
  - Loss of privilege for the remainder of the year, including special events



3. Accessing the vehicle without permission – Level 2 Discipline Code Violation
  - Loss of privilege for the remainder of the year, including special events
4. Parking a vehicle off campus – Level 3 Discipline Code Violation
  - Loss of privilege for the remainder of the year, including special events

## VIII. ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND LEADERSHIP

*In keeping with the Division of Student Development's vision to make the out-of-class experience as educationally purposeful as the in-class experience, GSSM promotes leadership in the residence hall, athletics, and the co-curricular experience. Our commitment is to develop life skills that will serve our students far beyond their time at the Governor's School. Because of the diverse interests of our students, we offer a variety of clubs, organizations, and affinity groups, which we refer to as societies. We work to support any group of students who may want to start an organization.*

### A. Philosophy and Vision

The philosophy of student engagement at GSSM is to support student success and excellence. Under the leadership of the Dean of Students and with the holistic development of the student at the forefront, we sponsor and implement engagement through participation in clubs and organizations, community service, and leadership development.

The vision is to foster an institutional culture that facilitates learning through student centered programming that promotes meaningful campus and community involvement through student organizations and activities. Student Engagement seeks to support its philosophy by:

- Challenging students to excellence in their academic, civic, and cultural pursuits
- Promoting an environment of respect, support, and appreciation for community
- Providing students with opportunities to grow and develop new skills
- Affording students leadership opportunities that develop their collaborative and communication skills

### B. Student Council

The GSSM Student Council is the principal voice for the student body to the school's administration, faculty, and staff on matters of school policy. In a spirit of cooperation, loyalty, and school spirit, the Student Council stresses good citizenship, works to encourage worthwhile activities within the school, and strives to improve the quality of life for everyone in the school community. The Student Council represents, at all times and to the best of its ability, the ideas, wishes, and attitudes of the student body. More specifically, the Student Council serves as a bridge between the student body and the school's administration, faculty, and staff by which student concerns can be heard and addressed. The school's administration calls on the Student Council for student input on policy matters directly affecting the student body. The Student Council consists of 14 members (8 seniors and 6 juniors) who are elected annually by their respective classes.

**The duties and responsibilities of the Student Council are as follows:**

1. To act as a barometer of student opinion
2. To assist the school's administration, faculty, and staff in gathering student opinion on new policies that directly affect the student body
3. To suggest to the school's administration ideas for the betterment of the school
4. To promote the general social life in the school
5. To stimulate student interest in school activities
6. To promote respect for the school and for private property
7. To organize and promote general and special elections
8. To interpret the Constitution and Bylaws as necessary

## **C. Student Activity Board**

The Student Activity Board (SAB) is made up of two elected students representing each floor and is advised by the Student Activities Coordinator. The Board has regular meetings with the advisor to plan activities for the student body. The members are responsible for planning dances, campus-wide events, and large off-campus trips. Students are involved with all aspects from planning, preparation, and advertising to cleaning up for SAB events.

## **D. Student Organizations**

Organization development and registration are determined at the beginning of each school year and driven by student interest. Most organizations at GSSM are social, cultural, academic, competitive, or service oriented (e.g. National Honor Society, Math Team, Robotics Club, French Club, Beta Club, Interact, etc.). Some organizations have local, regional, or national affiliations and GSSM students will often represent the school through service or at competitions at these various levels. To join an organization, students should express interest, attend club meetings, and be a contributing member. Some organizations have specific criteria and when joining those groups, that criteria must be met. While many clubs have remained active since their inception, participation fluctuates from year to year.

Students may also charter new organizations. When a group of students desire to establish an organization or continue a club, they are required to register through the Office of the Dean of Students. Once the registration materials have been submitted, they will be reviewed and approved by the office and Interclub Council (ICC). Student organizations that wish to be recognized and desire to be considered for funding must complete the following process:

1. Complete the club registration form obtained from the Office of the Dean of Students
2. Obtain a faculty or staff advisor who is willing to attend all meetings, activities, and functions
3. Provide a membership roster to include all officers and members
4. Develop a mission statement and/or constitution
5. Project anticipated organization activities to include a community service project during the fall and spring semester
6. Hold meetings at least twice a month
7. Submit monthly reports to the Student Activities Coordinator and Student Council through the Interclub Council (ICC)

## **E. Societies**

Societies are formed when groups of students with a shared interest in music, film, fun, sports, recreation, etc. seek to gather to share in their common interest (e.g. Society for the Easily Amused, Fancy Tuesdays, Rain Society, Football, Guitar, and Cheese Society, etc.). Being recognized as a Society is much easier and more flexible than registering as a club. For example, a Society is not required to have a faculty or staff advisor, elected officers, or hold regular meetings. However, Societies cannot request ICC monies or represent the school in any way.

To create or register a society, complete the society registration form from the Dean of Students. After the society has been approved by the Dean of Students or their designee, the society can begin meeting. Societies may be registered at any time throughout the school year.

## **F. Student Ambassadors**

Student Ambassadors represent the school in various ways such as speaking with parents and students at information sessions on campus and virtually, helping Admissions and other GSSM departments as needed, serving as hosts for prospective students, guiding campus tours for prospective students and parents, and assisting with GSSM's Preview Days. Ambassadors must complete an application and interview and are carefully selected by a committee of GSSM staff. Ambassadors should exemplify the best qualities of GSSM, academically and interpersonally, and they must be in good standing in all areas of campus life.

Ambassadors are expected to attend meetings, actively volunteer, and maintain positive behaviors in and out of the classroom and on and off campus.

## **G. Natural Helpers**

GSSM Natural Helpers are an informal "helping network." They are the "front line" in assisting the Wellness Counseling and Campus Life staffs in meeting the physical, emotional, and psychological needs of our students. These peer counselors and campus leaders complete an application and interview and are carefully selected by a staff committee. Natural Helpers must be in good standing in all areas of campus life as they are expected to be role models.

A Natural Helper is a facilitator in developing a relationship with their peers, helping to solve problems and guiding new students in their adjustment to the GSSM environment. The mission of a Natural Helper is to instill a "sense of belonging" in the new students and a renewed sense among their fellow seniors. Their goal is to assist new students in adjusting to the academic and social transition from their home high school to life at GSSM and to provide assistance to any student in need. Natural Helpers are selected each year by early March and are involved in promoting and fostering community for the entire student body assisting the residence life staff. They are actively involved in the life of the school, especially May and August Orientation and various campus programs.

## **H. Student Activity Center**

GSSM students, faculty, and staff are welcome to reserve the Student Activity Center or specific rooms in the Center for programs, activities, study sessions, or individual use. Please contact the Student Activities Coordinator or the Dean of Students to make a reservation.

Hours of Operation

Sunday – Friday: 3:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

Saturday: 12 noon to 11:00 p.m.

## **IX. ATHLETICS**

*Good sportsmanship is an emblem of GSSM Athletics along with the values of teamwork, discipline, and persistence. Our teams are competitive and many of our students try organized sports for the first time here. We encourage interested students to become academic and athletic champions. As our teams represent GSSM in the State, communities are often surprised by their athletic success. Additionally, many students choose to stay fit through their athletic participation or by becoming involved in the fitness classes and intramural offerings of the department. GSSM has been designated a First Team Safe Sports School by the National Athletic Trainers Association. We abide by all current and evolving health and safety regulations and guidance provided by the associated authorities.*

### **A. Athletics**

GSSM has sport programs sanctioned by the South Carolina High School League, which include volleyball, basketball, cross-country, soccer, swimming, tennis, and track. Some sports have separate girls' and boys' teams, and others are co-ed depending upon the level of student interest. GSSM has produced multiple State and Regional Championship teams and individuals.

To participate on athletic teams, students must:

1. Be in good academic standing (students on Academic Probation may not participate).
2. Have an updated physical (valid from April 1 through the following year) on file at GSSM.
3. Have health and accident coverage (a basic accident policy is available through the school).
4. Submit an official, original birth certificate. The school will make a copy and return the original to the student.
5. Read, sign, and abide by the Student Athlete Contract provided by the Athletic Department.
6. Submit signed parental permission and concussion protocols forms.

Students may earn an athletic letter in any of the GSSM sports programs. At various times during the year, sports recognition programs may be held and letters and other honors awarded. Students with disciplinary records (extensive Level 1s, a Level 2, or Level 3) may not be permitted to participate in athletics. The Athletic Director and coaches will determine if students will not be allowed to participate in athletics for disciplinary reasons.

### **B. Physical Activity**

The Governor's School for Science & Mathematics believes strongly in our students' need for physical activity. The purposes of the physical activity program are to:

1. Promote good health
2. Provide a means for releasing tension
3. Encourage lifetime fitness activities

There are systems in place to support and encourage the overall wellness of all GSSM students. Details can be provided by the Athletics staff.

## C. Seasons

### Fall Sports

Boys' and Girls' Swimming  
Boys' and Girls' Cross-Country  
Girls' Tennis  
Girls' Golf  
Girls' Volleyball

### Winter Sports

Boys' Basketball  
Girls' Basketball

### Spring Sports

Boys' and Girls' Track  
Boys' Tennis  
Boys' and Girls' Soccer  
Boys' Golf  
Boys' Volleyball

## D. Classes and Playoff Schedule Conflicts

Athletes participating in the playoffs are permitted to leave class or miss class based upon the location and time of the scheduled event. The High School League, not GSSM, determines where and when the playoffs will be played. The Athletic Director and/or coaches will provide athletic rosters and request for dismissals.

## E. Overlapping Sports Participation

Students participating in dual sports that have overlapping seasons will be reviewed by the Athletic Director on an individual basis. No student should participate in overlapping sports if they have substandard academic reports even if they are not required to attend Pre-QUEST (e.g. a student has three C's and plays basketball and soccer that overlap). Students may be removed from one or more sports based upon their academic standing. Students who commit to athletics should participate as much as possible, but academics are always first.

## F. Performance Enhancing Drugs

Any student athlete who has tested positive or has been observed using illegal or performance enhancing drugs may be suspended or terminated from participating in athletics. They may also be subject to other disciplinary action based on the results of a full investigation.

## G. Gym Usage during the Academic Year

1. GSSM students are permitted to utilize the facility during the allotted time period. (Weight room usage requires at least two individuals in the room whenever feasible. Students should not use weight room without supervision.)
2. During the academic school year, GSSM Security will open and close the gym according to the following schedule:
  - a. Monday – Thursday 6:00 am – 10:30 pm
  - b. Friday 6:00 am – 12 midnight
  - c. Saturday 8:00 am – 12 midnight
  - d. Sunday 8:00 am – 10:30 pm
3. GSSM faculty and staff members are permitted to utilize the gym and weight room during the allotted time period. However, faculty and staff members are responsible for securing the building if used outside of published operating hours. GSSM faculty and staff members are expected to maintain a safe environment by cleaning up and replacing equipment to the proper areas.
4. Special events must be arranged, in advance, through the Facilities Usage Form.
5. Priority of Use:
  - a. Academic class schedule
  - b. Athletic team game/practice – GSSM
  - c. GSSM intramurals/free play – All GSSM students
  - d. GSSM assembly/Foundation assembly

- e. Athletic team game/practice – Coker and/or Community

## **H. Gym Usage During the Summer**

GSSM faculty and staff members are permitted to utilize the facility. (Students are not permitted to use the weight room during the summer.) GoSciTech (formally Summer Science Program) faculty and staff members are permitted to utilize the gym and weight room. GoSciTech students are permitted to utilize the gym with proper supervision, but they are not permitted to use the weight room.

## X. SENIOR PRIVILEGES

*Like most high schools, seniors have certain privileges that are associated with their classifications. GSSM is no exception. These privileges are earned and exercised in the context of the school's academic and community standards.*

### A. Optional QUEST

Seniors with final grades in all semester and full year courses of at least an 80 **may exempt QUEST during the Spring Semester**, provided they have no serious disciplinary infractions. Should a senior with optional QUEST be placed on Pre-QUEST during the Spring Semester, the optional QUEST privilege is forfeited for the remainder of the semester. This privilege is given to encourage students to learn to manage study time on their own in preparation for college. This privilege is not to suggest that seniors do not need to study, but to offer a more flexible study schedule set by the student.

If necessary, this privilege may be modified or revoked at any time without advance notice.

1. Seniors who do not QUEST may not have lights out extensions on the same evening. If you think you may need an extension, you must inform the Residence Life Coordinator at the beginning of QUEST that you are QUESTing. Otherwise, they will not know that you have participated in QUEST, and therefore, will not be able to grant you a lights out extension.
2. We need to continue to provide study environments for students; therefore, TV, videos, NINTENDO, XBOX, Wii, PlayStation, and other games may not be played in the lounges during QUEST.
3. Seniors who are not QUESTing may use cell phones during QUEST, except in silent student areas, as long as it does not interrupt other students' study time. If this becomes a problem, this privilege will be taken away.
4. Seniors may not disrupt any other student's QUEST, either through distraction or by noise.
5. No other rules or policies are superseded by this privilege (i.e. visitation).
6. Seniors may go off campus if they have earned the privilege of Optional QUEST. They must return to campus no later than 10:00 pm. Properly signing in and out as dictated by school policy is required to maintain this privilege.

### B. QUESTing Outside

During Daylight Savings Time, seniors are allowed to study in the patio area outside of the Dining Hall, and the semi-circle lawn in front of the school until 9:00 pm. (The study time may be adjusted by the Administration.) Seniors QUESTing outside must sign up on a special sign-up sheet so that all students are accounted for during QUEST. Outdoor QUESTers must follow all current noise guidelines for QUEST. Students studying in groups must not disturb other students who are studying around them. The following guidelines are in effect for outdoor QUESTing:

1. All relative rules that apply to indoor QUEST also apply to QUEST outdoors.
2. Students may not leave the designated outside areas. Violators of outdoor QUEST rules will lose the privilege of outside study for one month. This penalty will carry over from Fall to Spring or Spring to Fall Daylight Savings Time periods.
3. Students or groups who are disrupting others will be asked to return to their room(s) and may be subject to the GSSM Discipline Code.



4. Seniors who are supposed to be QUESTing who are not engaged in study will be asked to go to their rooms.
5. Students may not move inside furniture to the outside (e.g. dining hall chairs, tables, lobby furnishing, etc.).
6. Students must use headphones when listening to music or any other program.

### **C. Parking**

Parking is a senior privilege. Please see the details in the Student Vehicle Policy of this handbook.

## **XI. DINING SERVICES**

*GSSM contracts with Aramark for its dining services. The food services manager works closely with various departments in managing meals and accommodating special dietary needs, especially in the case of our students, faculty, and staff.*

### **A. Meal Schedule**

Students will be provided breakfast, lunch, and dinner seven days a week in the GSSM dining Hall. GSSM dining services are contracted annually. The current provider is Aramark. Hours for dining are as follows:

	<b>Monday-Friday</b>	<b>Saturday-Sunday</b>
<b>Breakfast</b>	7:30 am – 9:00 am	
<b>Lunch</b>	11:30 am – 1:00 pm	11:00 am – 2:00 pm (brunch)
<b>Dinner</b>	5:00 pm – 6:30 pm	5:30 pm – 6:30 pm

### **B. Dining Hall Guidelines**

There are guidelines for the dining hall to ensure that all students, faculty, and staff can have an enjoyable dining experience. All dining services staff have the right to reprimand anyone for not following the guidelines for the dining hall. All write-ups received in the dining hall for inappropriate actions will result in work detail in the dining hall.

1. Dispose of all personal trash, whether dining inside or on the patio. Return all chairs to their proper positions after use.
2. Everyone is expected to wait in line for meals. No cutting in line is allowed. Allow yourself plenty of time to get your meal and eat before your next class.
3. Throwing food, utensils, plates, bowls, cups, napkins, etc. is strictly prohibited.
4. No carry out meals or drinks are provided, although when necessary, students may take a piece of whole fruit or cookie.
5. Meals will be provided for students who are ill and excused from classes. An RLC or other staff member will get your meal for you and deliver it to your room.
6. Everyone is to take their trays and dishes to the dish window after each meal. Diners should scrape and stack their dishes before leaving them.
7. Anything deemed inappropriate by the dining hall staff or any GSSM faculty or staff member may result in a write-up.
8. The Dining Hall can be used during non-dining hours for study or meetings provided that it does not interfere with breaking down from the previous service or preparing for the next.
9. Guests are required to provide payment for meals unless given permission by the Dining Services Director.

## XII. WELLNESS SERVICES

*Student health, safety, and fitness are fundamental to the overall well-being of our community. The Health Services department is the center of physical health programs at GSSM and the Wellness Counseling unit addresses and supports the mental and emotional health of our students. Ensuring compliance with HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and the DHEC (Department of Health and Environmental Control), our nurses and counselors are committed to providing excellent care to the students.*

### A. Health Services Office

The Health Services office is currently open (when school is in session) from 7:00 am – 11:00 pm Monday through Thursday; from 7:00 am – 11:30 pm on Friday and 7:30 am – 11:30 pm on Saturday. Sunday hours are 11:00 am – 11:00 pm. The schedule is adjusted on the Sundays after the Long Weekends and Breaks and on the Saturdays when we have major programs and activities to accommodate the needs of the students. The Health Services office is located on the first floor of the GSSM building in room A137 and is staffed by nurses contracted through our local hospital.

### B. Emergency Services

Emergency medical services are provided by Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center, 843-339-2100. The student and his or her parent or guardian are responsible for any medical or dental expenses not covered by personal health insurance. Please request an additional/duplicate insurance and/or prescription card for your child. If a student is treated and released from the hospital, the parent should contact the School Nurse, the Dean of Students, or the Residence Life Coordinator on Duty prior to bringing the student back to GSSM.

### C. Health Records

Every student must have the GSSM Medical Examination/Self History Form on file in the Health Services office. The information provided on this form is vital to our staff so the best possible care can be given to our students. Please note that the Self History portion must be reviewed by the student's physician in addition to the physician filling out the back of the form and signing the same.

A **parent or guardian** is responsible for updating the nurse if there are any changes regarding medications or the physical, medical, or psychological conditions of your child. Please see the medication policy for details – Section F, Item 8 noted later in the chapter. **Also, if any information changes regarding your contact information, such as a phone number or address, please inform Health Services directly and immediately.** Health Services files are confidential and kept separate from the main files; therefore, changes must be relayed directly to the School Nurse. Health Services is also responsible for maintaining the student's Release of Information form kept at the hospital. Correct information is important in the event of an emergency.

### D. Insurance

All GSSM students must have health insurance. Parents/guardians must provide proof of health insurance. Those families who do not carry such a policy will be required to purchase a policy to cover their child for medical treatment while at GSSM. Parents and guardians should examine their health insurance coverage to determine if it covers their child's health while attending GSSM. GSSM is neither responsible for, and does not provide health insurance for students, nor is it responsible for any health or medical costs. We encourage parents to make \$100 accessible to their student at all times for unplanned doctor visits and prescriptions. (If the prescription card is separate from the medical insurance card, please provide a copy of it as well, front and back, to your student.)

Please make sure your child's **INSURANCE INFORMATION** is **ALWAYS** up to date and **CURRENT** and provide the student a copy of medical insurance card.

## E. DHEC and GSSM Immunization Requirements

### 1. SC State Law requires:

- Any student transferring from one school to another must transfer the immunization records to the receiving school. The immunizations must be on the DHEC 4024 or DEHEC 2740 form. A copy can be obtained from your county Health Department, pediatrician's office, or current school. Please be specific that you are asking for the DHEC immunization record required for public school admission. Doctor's records and pink shot record cards are not acceptable documentation. Additional vaccines such as meningitis or HPV may be put on a separate sheet as they are recommended, but not required.
- Religious exemption from receiving immunizations must be signed and obtained from the health care provider and on the appropriate DHEC form.
- Students who do not have a current immunization record on file after 30 days from the first day of school will be dismissed until such time as the school receives the proper immunization record.

### 2. GSSM requires:

- All students in attendance must have a current Tetanus shot. (Current means within the last ten years; however, if it has been 5 years or more, please request the Tdap vaccine, which offers additional protection from Pertussis, also known as Whooping Cough.)
- Documentation from a health care professional of current PPD (Tb skin test) is required (within the last 12 months) for all rising juniors. This is only required for seniors if they have traveled out of the country during the summer before their senior year.
- Indication, **ON THE IMMUNIZATION FORM**, whether a student has had the Chicken Pox disease or the Chicken Pox Vaccine. Please have your health care provider write it on the form. GSSM highly recommends students receive the Meningitis vaccine prior to admission. Please explain to your health care professional that your child will be attending a residential school and living in a residence hall just like in a college setting.
- GSSM also highly recommends that our students receive the flu vaccine when it becomes available in the fall. Please plan for your student to have the flu vaccine over a Long Weekend. If possible, Health Services will sponsor a flu clinic in the fall, and parents will be notified in advance.
- *Institutions to which students are assigned for mentored summer research experiences may have their own health, vaccination, and testing requirements with which students are required to comply. These institutions are not necessarily obligated to provide exemptions for medical, religious, or other considerations due to the nature of their activities. Costs and scheduling of required inoculation, testing, and documentation are the responsibility of students and their families. It is the responsibility of the student and their family to communicate any health, religious, or other considerations that may interfere with compliance with these policies and limit potential assignment to the Office of Research & Inquiry as soon as the potential conflict is suspected.*

## F. Medication Policy and Doctor Information

GSSM requires notification of all medications (prescription and over-the-counter) needed by students.

1. All oral prescription medications will be retained by the nurse, kept in locked cabinets in Health Services, and given by a health care professional or designated trained staff member.
2. The only prescription medications designated as "**self-administered**" medications and allowed to be retained by the student are Insulin, topical creams/lotions, eye/ear drops, inhalers/nebulizers, and emergency Epi-pens. These medications still have to be reviewed by and registered with Health Services.

3. Each student must have on file in Health Services:
  - a. A **Medication Policy** signed by the student and the parent or guardian
  - b. **Permission for Administration of Prescription Medication** forms signed by the prescribing physician and a parent or guardian for each prescription medication brought to GSSM
  - c. **Authorization of Administration of Non-Prescription Medication** (over the counter medication) forms signed by the student's health care provider and a parent or guardian
4. Limited over-the-counter (OTC) medications may be retained by the student **after review** by Health Services. Controlled OTCs include, **but are not limited to**:
  - a. Cold/Sinus medication
  - b. Any medication with Diphenhydramine/Benadryl
  - c. Melatonin

Students are not allowed to retain these medications, but they can be retained and administered through Health Services.

5. Students who purchase OTC medications must show them to Health Services for review. OTCs are to be taken in accordance with the medication label or package insert, unless prescribed otherwise in writing, by a health care practitioner. The parent or guardian shall indemnify and hold harmless GSSM and its employees and agents against any claim arising from a student's self-monitoring or self-administration of medication. CBD oil, topicals, and related substances are not permitted.
6. A limited number of OTC medications will be available in the Health Services office and given in accordance with your child's physician's orders per the **Authorization of Administration of Non-Prescription Medication** form.
7. Requests from parents/guardians for administration of experimental medications and herbal/alternative medicinal products at GSSM will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the School Nurse and the School Administrators.
8. As specified by GSSM policy:
  - a. All prescription medications and controlled OTC medications will be locked in the Nurse's office, except those approved by a GSSM nurse. The prescription and controlled OTC medications will be dispensed on a daily, or as needed basis – depending on the medication and each individual student's needs.
  - b. Health Services must be notified immediately via phone, email, or in writing by a student's parent/legal guardian, of any new medications, changes in dosage, or eliminations/additions of a medication. This includes OTC medications. If a student purchases an OTC, they must show it to the nurse for review. A corresponding **Permission for Administration of Prescription Medication form** completed by the prescribing physician must accompany any change in dosage or new medication as soon as possible after any adjustment in treatment. If a prescription is discontinued, Health Services should receive notification from the prescribing physician verifying this discontinuation.
  - c. **All new medications brought to GSSM must be given to the School Nurse for review. If the Nurse is unavailable, the medication must be given to the Residence Life Coordinator (RLC) on duty.**
  - d. All prescription medications must be turned in to Health Services on the day you return from the Long Weekend, the weekend home, or a school break. If a nurse is not available, the medication should be left with the RLC on duty. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
  - e. When possible, parents may be notified if a student fails to comply with the medication policy and/or their medication regimen. Parents are encouraged to contact Health Services for up-

- dates regarding their children's compliance as it is not always feasible for the nurses to contact them. Non-compliance could result in disciplinary action.
- f. GSSM reserves the right to refuse to honor medication requests that are not consistent with professional standards (e.g. manufacturer's guidelines, Physician's Desk Reference) and/or are deemed unsafe for the school setting. If this occurs, GSSM's School Nurse, School Administrators, the prescribing health care practitioner, and the student's parent/guardian will discuss alternatives for meeting the student's needs.
9. All prescription medications must be in the original bottle labeled with the student's name.
  10. All OTC medications must be in the original container. We ask that the student's name be written on the bottle with a Sharpie pen.
  11. Please schedule any doctor appointments needed for your child, on the Friday of Long Weekend. If/when prescription refills are needed, the new medication can be sent with your student when they return. If your pharmacy has a location in Hartsville, you can transfer the prescription to Hartsville if you choose.
  12. Health insurance is required. Please contact your insurance company regarding physicians and your approved provider(s) in Hartsville. Please provide your student with a copy of their health insurance.

**Local pharmacies:**

CVS Pharmacy – 843-332-4191  
Hartsville Drug Company – 843-332-6581  
Walgreens – 843-332-4523  
Wal-Mart Pharmacy – 843-332-8111

## **G. Student Illness**

Students must see the School Nurse, a Residence Life Coordinator, or the Dean of Students prior to missing a class for illness or the absence will be recorded as unexcused. Students may not be excused after the fact. The procedure for reporting illness is as follows:

1. If a student is ill, they must go to the School Nurse. If the nurse is not in the office, the student is to call or see the Residence Life Coordinator on Duty or the Dean of Students.
2. If a student is in class and becomes ill, the student should ask permission from the instructor to leave class to see the nurse but then must follow the procedures as listed above.
3. The nurse may determine the student needs to see a health care provider and will make the appropriate appointment for the student after consulting with a parent/guardian. Transportation to and from a local physician will be provided. If no appointment is deemed necessary, it is the student's responsibility to notify a parent of their illness.
4. Students are required to see the nurse after returning from medical appointments and/or the hospital. All prescriptions must also be turned in and logged.

## **H. Excused Absences**

The student must come to the Health Services if they are too sick to attend classes. The student will be assessed and the nurse will determine as to whether or not they may be excused. The faculty and staff will be contacted so they are aware the absence is excused. A student should not stay out of class without an excuse. An unexcused absence may result in the student not being allowed to make up missed assignments. A maximum of (3) excused absences will be permitted per semester. *If additional absences are needed, permission will be made on a case-by-case basis.* The student will not be excused for a class after the fact.

In other words, they may not come down at 10:00 am and be excused for a 9:00 am class. **No exceptions will be made to this policy.**

1. **A student who is excused from class must remain in their room for the remainder of the day and night. Whether contagious or not, once excused from classes, students are restricted until the next morning.**
2. A student may leave their room only to seek additional medical attention or to heat food in the lounge microwave.
3. Meals will be brought to sick students. A nurse will also check on sick students who have been excused from classes.
4. A student may not have visitors in their room or visit another student's room on a day they are excused from class(es) for illness. We also ask their roommate to limit visitors to support the roommate's recovery.
5. A student may not participate in athletics or other school events on a day they miss class for illness.
6. A student who misses two or more class days in a week due to illness must have medical clearance (Nurse and/or Dean of Students) before participating in a student activity or athletic activity. Based on the situation, this may require a doctor's release.
7. A student with a temperature  $>102^{\circ}$  or with an illness that will take them 2 days or longer to recuperate will be sent home for the duration of the illness. A student must remain at home for 24 hours after their temperature has returned to normal without the use of medication. **Also note that there may be times in the life of the school when students are required to leave campus outside of these circumstances.**
8. A student who is hospitalized or taken to the emergency room due to an accident, illness or injury may not return to campus without the Nurse or Dean of Students' approval.
9. A student who was excused for illness the previous day should see the School Nurse the next day before attending class.

These guidelines are in place to allow the student to rest and get well. Additionally, we want to decrease exposure to other students. Students who do not follow these guidelines will be referred to the Dean of Students or the Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth.

## **I. Counseling Services**

Enriched academic programming for high school students brings many opportunities, but not always without its challenges and stressors. GSSM is pleased to offer on-site counseling as a part of the support services of our school. Students are able to access the resources of licensed mental health professionals in a setting that is convenient and comfortable to them. The Wellness Counseling staff maintain confidentiality as outlined by HIPAA and FERPA. However, because GSSM is a residential high school allowing students appropriate freedoms, in cases of potential serious harm to self or others, or significant emotional distress, the Wellness Counselors, along with the Vice President of Student Development & Professional Growth, may return the student to the parent/guardian's care for assessment and/or treatment.

Because this is a close environment and we want to ensure that we have appropriate supports in place for our school community, we ask students to let one of the counselors know if they begin or terminate mental health services in their home community. We also encourage families to share with our staff any distressing

circumstances that may impact their students while enrolled (e.g. illness, the death of a close family member or friend, etc.).

Students may seek assistance for a variety of issues including relationships, homesickness, transitioning to community living, stress and/or time management, anxiety, grief, depression, etc. These services are free to all enrolled students and are offered face-to-face when students are in residence. During breaks and the summer, students will work with providers in the home communities.

Students who need counseling beyond what can be reasonably provided by our wellness counselors are expected to arrange for therapeutic services in their home communities under the supervision of their parent/guardian. This protocol is designed for the safety of the student. It also ensures that the entire family is engaged to support the overall wellness of the student. These mental health professionals work closely with our staff in partnering toward student success.



## XIII. COLLEGE COUNSELING AND ADVISING

*The quality of college advising is a hallmark of the GSSM journey. What students receive through this office is comparable to the services provided by private consultants. The professionals in this office are committed to best practices and individualized attention. Students are encouraged to invest themselves in this process and fully utilize the resources this department provides as this is one of the most important in their educational journeys to date.*

***“College admissions is a match to be made, not a prize to be won.”***

*Frank Sachs, former director of college counseling at the Blake School in MN and the past president of the National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC)*

### A. College Counseling and Advising

The Office of College Counseling and Advising focuses on post-secondary opportunities for students at GSSM. Our primary goal is to assist students with finding “right fit” colleges for them: academically, socially, personally, and financially. We do this through collaborative work with students on the college search, application and admission process, as well as seeking and applying for need and merit-based financial aid. As part of our outreach, students learn more about their aptitudes, interests and why a good fit college is more than name recognition or prestige – it’s about learning where you can succeed and launch your career and/or graduate school preparation.

Each entering junior student is assigned a college counselor who will work with the student and parent through the senior year on the college planning and matriculation process.

Students may take up to five academic days for college visits during their two years at GSSM (Excused Absences-Category II). We encourage students and parents to use long weekends, holidays, and summer breaks to minimize loss of academic days. Students will be required to complete and return a **College Visit Verification Form** to their counselor to confirm campus visits using an excused absence.

In addition to one-on-one session with students through the year, we offer the following programs to assist students with college planning:

#### College Search and Application Process

- College Planning Seminar I course (all juniors, spring semester)
- College Planning Seminar II course (all seniors, fall semester)
- *Scoir* for students and parents (*Scoir* is a cloud-based software that connects students, families, high schools, and colleges for college planning and applications.)
- Parent-student meetings via Zoom, conference call, or in person at GSSM

#### Interaction with College Admissions Representatives

- More than 50 colleges and universities visit GSSM each year to meet with prospective students for individual college information sessions
- GSSM College Fair (fall)
- Bus trip to NACAC College Fair in Charlotte, NC (spring)
- Campus visits to SC colleges (Clemson, College of Charleston, USC Columbia)
- Annual College Admissions Dean’s Panel

#### Career Planning

- YouScience Aptitude and Career Discovery Inventory to determine aptitudes and interests (juniors)
- Corsava card sort to identify and prioritize college characteristics and preferences (optional for juniors)

The Office of College Counseling and Advising is a member of the National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC) and abides by the best practices of this association and its members.

## **B. PSAT, SAT, ACT and AP Testing**

To assist student in their preparation for applying to college, the dates of the PSAT, SAT, ACT, and AP exams are published in the school calendar and on the College Counseling webpages. All juniors are required to take the PSAT in October and the ACT or SAT in the spring semester (sponsored by the SC Department of Education). *It is strongly recommended that students take the SAT and ACT at least once in the spring of their junior year and again in the fall of their senior year. SAT and/or ACT scores are required to qualify for the SC state merit scholarships (Palmetto Fellows and LIFE) even though many colleges are now test-optional or test-blind. The vast majority of colleges and universities will consider the highest test scores submitted by a student for college admissions.* Where applicable, the student bears the responsibility of the cost of tests and the sending of official test scores.

All students enrolled in an Advanced Placement (AP) course are expected to take the AP exam. The state of SC currently pays the costs of AP exams for courses students take at GSSM. If a student chooses to take an AP exam for a course which they have not taken at GSSM, the student will be responsible for the entire cost of the exam, which is currently \$97.00. Students are expected to complete some level of independent work outside of class in order to fully prepare to sit for AP exams. Information on how to prepare for AP exams is available from the subject instructor or the Office of College Counseling and Advising. Additionally, students who cancel or opt out of AP Exams after registration are subject to the College Board's unused exam fee of \$40.00.

## **C. College Application Procedures and Deadlines**

1. The Office of College Counseling and Advising will take responsibility for sending the documents listed below to college(s) on behalf of a student once confirmed in *Scoir*. All documents are sent electronically through a secure server, unless the college/university requires that documents be sent via US Mail.
  - An official high school transcript, which includes all courses, grades, units earned for high school credit, and unweighted and weighted (SCUGS) cumulative GPAs
  - A mid-year and final high school transcript and grade report
  - *Scoir* School Report
  - Recommendation letter from the college counselor
  - Teacher recommendation letter(s)
  - GSSM School Profile

Students are responsible for submitting the following materials to their colleges:

- A completed application form and application fee (where applicable)
  - Essays and supplemental essays (as required for admissions and/or Honors College admission)
  - Official or self-reported SAT and/or ACT scores (if required)
  - Applicable financial aid applications and requested supporting tax return documents: FAFSA ([www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov)) and CSS Profile ([css.collegeboard.org](http://css.collegeboard.org)) available December 1, 2023
  - See page 18 for instructions on how to send transcripts to colleges for Dual Enrollment courses/credit.
2. Students are encouraged to work in tandem with their assigned college counselor to confirm the colleges to which a student applies includes a balance of “reach,” “target,” and “likely” colleges on their list.

3. Updated on-line college applications are typically available August 1<sup>st</sup>, including the Common Application. The single most important step in completing a college admissions application is the simplest: Read the instructions before filling out the form. Colleges expect students to read and follow directions.
4. Students may begin working on their application over the summer and must confirm the application deadline under which they plan to apply with their counselor.
5. Students should carefully proofread their application and sign all appropriate areas, securing a parent's signature if required. Make sure grammar and spelling are correct. Students are strongly encouraged to save an electronic or paper copy of their completed applications submitted to colleges.
6. Students should have application fee payment available, usually a credit card number, prior to submitting their applications.
7. Teacher letters of recommendation requested in the spring will be available to send to colleges by mid-October. Earlier requests for letters of recommendation must be shared with the counselor and/or teacher at least two weeks in advance.
8. For each transcript request, students must list the college in *Scoir* as "applying" or "applied" by the following deadlines:
  - All October, Early Decision (ED), or Restrictive Early Action (REA) college deadlines: **September 15<sup>th</sup>**
  - All November college deadlines: **October 15<sup>th</sup>**
  - All other application deadlines (rolling, regular): **November 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Please note: The internal GSSM deadline for the submission of all college applications is December 1<sup>st</sup>. Many institutions use December 1<sup>st</sup> as their published or unpublished merit scholarship deadline.**

#### **D. Counselor's Responsibilities**

1. All college counselors are available to assist students with completing college applications upon request.
2. The counselor will ensure that each transcript/teacher letter of recommendation is processed according to stated deadlines, provided the student has met departmental deadlines.
3. Counselors will meet with parents/guardians as requested/necessary as it pertains to each individual student.

#### **E. Discipline Disclosure Policy**

As recommended in NACAC's Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission, GSSM clearly states its policy: The Office of College Counseling and Advising will disclose all infractions that result in suspension, expulsion, withdrawal pending disciplinary action, or any probation status to the colleges to which a student applies. Whether the offense occurred before or after the time of application, or if a student has received an offer of admission, will not preclude an infraction from being reported.

A student facing disciplinary action is encouraged to work with their college counselor to report accurate and timely information in a student reflection paragraph sent prior to the counselor's report.

## XIV. STUDENT DRESS CODE

*The way we choose to present ourselves makes a statement about us. The GSSM Student Dress Code is designed to remind students that we are an educational institution and that their attire should not pose a distraction to other community members. It should also be appropriate for the occasion. Students should expect to be addressed if their attire is deemed inappropriate based on the outlined code.*

Students are expected to adhere to the GSSM dress code at all times. When in their rooms with the doors open and during check times (hall meeting, rounds, room check, etc.), students are to be fully clothed. For special events and programs, faculty and staff may predefine their dress code expectations 72 hours in advance whenever possible. The assumption for an altered dress code is that it adheres to all dress code expectations as defined in the sections below.

### A. General Dress Code

(This is the dress code at all times.)

1. **Messaging on Clothing**

Profane or obscene language on articles of clothing is not allowed. Exemplary and non-exclusive examples are vulgar, libelous, or pornographic materials, or clothing which displays statements or symbols that promote drugs, alcohol, or are insensitive to race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, or gender differences.

2. **Outer Wear**

Clothing that is distracting, inappropriate, or too revealing is not allowed. Undergarments such as boxers, "A" shirts, and leggings/tights are not permitted to be worn as outer wear and should only be worn in the appropriate context. Leggings may be worn as outerwear only if they are designed for that purpose. They should not be too tight or revealing, regardless of body type and should not reveal underwear or skin about the mid-thigh. No see-through clothing is allowed.

3. **Footwear**

Footwear with soles must be worn in school facilities and on school grounds.

4. **Sleepwear/Loungewear**

Wearing of sleepwear and loungewear as outer clothing is not permissible during the academic operating hours of 8:00 am – 5:00 pm Monday through Friday or during official school-sponsored events, regardless of time or day. This policy is relaxed during exam week to allow sleepwear/lounge pants during the academic operating hours, but is still not permissible in class. School-sponsored events such as spirit week, which may include "pajama day," are an exception to this policy. Sleepwear is permissible upstairs in the residential community in their designated side of the building.

5. **Swimwear**

Swimwear is not permitted as clothing except during certain athletic or other previously-defined activities and in certain defined areas. All swimwear must be appropriate. Thong suits, string bikinis, Speedos, etc. are not permitted. If you are not sure of the appropriateness of a suit, please ask a staff member prior to wearing it. When in the building, students must wear clothing that appropriately covers their swimsuits. A towel is not considered an appropriate cover-up.

6. **Other**

Anything that is distracting, inappropriate, or dangerous is not allowed.

## B. School/Weekday Dress Code

(From Monday to Friday from 7:00 am until 5:00 pm and all school-sponsored events except school-sponsored dances, where the weekend dress code may apply.)

1. **Legwear/Skirts**

Legwear should meet the 'fingertip' rule, meaning when a student stands straight and holds their arms down by their side, their legwear should be no shorter than their fingertips. Laboratories may involve special requirements. Individual instructors will determine on the basis of safety whether shorter legwear is appropriate for their laboratories. Prior approval to wear shorter legwear must be obtained from the lab instructor. Shorts with inseams of less than 5 inches are prohibited. Wearing long shirts that make it so shorts/skirts are unseen are inappropriate and is also a violation.

2. **Shirts**

No skin should show above pants/skirts under normal conditions. No skin should show below the students' hand when placed palm down on your chest and the first finger is touching the collarbone. No cleavage should ever show. Shoulder straps should be at least 2" wide. Spaghetti straps, tanks, nor midriff tops are permitted.

3. **Body Piercing**

No exposed body piercing jewelry is allowed, except earrings as designated below. **While under GSSM supervision, which includes school sponsored trips, students are not allowed to get a body piercing or tattoo, even with parental permission.** Earrings in the ear and certain styles of nose piercings are allowed. If students have nose piercings, only small studs (no larger than 3mm) and small, thin hoop nose rings are allowed. Body piercings, including micro-dermal piercings, on other visible areas of the body (e.g. lips, eyebrow, etc.) are not permitted. Again, students are not allowed to get piercings or tattoos anywhere when on school sponsored trips or in the care and custody of GSSM.

4. **Hats and Caps**

Hats are permitted in hallways, the residence hall, and other informal areas of the school and outside. No form of hats or caps may be worn in classes, offices, or in formal settings. When entering these areas, students may be asked to remove them.

## C. Weekend Dress Code

(After 5:00 pm Monday through Friday and all weekend through Monday morning at 7:00 am)

1. **Legwear/Skirts**

Legwear should meet the 'fist' rule, meaning when a student holds their arms down by their side and makes a fist facing the floor, their legwear should be no shorter than where the end of their fist touches their legs. To ensure that the dress code is not violated, we encourage students to consider the weekday code on the weekends as well which reads as follows: Shorts with inseams of less than 5 inches are prohibited. Wearing long shirts that make it so shorts/skirts are unseen are inappropriate and is also a violation.

2. **Shirts**

No skin should show above legwear under normal conditions. No skin should show below the student's hand when placed palm down on your chest and the first finger is touching the collarbone. No cleavage should ever show. Shoulder straps should be at least 1" wide.

3. **Body Piercing**

No exposed body piercing jewelry is allowed with the exception of earrings in the ear and the nose as noted above.

4. **Hats and Caps**  
Hats and caps may be worn in buildings.

## **D. Informal Dance Dress Code**

(Including dancers and attendees)

1. **Shorts/ Skirts**  
Shorts and skirts should reach the end of the fists when arms are held at the sides.
2. **Shirts**  
Spaghetti straps of all widths are allowed, though strapless or one-strap tops are not.
3. **Midriff/Cleavage**  
Midriff should not show with arms held at sides. No cleavage may show.
4. **Shoes**  
Shoes are not required within the perimeter of the dance.

## **E. Special Occasion Dress Code**

1. **Business, Formal Event Dress**  
This is the dress code for special events such as convocation, colloquium, SCJAS, senior banquet, concerts, recitals, and plays. Additional occasions that require this type dress may be designated and announced during the school year. Students are required to keep this type of attire at GSSM at all times. For males: dress slacks, dress shirt, tie, suit jacket, brown or black dress shoes and dress socks; for females: nice (business) dress, skirt or pants suits, dress skirt and blouse, and dress shoes. No clogs, Birkenstock style shoes, platform shoes over 1" high, hiking boots, or athletic shoes are allowed. This is considered "GSSM Dressy."
2. **Prom and Winter Formal**  
Appropriate formal attire is acceptable for the Prom and Winter Formal Dance. If a student is unsure if their clothing is acceptable, they should ask the event sponsor for clarification before the event.

## XV. APPROPRIATE USE POLICY (AUP) FOR GSSM TECHNOLOGY

*The Appropriate Use Policy (AUP) applies to all users of GSSM networks, contracted services, and any and all other technologies provided by and on behalf of the school. The term **user** includes, but is not limited to, employees, students, alumni, visitors, contractors, program applicants, job applicants, program participants, and volunteers.*

*The school's network, and the services it provides, are shared resources used by students, teachers, and administration. Those who use technology resources provide by GSSM, accept the responsibility to use it appropriately.*

### A. Ethical and Behavioral Standards

When communicating with others or sharing resources, everyone is expected to follow the same high standards of conduct and communication that would be expected in face-to-face encounters. These standards are described in the *GSSM Student Handbook*. Some responsibilities are unique to the environment created by online services and are addressed here:

1. **Online Safety**  
GSSM cares about the safety of students, faculty, and staff. Social media services can be dangerous when personal information, particularly information that can lead to the location of a person, is published openly. GSSM strongly encourages students to secure their profiles so that they are not publicly visible.
2. **Online Harassment**  
GSSM's policies against harassment are in effect whenever, and however, students encounter each other. This includes online encounters even when participants are off campus. The use of Internet services within **and beyond the control** of the school to harass another student is a violation of GSSM rules and will result in disciplinary action. When harassment involving non-GSSM services is observed or reported, the school may engage law enforcement agencies and the courts to compel the service provider to disclose identifying information about the harassing party.
3. **Protected Information**  
Education records, health information, confidential information, personally identifiable information must be transmitted and stored in an approved encrypted format. Such information may only be accessed using authorized equipment maintained and authorized by GSSM and by GSSM authorized GSSM personnel. For more information, refer to the GSSM Information Security Policy.
4. **Online Identity/Login Credentials**  
GSSM provides all faculty, staff, registered students, and their parents of record with credentials (usernames and passwords) for the purposes of accessing GSSM-provided resources. These credentials are intended to be used only by the person to whom they are assigned.

**No member of the GSSM staff will ever ask anyone for their password. Ever.**

Credentials assigned by GSSM may not be divulged to anyone else. The person to whom network credentials are assigned is responsible for all activities that occur when those credentials are used. Further, it is a violation of GSSM rules for a person to impersonate someone else by either using their credentials or any other means that might obfuscate their identity. GSSM students and employees may be provided credentials to access online databases while using the Coker University library. These credentials are issued by Coker University and their use is subject to Coker University policies in addition to GSSM policies. Login credentials are disabled when a person's official relationship to the school ends due to graduation, dismissal, withdrawal, resignation, or other termination.

5. **Intellectual Property**

As an educational institution that values the contribution of research to the quality of life, economic development, and civilization, GSSM strongly supports the rights of owners of intellectual property. Many Internet services facilitate the sharing and collection of digital content in violation of the rights of their owners. Acquiring, possessing, or sharing digital content in violation of copyright is illegal and prohibited at GSSM.

6. **Prohibited Access**

Attempting to access protected information without authorization violates GSSM policies as well as state and federal law. Activities that could inappropriately reveal the existence or configuration of servers, databases, network services, or security features are prohibited. Scanning networks and devices to discover network resources and topologies is expressly prohibited.

7. **Pornographic & Other Objectionable Material**

Persons using the GSSM network are prohibited from viewing, accessing, sending, or possessing pornographic material on GSSM-owned computers, via the GSSM network, while on the GSSM network, or at a GSSM-sponsored event. Attempts to circumvent, disable, or otherwise render content filter measures ineffective are a violation of GSSM rules. Please note that when students use networks off campus, the school is unable to regulate the content available to them. During summer research internships and while conducting assignment research at the Coker University library or any other collegiate library, GSSM students will access networks not equipped to prevent access to pornographic material.

8. **Conservation of Shared Resources**

Network resources may be overwhelmed when used indiscriminately. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each person who uses the GSSM network to ensure that their activities do not prevent others from effectively using the resource.

a. **Internet circuit management**

GSSM utilizes a commercial-grade connection circuit to provide Internet access to the campus. Priority for using this service is given to educational and campus operation purposes. GSSM will manage this resource by prioritizing Internet traffic, limiting or eliminating interfering services, and other means as necessary.

GSSM-operated devices may unencrypt and examine the contents of encrypted network communications for the purposes of ensuring network security and availability, and to comply with state and federal content restriction requirements.

b. **Message and file storage**

GSSM servers provide spaces to store messages and files. They are intended to support educational and campus operations. Therefore, they should not be used to store media collections or for other recreational purposes. GSSM servers may never be used to store illegal content.

## **B. Using Your Computer at GSSM**

Students find it helpful to bring computers to school for use in their room and around campus. Employees sometimes use the school's Wi-Fi system with their personally owned phones and tablets. Attaching a personally-owned computer to the GSSM network indicates acceptance of this AUP and places specific responsibilities upon the owner:

1. **Owner Responsibilities**

Owners are responsible for ensuring that their computers are free of malware prior to connecting to the network. Computer owners may be held responsible for damage created by malware or other activity originating from their computer. When it is determined that a computer is threatening the stability of the network or other computers, it will be removed from the network immediately and may be confiscated.



Owners are also responsible for maintaining their own devices. GSSM staff does not provide repair services for personally owned devices. Owners should back up their important files to cloud services like OneDrive, Google Drive, or Dropbox to prevent loss.

2. **Antivirus Software is Required**

Every computer that is connected to the GSSM computer network must have effective, up-to-date antivirus software installed at all times. This protects the computer owner as well as others on the network.

3. **Dynamic Network Addressing**

The GSSM computer network automatically assigns IP addresses to each connected computer. This address must not be tampered with or changed. No person may assign a manual IP address to their device.

4. **Network Registration**

Computers are registered to their owners when they log into Wi-Fi and present a username and password. Attempting to conceal the ownership of a computer is prohibited.

5. **Protected Information**

It is a violation of state regulations for protected information to be copied to or stored on personally owned devices. Protected information includes education records, health information, or any other information that is considered to be GSSM Confidential or of a personal and private nature to an employee or student.

6. **Prohibited Devices**

Certain network devices can interfere with network operation. Any kind of DSL/Cable router has this potential and is prohibited on the network. Wi-Fi access points, hot spots, routers, and other devices that provide Wi-Fi network services to others will reduce the number of channels available to the GSSM network, reducing performance in the area where they operate. Only wireless devices acting as clients of the school's Wi-Fi network are allowed.

**Wireless printers** slow down all nearby devices and must be properly configured to not create a temporary WIFI network. If a printer owner does not know how to disable this feature, contact IT for assistance. Printers found to be interfering with GSSM Wi-Fi may be confiscated until they can be taken home.

7. **Prohibited Software**

Software that allows others on the Internet to access, share, or control computers on the GSSM network represent security risks and are therefore prohibited. Any software that scans networks or computers for vulnerabilities, any software that interferes with the GSSM network or devices attached to it, or any software that facilitates circumvention of any GSSM rule is prohibited.

8. **Govinet Wireless Network**

Govinet is GSSM's wireless network for teachers, students, and staff. Instructions for connecting to Govinet are distributed regularly. An active GSSM username and password is required to access Govinet. These credentials are requested infrequently. A guest network is available for visitor use. Instructions for connecting to it are posted in the main lobby.

9. **Microsoft Office 365**

As part of its site licensing agreement with Microsoft, students and employees may download MS Office 365 to their computers and portable devices. Each person may install the software on up to five personally owned devices which may include phones and tablets. The installation screen is accessed through the Outlook portal (<https://outlook.office.com>). GSSM provides this service as a convenience and makes no guarantees regarding compatibility, fitness, or availability for any particular task. Anyone who downloads and installs Microsoft products accepts any

and all license terms applicable to their use. This software remains functional while the person using it is actively employed or enrolled at GSSM.

10. **Compatibility**

GSSM makes no guarantee of compatibility between personally-owned equipment and its networking equipment, services, software, etc.

## **C. Privacy**

In order to protect the computer-using community and to enforce GSSM rules and policies, the school reserves the right to examine, restrict, or remove any material that is on, or passes through, its network. Such activities are not undertaken routinely or lightly. In addition, specific information about computer use is collected and preserved over time. The items below are a sample of the kinds of information that may be stored and is not intended to be a complete list:

1. **Internet locations visited**

This information is logged for each Internet user and device.

2. **IP addresses assigned to each computer**

When an IP address is assigned, the hardware address of the computer, the IP address assigned, the date and time of the assignment and location of the computer requesting the address are recorded.

3. **Log in/out information**

Username, network location, date and time are recorded when logging into or out of some network resources.

There are privacy issues associated with using public GSSM web sites that are described at:

<http://www.scgssm.org/privacy-policy>.

## **D. AUP Violations**

Violations of the AUP may result in temporary or permanent loss of network use privileges. Depending on the nature of the violation, additional disciplinary actions may be taken.

## **E. Amendments**

These policies may change from time to time as circumstances warrant. The most current version will always be posted online at <http://www.scgssm.org/aup>.

## XVI. IMPORTANT LAWS AND GSSM POLICIES

GSSM has a commitment to ensure that community members respect and abide by all state and federal laws. This chapter explains the school's position on weapons, tobacco, alcohol, and substance use and abuse.

*The use of illegal substances among the student body cannot be easily differentiated from abuse and suggests a significant error in judgment and lack of maturity. If and when this occurs, GSSM and the families must determine whether a student is emotionally and psychologically prepared for our program. In our close-knit environment, illegal substances and other contraband are a concern not only for individuals, but for the entire campus community.*

### A. Weapons

Weapons are forbidden at GSSM. Applicable state law describes such weapons. Please note that GSSM will abide by all SC state and federal laws as they pertain to our school. Articles such as knives needed for cooking, hatchets needed for camping, etc., must remain under the control of faculty or staff. All equipment pertaining to weaponry (martial arts, paintball and fencing paraphernalia, bows/arrows, etc.) must be stored with the Director of Athletics.

Relevant state law:

**South Carolina Code of Laws**

**SECTION 16-23-430.** *Carrying weapons on school property.*

*(1) It shall be unlawful for any person, except State, county or municipal law-enforcement officers or personnel authorized by school officials, to carry on [their] person, while on any elementary or secondary school property, a knife, with a blade over two inches long, a blackjack, a metal pipe or pole, firearms or any other type of weapon, device or object which may be used to inflict bodily injury or death.*

*(2) A person who violates the provisions of this section is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than one thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than five years, or both. Any weapon or object used in violation of this section may be confiscated by the law enforcement division making the arrest.*

### B. Possession or Use of Tobacco

GSSM does not allow the use of any tobacco products by any student while they are GSSM's responsibility. Smoking, possession of, or the use of any tobacco products by any student is forbidden while on and off the GSSM campus or at any GSSM activity or event. This also includes electronic cigarettes, paraphernalia used to facilitate the use of tobacco (e.g. pipes, cigarette paper), vaporizers, and other devices associated with nicotine and vaping use. Violations are Level 3 offenses, as described in the Discipline Section of the *Student Handbook*.

Relevant state law:

**South Carolina Code of Laws**

**SECTION 16-17-500.** *Sale or purchase of tobacco products for minors; proof of age; location of vending machines; penalties; smoking cessation programs.*

*(A) It is unlawful for an individual to sell, furnish, give, distribute, purchase for, or provide a tobacco product to a minor under the age of eighteen years.*

*(E)(1) A minor under the age of eighteen years must not purchase, attempt to purchase, possess, or attempt to possess a tobacco product, or present or offer proof of age that is false or fraudulent for the purpose of purchasing or possessing a tobacco product.*

## C. GSSM Drug and Alcohol Policy

With the intent of supporting the overall health and wellness of the individual student and a safe school environment, the following policy has been developed regarding drug and alcohol possession and use by GSSM students.

In every case, policies developed by GSSM consider the health and welfare of the student of utmost importance. As a learning institution, GSSM always seeks to educate first. We believe that it is our mission and purpose to help students learn from every experience they have while in attendance with us.

When a student comes to a member of the GSSM faculty or staff indicating that they may have a problem with substance, we are committed to assisting the family is seeking appropriate treatment. This may constitute a medical withdrawal, but each situation will be considered on a case by case basis. Through our professional staff, and as necessary, outside agencies, a student who acknowledges a problem may be required to enter into counseling to assist in maintaining a clearer understanding of the dangers of drug and alcohol use and/or abuse and to help them design and implement a program for dealing with their problem. The GSSM wellness counseling staff may work with the student and their family to develop a plan that is most effective for meeting the student's immediate and long term needs. In the student's best interest, this may require them to return home for appropriate treatment. If a student is found in violation of this policy, safety will still be the primary concern, but we will exercise our conduct procedures as outlined in this document.

Use, possession, or distribution of alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription medication not prescribed to the student, or paraphernalia is prohibited while enrolled at GSSM. Being present when alcohol or illegal substances are used or purchased or supplying them to members of the GSSM community also violates the school's community standards. GSSM will adhere to all applicable state and/or federal laws dealing with drug and alcohol possession and/or use. Law enforcement agencies will be notified in cases where it appears there have been violations of the law or when deemed appropriate for health or safety reasons. Any punishments levied by law enforcement agencies are separate from those given by GSSM.

### Relevant state law:

#### **South Carolina Code of Laws**

**SECTION 63-19-2440.** *Purchase or possession of beer, ale, wine, malt or other fermented beverages.*

*(A) It is unlawful for a person under the age of twenty-one to purchase or knowingly possess beer, ale, porter, wine, or other similar malt or fermented beverage. Possession is prima facie evidence that it was knowingly possessed. A person violating this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not less than twenty-five dollars or more than one hundred dollars.*

**SECTION 63-19-2450.** *Purchase or possession of alcoholic liquors.*

*(A) It is unlawful for a person under the age of twenty-one to purchase or knowingly possess alcoholic liquors. Possession is prima facie evidence that it was knowingly possessed. It is also unlawful for a person to falsely represent [their] age for the purpose of procuring alcoholic liquors.*

In the event of reasonable suspicion that a student is under the influence or in possession of an illegal drug, alcohol, or prescription medication not prescribed to the student, the medical needs of the student will be evaluated immediately and the student may be transported to a medical facility at the discretion of the school. Alcohol and/or drug testing may be initiated, as appropriate and safe in light of a student's medical needs. **Permission for medical personnel to conduct such testing, signed by the student and at least one of their custodial parents or guardians, must be on file before the student may be enrolled at GSSM.** If testing is deemed necessary, it will be done in a private and confidential manner. Parents will be notified of the situation at the earliest practical opportunity.

### 1. **Possession**

In the event a student is found in possession of an illegal drug, alcohol, a prescription medication not prescribed to the student, or related paraphernalia, the following measures will be taken:

- a. Parents will be notified to take the student home immediately.
- b. The student's room and personal belongings will be searched.
- c. A Judicial Council will convene as soon as possible to assess the situation and determine possible action(s).

2. **Alcohol**

In the event of reasonable suspicion (see "Terms Defined") that a student is under the influence of alcohol, a Breathalyzer test may be administered onsite by appropriately trained GSSM Staff as a preliminary assessment. Based on this assessment, the student may be transported to a certified testing laboratory for testing and evaluation.

3. **Drugs**

In the event of reasonable suspicion that a student is under the influence of an illegal drug or a prescription drug not prescribed to the student, the student may be transported to a certified testing laboratory for testing and evaluation. The student also may be suspended immediately.

4. **Testing**

- a. **Positive test results:** If the certified laboratory test result is positive for drugs or alcohol, the student will be required to leave the school immediately or as soon as the parents can pick them up from GSSM. (This includes testing positive for alcohol using a breathalyzer.) Pending receipt of the drug test results, a student may be asked not to return to school. Circumstances under which the student may return to classes are outlined below in the portion of this policy entitled "Conditions for returning to GSSM following a suspension for substance abuse." Additionally,

- Parents will be notified to take the student home immediately.
- The student's room and personal belongings will be searched.
- A Judicial Council will convene promptly to assess the situation and possible actions.

- b. **Refusal to submit to testing**

- The refusal will be interpreted as a positive result.
- The student will be suspended immediately.
- The administration will contact the parent.
- The parent must pick up the student as soon as practical.

- c. **Negative results**

- The student may return to normal activities unless either medical or other disciplinary intervention is necessary.

5. **Conditions for returning to GSSM following a suspension for substance abuse**

- a. In rare instances with unusual extenuating circumstances, the Judicial Council may assess an extended suspension rather than recommending an expulsion hearing.
- b. If a term of suspension is assessed by the Judicial Council, the suspension normally will be completed prior to the student's return to school.
- c. The student and their parent(s) must agree to a regular program of monitoring to ensure cessation of use prior to GSSM considering the student's return. The family must sign a release allowing the technician/assessor, the Psychologist, and/or the School Nurse to exchange information regarding the incident and all test results and recommendations.

- d. The student and family must reach agreement with the Psychologist regarding any necessary program of counseling to support the student's efforts to return to health within a reasonable time following return.
- e. Failure to complete the recommendations from the assessment and provide a drug/alcohol test indicating cessation of use may result in an expulsion hearing.
- f. The family is expected to work in cooperation and in a timely fashion with the School Nurse and Wellness Counselors in completing any prescribed program of counseling and/or the recommendations from all drug/alcohol assessments and subsequent follow-up.

## 6. Possible Sanctions

- a. 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Possession, use, or distribution of alcohol, any illegal drug, prescription drug not prescribed to the student, or related paraphernalia constitutes a Level 3 violation as outlined in the *Student Handbook*.
  - The student will be removed immediately. A Judicial Council will convene according to the *Student Handbook* to consider the matter further and an expulsion hearing should be anticipated. A request to withdraw from GSSM pending judicial action may be considered by the President. A withdrawal pending disciplinary action will be noted in the student's record.
  - The distribution or intent to distribute alcohol, illegal drugs, drugs not prescribed to the student, or drug paraphernalia on GSSM grounds or at school sponsored events will result in a recommendation for immediate expulsion.
  - Additional restrictions may be imposed by a club sponsor or coach regarding participation in extra-curricular activities or athletics.
  - **Students who violate GSSM's Drug and Alcohol Policy may be denied the GSSM diploma, although the student will receive a state diploma if they have earned sufficient credits.**
- b. 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: The student will be immediately suspended. If the student is found to have committed a second offense, they will be recommended for immediate expulsion. The expulsion may be reflected in the student's record.

## 7. Terms Defined

**"Reasonable Suspicion"** is based upon a belief that a student is using or has used alcohol or drugs in violation of this Policy drawn from specific objective and articulable facts and reasonable inferences drawn from those facts in the light of experience. Reasonable suspicion may be based upon, but not limited to, a student exhibiting behaviors consistent with drug or alcohol use such as erratic behavior, slurred speech, odor of alcohol or drugs on breath, body, or clothing, staggering, vomiting, bloodshot eyes, association in a situation involving drugs or alcohol, or reports of drug or alcohol use provided by reliable and credible sources. Suspicion could result in an immediate Breathalyzer test or an alcohol/drug screening by a certified technician at the certified testing laboratory or both.

**"Use"** means consumption of or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, and/or prescription medication not prescribed to the student while under the jurisdiction of GSSM during the period of student enrollment. Suspicion of use will result in:

- a. A drug/alcohol test at the GSSM designated testing site (The Medical Group, 206 Swift Creek Road). Parents of the student are responsible for the cost of any recommendations made beyond the initial alcohol/drug assessment.
- b. Refusal of drug/alcohol test will be considered the same as a positive drug/alcohol assessment.

**“Alcohol and Illegal Drugs”** are defined to include all alcoholic liquor and beverages; all controlled substances under the Controlled Substance Act except when prescribed for the student by a licensed physician and properly registered with GSSM Health Services; cannabis under the Cannabis Control Act; any “look-alike” substance; inhalants, hallucinogens, and mood altering chemicals or substances. This also includes prescription medication not prescribed to the student.

**“Alcohol/Drug Test”**: Test(s) administered for the purposes of determining the presence or absence of alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription medication not prescribed to the student, or their metabolites in a student’s bodily fluids, products, breath, or urine.

**“Drug/Alcohol Assessment”**: A screening done by a physician or certified technician to determine the presence of alcohol or any other illegal substance in a person’s system. The assessment includes a recommendation made by a physician, certified technician, or drug/alcohol counselor for action necessary to restore the individual to drug or alcohol-free state.

**“Possession”**: Includes alcohol, illegal drugs, and/or prescription medication not prescribed to the student being found on a student’s person or stored in the following locations: clothing, backpack, room furnishings and other personal belongings, or automobile. The production of or attempted production of alcohol or illegal, hallucinogenic, or mood altering chemicals or substances is also considered possession.

**“Paraphernalia”**: Includes empty alcohol bottles or cans, and drug articles including pipes, papers, or other materials used for drug use, storage, disguising use, or any materials considered to be intended for production, purification, diluting, or escalating the potency of any illegal substance.

**“Certified Testing Laboratory”** is a medical test facility employing technicians trained and certified by the National Alcohol and Drug Center.

## XVII. DISCIPLINE AND HONOR CODE VIOLATIONS

*Appropriate conduct, including respect for all persons and property within and beyond the school community, is required of all students at GSSM. All students are expected and required to accept responsibility for their actions. The guidelines established in this code pertain mainly to students while on campus, but objectionable behavior will always be considered grounds for disciplinary action, no matter where it occurs.*

*GSSM discipline policies are intended to provide the basis for fairness and equitability requiring appropriate conduct by all students. Most guidelines pertain to the host of relatively minor issues that arise among students living away from home, often for the first time, and might be viewed as the means to insist on responsible behavior without nagging. However, the policies are also designed to cover more serious issues of misconduct, although these are much less common.*

The Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth, Dean of Students, and/or the GSSM Care Team periodically receive reports designed to assist students who may be having difficulty meeting the disciplinary standards of GSSM. Efforts are made to support the student in adjusting to the school's behavioral expectations. Parents also receive a discipline report for their student each grading period.

The basic instrument of the discipline system is a written notification of misconduct called a "write-up." The faculty or staff member addressing the conduct or making the referral should meet with the student to notify them that their behavior violates acceptable community standards. During the conversation, the student may provide an explanation for the behavior. After discussing the matter, if the student is going to be charged with a Level 1 infraction, the appropriate paperwork should be completed. During the first part of the junior year students may be addressed verbally regarding minor infractions. This allows them time to adjust to their new environment. In some cases, throughout the first few weeks, reminding students of expectations is often a more effective way to garner cooperation. When a student receives a write-up, they will be notified in person at the time of the incident or via email. Offenses are divided into Levels 1, 2, and 3 in order of relative severity. Sanctions for these offenses are similarly scaled.

### A. Disciplinary Offenses and Typical Sanctions

1. **Level 1 Offenses** are the minor incidents that are common in a residential community as students acclimate to living away from home. Once students adjust to living at GSSM, these infractions should be minimal. They include, but are not limited, to the following:
  - a. Being barefoot downstairs
  - b. Failing room inspection or white glove inspection
  - c. Failing to clear dining items (utensils, trays, glasses, etc.) from dining hall tables and failure to return items to the dining hall
  - d. Failing to follow instructions
  - e. Failing to sign in upon return to campus
  - f. Failing to sign out upon leaving the campus
  - g. Inappropriate behavior
  - h. Inappropriate displays of affection
  - i. Inappropriate or disrespectful language, profanity, or actions
  - j. Leaving for overnight without an approved weekend leave request or excused absence form
  - k. Missing an appointment or required meeting including required school events<sup>1</sup>
  - l. Tampering with others' property, facilities or equipment
  - m. Habitual violations of the GSSM Dress Code
  - n. Use of recreation equipment<sup>2</sup> inside building or outside of approved outdoor areas
  - o. Violation of lights out

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<sup>1</sup> This includes room check, hall meeting, Pre-QUEST, academic meetings [research and others] and Community Engagement if you do not contact your supervisor.

<sup>2</sup> Basketballs, skateboards, bowling balls, soccer balls, hacky sack, etc.



- p. Violation of Residence Hall Room Decorations and Furnishing guidelines
- q. Violation of proper use of email (1<sup>st</sup> Offense)
- r. Violation of QUEST<sup>3</sup>, including excessive noise prior to room check

**Level 1 sanctions include, but are not restricted to the following:**

- A documented warning or reprimand
- Restriction from a specified place or event
- 8 pm curfew<sup>4</sup>
- Work detail
- Essay
- Parent conference
- Restriction from extracurricular activity and/or loss of privileges
- Confiscation
- Restitution for damages
- Any combination of the above

Level 1 sanctions may be imposed by administration, faculty, or staff. The fourth Level 1 infraction in a grading period will result in communication with parents/guardians via email. The sixth Level 1 infraction in a grading period will result in a Level 2 violation and be handled in conjunction with the GSSM Discipline and Honor Code. A second set of six Level 1 infractions during a semester could result in a weekend suspension from school.

2. **Level 2 Offenses** are more serious in nature and must be reported to the Dean of Students or the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction (if academic dishonesty or associated academic activity is involved) as soon as reasonably possible. These infractions often require an investigation. Reviews are generally conducted by the Dean of Students, but others may conduct the review depending on the conduct. Level 2 offenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Accessing or using a vehicle without permission
- b. Any action likely to cause injury to self or others; horseplay
- c. Any behavior that discredits the school, either on-campus or off-campus activities<sup>5</sup>
- d. Bullying/Intimidation including that done on social media platforms when reported
- e. Cell phone misuse
- f. Cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and other acts of academic dishonesty
- g. Damage and/or destruction of property
- h. Disregard for lab safety procedures
- i. Disrespect to persons in positions of authority
- j. Excessive noise after midnight on weeknights and weekends
- k. Gambling
- l. Gross violation of Residence Hall Room Decorations and Furnishing Guidelines
- m. Gross violation of sign out policy and procedures
- n. Harassment and/or discriminatory behavior (verbal or actions) including but not limited to sex, race, and/or religion
- o. Honor Code violation
- p. Improper/fraudulent use of student identification card
- q. Inciting or participating in a major disturbance
- r. Indecent exposure
- s. Injurious action without malice to a person
- t. Intentional dishonesty (e.g. lying, forgery, falsifying any records)
- u. Keeping an unauthorized pet in the residence hall

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<sup>3</sup> This includes, but is not limited to, watching television, practicing musical instruments [without approval], "hanging out" in the lobby or in front of the residence hall, conducting club meetings, etc.

<sup>4</sup> This may be given for any week or weekend night.

<sup>5</sup> This includes activities on campus or field trips, as well as behavior away from the school.

- v. Keeping controlled substances in the residence hall without permission
- w. Leaving campus without permission when required
- x. Leaving residence hall (floor and building) after room check or prior to 6:30 am
- y. Misuse of GSSM computers/violation of computer policy to include misuse of copiers and other technology equipment
- z. Possession of or discharge of fireworks
  - aa. Possession of illegal appliances, flammable items or burning things in the residence hall
  - bb. Possession of a knife (or object) with a blade of two or more inches
  - cc. Possession of sexually explicit or pornographic material
  - dd. Pranks or practical jokes that may be perceived as offensive and/or disruptive.
  - ee. Psychological and/or physical harassment
  - ff. Repeated failure to follow instructions or attend required meetings and/or programs
  - gg. Slander/libel towards students, faculty, or staff
  - hh. Threatening a student
  - ii. Trespassing on Coker University's campus or any other property deemed private, closed, or where you do not have specific permission to be there
  - jj. Trespassing on GSSM property, facilities, or offices
  - kk. Unauthorized entry into/use of facilities or equipment
  - ll. Unauthorized use of a vehicle or riding in a vehicle of an unauthorized person
  - mm. Using another person's or a fake identification card
  - nn. Violation of proper use of email (2<sup>nd</sup> Offense)
  - oo. Violation of GSSM Guest Policy
  - pp. Violation of imposed sanction
  - qq. Violation of Intervisitation guidelines
  - rr. Violation of movie and video game policy
  - ss. Violation of the vehicle policy including accessing a vehicle without authorization
  - tt. Walking or biking outside of established walking boundaries

**Level 2 sanctions include, but are not limited to:**

- Any combination of level 1 sanctions
- Restriction to campus
- Restitution for damages
- 48 Hour In-Room Restriction
- Loss of vehicle privilege for one month
- Loss of vehicle privilege for the remainder of the year, including special event
- Loss of privilege to use email distribution lists
- Probation
- On Campus Suspension (on campus conference with parents)<sup>6</sup>
- Required counseling or other intervention activity

The Dean of Students or their designee will investigate most reports of Level 2 offenses during the school year and determine appropriate actions as described in Section C, on Investigation and Imposition of Sanctions. Academic dishonesty violations or those associated with academic activities may be investigated by the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction or their designee. Parents or guardians will be notified of Level 2 infractions.

3. **Level 3 Offenses** are the most serious violations and may result in separation from GSSM. Alleged infractions should be reported as soon as reasonably possible to the Dean of Students or the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction (if academic dishonesty or associated academic activity is involved). After a complete review of the incident, the appropriate referral is made if necessary. In some cases, students charged with Level 3 infractions may be required to return to their

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<sup>6</sup> Psychological screening and/or counseling by a private counselor may be required before re-entry to GSSM. Any expense incurred will be the responsibility of the student's parent/guardian.

parents/guardians' care while awaiting next steps. Violations include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Any action likely to cause serious injury to self or others
- b. Any action that may be considered illegal or a criminal offense
- c. Any action that may compromise campus or building security
- d. Assault (sexual or physical)
- e. Bomb threat
- f. Breaking and entering
- g. Cheating, plagiarism and other acts of academic dishonesty (2<sup>nd</sup> offense)
- h. Consumption, use, or possession, of illegal drugs, alcohol, alcohol containers, and/or drug paraphernalia, etc.<sup>7</sup> (This includes counterfeit illegal drugs, all drug paraphernalia, unauthorized prescription drugs, and CBD oils, topicals, and related products.) Being present when alcohol or illegal substances are used or purchased or supplying them to members of the GSSM community also violates the school's community standards. Everyone involved or associated with the incident will be subject to disciplinary action.
- i. Egregious Honor Code violation
- j. Egregious Intervisitation violation
- k. Extortion
- l. Gross disrespect to persons in positions of authority
- m. Gross misuse of GSSM computers/violation of computer policy
- n. Harassing or hazing<sup>8</sup>
- o. Having unauthorized keys and card access to GSSM or Coker property
- p. Having an unauthorized opposite sex visitor in the residence hall
- q. Intentional dishonesty during an investigation or a judicial proceeding including Title IX investigations.
- r. Intentionally causing a false fire alarm
- s. Intentionally causing a fire, or causing a fire by personal negligence
- t. Offensive sexual behavior including sexual harassment and distributing sexually explicit materials
- u. Parking a vehicle off campus
- v. Possession or use of a weapon (including firearms)
- w. Repeated violation of vehicle policy
- x. Sexual Intimacy (defined as a broad range of sensuous activity)
- y. Sharing prescription medication with another student
- z. Signing in/having an unauthorized guest in the building or in the residence hall
- aa. Soliciting with regard to any illegal activity
- bb. Tampering with a fire alarm
- cc. Theft or possession of stolen property
- dd. Unauthorized attempts to access or alter any printed or electronic records or files
- ee. Use/possession of tobacco products and paraphernalia used to facilitate tobacco use (e.g. pipes, cigarette paper) including electronic cigarettes, vaporizers, and other devices associated with nicotine and vaping use
- ff. Vandalism
- gg. Violation of disciplinary probation
- hh. Violation of Title IX

**Level 3 sanctions include, but are not limited to:**

- Any combination of Level 1 or Level 2 sanctions
- Probation with or without restrictions
- On Campus Suspension (on campus conference with parents required)

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<sup>7</sup> Sharing any prescription medication or possessing any outdated prescription medication is forbidden.

<sup>8</sup> Hazing is defined as any willful act done by a student, either individually or with others, to another student for the purpose of subjecting the other student to indignity, humiliation, intimidation, physical abuse or threats of abuse, social or other ostracism, shame or disgrace.

- Suspension (on campus conference with parents required)<sup>9</sup>
- Suspension with Probation
- Expulsion<sup>10</sup>
- Legal action
- Restitution for damages, if applicable, in addition to the above
- Required counseling or other intervention activity

All Level 3 offenses are adjudicated by the Judicial Council. Parents or guardians will be notified of Level 3 infractions.

## **B. Descriptions of Specific Sanctions**

### **1. Guidelines for 8 pm In-Room Restriction**

An 8 pm restriction begins at 8 pm and lasts through 7:30 am the following morning. During this restriction, the student is expected to remain in their room and remain quiet. Specifically:

- Students must meet with the Residence Life Coordinator immediately prior to serving this sanction.
- The student may not leave their room.
- The student may not be in their suitemates' room.
- The student may not have a guest or suitemates in their room.
- The student's roommate may not have a guest(s) or their suitemates in their room.
- The student may not use the bathroom area for interactions/conversations with anyone.
- The student may not have room doors open.
- Emergency phone calls should be directed to the Residence Life Coordinator on duty so that the messages can be relayed.
- The student may not go to club meetings, lounges, lobby, etc.
- In case of an EMERGENCY, the student may contact the Residence Life Coordinator on duty directly. Please discuss what constitutes an emergency with the Residence Life Coordinator prior to the start of your restriction. Students should respond appropriately to fire alarms and related emergency procedures.
- The student is required to report any violations of the guidelines that occur while you are serving this restriction.
- Violations may result in repeating the sanction with additional nights as penalty, 48-hour in-room restriction, or immediate suspension to home.

### **2. Guidelines for 48-Hour In-Room Restriction**

This restriction begins at 8:00 pm on any night and ends at 8:00 pm 48 hours later.

- All guidelines for 8 pm restriction apply.
- The student will have 30 minutes for each meal. This time may be spent only in the cafeteria for meals. The student may not spend extra time socializing with other students. The student will be required to schedule these times with the Residence Life Coordinator on duty prior to the start of your restriction.
- The student may be required to do several hours work detail during the sanction period including Suite Rotation.
- If there problems or questions during the restriction, the student will have to either talk with/leave a note for the Residence Life Coordinator on duty during the 30-minute meal break OR send their roommate down with a message/note.
- Violations may result in immediate suspension to home.

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<sup>9</sup> Psychological screening and/or counseling by a private counselor may be required before re-entry to GSSM. Any expense incurred will be the responsibility of the student's parent/guardian.

<sup>10</sup> Students who are dismissed for disciplinary reasons are not permitted to attend GSSM events.

### 3. **Probation**

A student may be placed on disciplinary probation if they have the following violations during an academic year:

- One set of 6 Level 1 violations and a Level 2 violation.
- Two sets of 6 Level 1 violations.
- At the discretion of the Dean of Students after any Level 2.
- Two Level 2 violations.
- Any Level 3 violation.

Students will remain on probation for the semester in which it was imposed, plus one additional semester, except in unusual circumstances as determined by the Dean of Students or the Judicial Council.

- a. **Violation of Probation:** A student is in violation of probation if they have one set of six Level 1's, a Level 2, or a Level 3 infraction while on probation. The violation of probation may result in suspension or expulsion from GSSM. It is Level 3 infraction and will be referred for Judicial Council review.
- b. **Possible Restrictions:** Students on disciplinary probation may not be allowed to participate in certain school activities, athletic events, or trips based on the nature of the violation. These restrictions will be imposed by the appropriate administrator (e.g. participation in athletics events will be assessed by the Athletic Director. School activities and Residence Life trips will be assessed by the Dean of Students, etc.). Any restrictions will be communicated to the student and the parents.

A student on probation should exercise great personal responsibility and integrity during this time of learning, growth, and consequence. Probation is best interpreted as a time to learn from mistakes while abiding by all GSSM community standards and related expectations as outlined in the *Student Handbook*.

### 4. **On Campus Suspension**

Students may be sanctioned to On Campus Suspension for any Level 2 or Level 3 infraction. This suspension allows the student to remain in residence and attend classes. When not in class, students serving On Campus Suspension will be required to remain in a monitored space during the academic day, and they will be restricted to their rooms after 6:00 p.m. until the next morning. Students serving On Campus Suspension will be required to sign out for the weekend during the period of the suspension. Additionally, students cannot participate in any extra-curricular activities including athletics, club activities, field trips, etc. In some cases, students with this status may be required to move out of their assigned residence hall room for the period of suspension. Like probation, a violation of On Campus Suspension may result in expulsion from GSSM.

### 5. **Suspension**

Students may be suspended for Level 2 or Level 3 offenses by processes described in the Section on Investigation and Imposition of Sanctions. The number of days of suspension will depend on the details of the infraction, but will not exceed seven academic days. The parent/guardian of the student is responsible for the student's transportation. The student will not be allowed to drive their car home.

A class absence due to suspension will be unexcused. Suspended students must take the responsibility for missed academic work through self-guided, individual study. Teachers have no obligation to repeat lectures, class activities, or laboratory work. Academic penalties may be imposed by teachers and will vary depending on the nature of the course. Missed quizzes, labs, and graded class activities may be recorded as "zeros" with the result a reduction of no more than one half of a full letter grade for the semester. Students are allowed to make up major tests and other significant assignments. Students must complete this work within one week after their return from suspension. Teachers may impose a penalty on this work not to exceed one full letter grade for the test or assignment. This policy for graded work seeks to balance the ultimate goal of student learning and its reflection as a course grade with the burden on teachers to pre-

pare make-up assessments, and the lesson that personal behavior may affect one's opportunities as well as other people. Teachers will not provide any remediation or extra help for missed lectures. Each student is required to attend counseling as assessed by the guidance office.

Records of student suspensions are retained as described in the section on Records Retention.

Suspensions may be appealed as outlined in the section on Investigation and Imposition of Sanctions.

6. **Recommendation for Expulsion**

A student may be recommended for expulsion for any Level 3 Infraction or for violations of disciplinary probation by processes described in Section C on Investigation and Imposition of Sanctions. If the designated hearing officer upholds the Judicial Council's recommendation, expulsions may be appealed as described therein. The student's records will be transferred to the institution designated by the family once a request from that school is provided. Records of expulsions are retained as described in the section on Records Retention.

**Important Note: Disciplinary actions and sanctions that involve but are not limited to probation, suspension, or expulsion may be reported to colleges and universities as referenced in the Discipline Disclosure Policy noted on page 71.**

## **C. Investigation and Imposition of Sanctions**

1. **Level 1 Offenses**

Any member of the GSSM faculty or staff may investigate a situation and impose a Level 1 sanction with the oversight of the Dean of Students for consistency and fairness.

2. **Level 2 Offenses**

The Dean of Students will investigate all situations involving Level 2 offenses with the exception of academic dishonesty violations, which will be managed by the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction. Violations potentially resulting in suspension will be heard by a Judicial Council as described in Section E. For other violations, the Dean of Students will impose sanctions in most cases. Generally, in academic matters, the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction working with the faculty will make the appropriate determination.

3. **Level 3 Offenses**

The Dean of Students normally investigates Level 3 violations. The Vice President for Academic Affairs or his designee investigates Level 3 academic dishonesty violations. The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will (in most cases) investigate Level 3 violations that occur during Interim trips. During summer research, the Director of Research and Inquiry investigates conduct violations. Findings are reported to the appropriate entity as described below.

## **D. Consequences for Academic Integrity Violations**

1. When teachers discover that a student has violated academic integrity, they will discuss the incident with the student and determine the consequences for the offense. In enforcing academic integrity, teachers will always work to be fair and consistent to all students and to help students learn from their mistakes.
2. The teacher may choose to resolve the incident without a formal incident report if they think that is the best way for the student to learn from it. For these minor incidents, teachers can give students verbal or written warnings, reduce their grades, and/or require them to revise, rework, or retake written work or an exam. Teachers will keep records of all incidents involving academic integrity even if they do not write a formal incident report for them.

3. If the teacher considers the incident more serious, they will **complete an academic integrity incident report** and send it to the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction and the Dean of Students. At this point, the level of the charge is at the discretion of the instructor. The incident report will describe what happened, any supporting facts for the existence of a violation, and the penalty for the incident. The report will also outline how the teacher has worked with the student to understand the consequences of their actions and a plan for moving forward in the class.
4. Incident reports have three levels:
  - a. **A level-one incident related to academic integrity** is “failing to follow instructions” as outlined on the class syllabus and/or communicated by the teacher. As referenced in the *Student Handbook*, GSSM makes some allowances for students as they acclimate to the school and, in this case, the rigor. Minor infractions should be minimal once students adjust. Penalties may include a written reprimand and/or warning.
  - b. **A level-two incident** is “cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and other acts of academic dishonesty.” Penalties may include a zero on the assignment. Faculty may also give the student an opportunity to re-submit the assignment.
  - c. **A level-three incident** occurs when a student commits a second level-two academic integrity offense or when a violation is judged to be egregious. Level-three incidents are referred to the Judicial Council for review. Penalties may extend to expulsion from the program. See the Judicial Council section of this handbook for an explanation on Judicial Council procedures.
5. **Level-two or level-three incidents will also be sent to the student’s parents** in keeping with the GSSM Discipline and Honor Code.
6. The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will review the incident report and student’s permanent record to determine if a greater penalty is merited based on previous offenses. Completed academic dishonesty incident reports and subsequent actions will be placed in a student’s permanent record. The Dean will also meet with the student to help them understand the consequences of their actions and to work on moving forward productively.
7. Appeals:
  - a. Students may appeal to the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction (DAP) if they believe that they did not violate academic integrity. The DAP will consult with the faculty member, the chair of the department, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs before deciding the appeal.
  - b. Students may appeal grade penalties by using the GSSM grade appeal process found in this handbook.
  - c. Students may appeal Judicial Council decisions using the appeal process outlined in the Discipline and Honor Code Violations section of this handbook.

## **E. Judicial Council**

The Judicial Council will hear all Level 3 violation cases of the GSSM discipline code and Level 2 cases when suspension is a possible sanction. The composition, duties, and procedures of the Judicial Council will be as follows:

### **1. Judicial Council Members**

- a. The Judicial Council for each case will consist of three members: The Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth as Chair and two additional persons representing the faculty and/or staff. Six (6) members from the faculty and four (4) staff members will be trained and prepared to review cases when called upon. Committee members will be appointed by the President in consultation with the leadership team who will recommend mem-

bers holding full-time positions. Certain faculty and staff members may be exempt from serving due to the nature of their positions (e.g. residence life staff, psychologist, etc.). Members of the leadership team may not serve, but may be called on to chair proceedings when and if the Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth is unable to convene the Council or if they have to recuse themselves.

- b. After the completion of the investigation by the Dean of Students, the Judicial Council will meet to review all documentation and other evidence in the case. (Note that in some cases, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction, or the Director of Research and Inquiry may do the initial investigation.) At the discretion of the Chair, these materials may be distributed prior to the meeting to expedite the process. The Judicial Council will identify any witnesses who should be present at the hearing to clarify their previous statements or to provide additional information.

## 2. **Responsibilities and Process**

- a. The Judicial Council will convene as promptly as circumstances permit after it receives a case. The meeting(s) will continue in a timely manner until the case is resolved.
- b. The Chair of the Judicial Council will notify parent(s) of the student(s) about the alleged disciplinary infractions of their child and of the proceedings of the Judicial Council.
- c. The Judicial Council will hold an evidentiary hearing of all Level 3 cases. The Judicial Council will convene an evidentiary hearing for all Level 2 cases if the Dean of Students or their designee or the President of GSSM determines that suspension is a possible sanction.
- d. The Dean of Students, Dean of Curriculum and Instruction (academic dishonesty and Interim trips), Director of Research and Inquiry (summer research) or another person designated by the President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, or Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth carries out the initial investigation of Level 2 or Level 3 incidents. The Judicial Council may call witnesses to give testimony that has direct relevance to the case.
- e. A hearing will then be convened where the accused student will have the right to present their case before the Judicial Council. The accused student may request that witnesses with information relevant to the incident be present and make statements on behalf of the accused. Judicial Council members may question all witnesses and the accused student. No one else, including parents, may participate in the hearing. After dismissing all witnesses, the Judicial Council will deliberate in closed session to reach a decision.
- f. The accused student has the right to be informed of their alleged disciplinary infraction and will generally be provided the identity of the person(s) alleging the infraction. However, the Judicial Council reserves the right not to disclose the identity of the person alleging the infraction after considering all the circumstances of a particular case, including the possibility of retaliation if the student's identity is revealed.

## 3. **Outcomes**

- a. The Judicial Council shall reach its decision by majority vote. The deliberations of the Judicial Council, including individual votes of members, shall be confidential. The Chair will promulgate the decision of the Judicial Council, as well as any additional information about the case.
- b. The Judicial Council will render one of the following decisions:
  - Not responsible for charges.
  - Suspension/expulsion not warranted, but lesser sanctions imposed.
  - On Campus Suspension; Judicial Council will determine dates and length along with additional sanctions if deemed appropriate.
  - Suspension; Judicial Council will determine dates and length of the suspension and any additional sanctions as deemed appropriate.
  - Suspension with a recommendation for Expulsion; student will be referred to the School Hearing Officer to schedule an Expulsion Hearing.
- c. The decision of the Judicial Council is final. However, any suspension or expulsion decision is subject to the appeals process as outlined below. If requested by the accused student or



their parent, copies of all written witness statements will be provided to them. These statements will be presented in a form that deletes the names and personal references to students other than the accused.

- d. Parents of a student who is suspended will be notified in writing and will be offered a conference within three days of the date of the suspension.
- e. The President of GSSM or their designee has the authority to have a student leave campus immediately during an investigation or pending the convening of the Judicial Council. This decision will be made if the President determines it is in the best interest of the student(s) or the school. The Judicial Council will not consider this action as a finding of guilt. The Judicial Council will reach an independent decision based on evidence presented in the case. If the Judicial Council determines that suspension is the appropriate sanction, the days the student has been away from campus may be considered time served by the student. To clarify, the panel can consider the time spent awaiting the hearing to count as part of the sanction. If the Judicial Council determines that the suspension is not an appropriate sanction, the student will be allowed to make up all work without penalty, and the days missed will be recorded as excused absences.

## F. Expulsion Hearing

### 1. Hearing Officer

If a Judicial Council recommends expulsion, the GSSM President will designate a Senior Administrator to serve as the Hearing Officer. The GSSM President has the authority to expel a student without judicial council review.

### 2. The Hearing

- a. The Hearing Officer will inform the student's parent/guardian of the basis of the recommendation of the Expulsion Hearing. They will notify the student's parent/guardian in writing of the time and the place of the hearing. The hearing shall take place within 10 days of the written notification of the expulsion recommendation and a decision shall be rendered within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.
- b. At the hearing, an administrator will present the facts of the case on behalf of the administration, including the testimony of any relevant witnesses, if appropriate. At the conclusion of the administration's presentation, the student and/or their parent/guardian may present witnesses with relevant testimony. Within the discretion of the Hearing Officer, either party may appropriately question the witnesses of the other party. In addition, the administrator may also ask questions. The student may invite a faculty or staff member to be present for personal support.
- c. The student may be represented by counsel at the expulsion hearing. However, if a student is to be represented by an attorney, he must notify the Hearing Officer at least three (3) days prior to the hearing. Failure to notify the Hearing Officer that a student will be represented by counsel at an expulsion hearing may result in the postponement of the hearing. The Hearing Officer will inform the student and parent/guardian of the decision within 10 days after the hearing. An official letter of notification will follow the initial contact.

## G. Appeals

1. Appeals of Sanctions – There are certain grounds that students and their families should consider in appealing sanctions. Generally, the basis for appeals are as follows:
  - a. **Procedural error** that prevented a fair, impartial hearing where prejudice can be proven;
  - b. Discovery of **new information** that was unavailable at the time of the hearing and could have reasonably affected the decision of the administrative or Council proceeding
  - c. Sanction imposed is **disproportionate to the violation(s)** committed considering relevant factors

## 2. **Appeal of Expulsion**

- a. If a student or a parent/guardian wishes to appeal an expulsion decision made by the Hearing Officer, a hearing may be requested with the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of GSSM. Such a request must be made in writing to the attention of the President of GSSM within five days of receiving notice of the expulsion decision. The student may be represented by legal counsel during this appeal. During the appeal, terms of the original sanction will be enforced.
- b. An appeal to the Executive Committee of the Board will normally be limited to the established record and no new testimony will be allowed unless the Board desires to hear additional testimony. The Board may reverse or alter the decision of the Hearing Officer. If an expulsion is overturned, the student will be allowed to make up work without penalty and all reference to the expulsion will be removed from the student's record.

## 3. **Appeal of Suspension**

- a. If a student or a parent/guardian wishes to appeal a suspension, the request must be made in writing to the GSSM President within five days of notification of the sanction. The GSSM President will designate a member of the Senior Administration to hear appeals of suspensions. The appeal will be conducted as an informal hearing. The administrator who investigated and/or imposed the suspension, parents, and student may be present. The parents, student, and administrator will be allowed to address the Hearing Officer. It is within the discretion of the Hearing Officer to permit others to attend, at the request of either party.
- b. Within 10 days of the hearing, the Hearing Officer shall render a decision in writing as to their decision.
- c. The decision of the Hearing Officer will be final. During the appeal, the terms of the original sanction will be enforced. If the appeal is successful, the sanction will be overturned and, in case of suspensions, the student will be allowed to make up all work without penalty and all reference to the suspension will be removed from the student's record.

## 4. **Appeals Not Involving Suspension or Expulsion**

If a student wishes to appeal a sanction, they may appeal to the appropriate person as follows:

- a. Level 1 infractions may be appealed in writing to the person who assigned the sanction. Appeals must be made within 24 hours of notification of the sanction. If it is decided the appeal should be upheld, the student's record will be changed; i.e., the infraction will not count. If the appeal is denied, the sanction will be served on the date assigned, or, if the sanction has been postponed, a new date and time (the next day, if possible) will be set. The decision will be final.
- b. Level 2 infractions levied by a Residence Life Coordinator or any other faculty or staff member may be appealed to the Dean of Students (or the Vice President for Academic Affairs for academic matters) or their designee in writing within 24 hours of notification of the sanction. The decision will be final. Appeals of Level 2 infractions levied by the Dean of Students must be made to the Vice President for Student Development & Professional Growth or their designee in writing within five days of notification of the sanction. Verbal statements of intent to appeal are not acceptable.
- c. Students and parents who wish to appeal sanctions imposed by the Judicial Council that are not suspension should make their request in writing to the GSSM President within five days of notification of the sanction. The President will designate a member of Senior Administration to consider the appeal. In some cases, the President may decide to review the matter.

## **H. Legal Charges**

Legal charges may also result from any offense noted above that is a criminal act. Any disciplinary action by GSSM may be in addition to any penalty imposed in the criminal courts.

## **CLOSING STATEMENT**

As an institution dedicated to education, the South Carolina Governor's School for Science + Mathematics realizes the importance of growth and change. To accommodate new or different policies or regulations and in the interest of bettering the student's educational experience, the Governor's School reserves the right to alter this handbook throughout the year. In the event of an alteration of this document, students will be notified at once.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A GSSM Acute 12



SOUTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL FOR

# SCIENCE+ MATHEMATICS

**The Acute 12: GSSM Community Standards and Expectations that deserve particular emphasis and clarity.**

*The following policies and potential consequences are presented here to make absolutely certain that they are understood and their importance stressed. Students and parents are required to sign this contract at the beginning of the student's junior year.*

I understand and agree that:

1. The use, possession, and/or distribution of illegal or unauthorized prescription drugs, or otherwise illegal substances, while under the school's jurisdiction is prohibited and will likely lead to separation from the school.
2. The use, possession, and/or distribution of alcohol on campus and while under the school's jurisdiction are prohibited and will likely lead to separation from the school.
3. The creation of an open flame (match, candle, etc.) in the residence hall is prohibited and will likely lead to separation from the school.
4. Title IX violations on the campus or while under the school's jurisdiction is prohibited and will likely lead to separation from the school.
5. Intentional dishonesty as a part of a judicial proceeding is prohibited and will likely lead to separation from the school.
6. Fighting or initiating physical violence against any member of the GSSM community is prohibited and will likely lead to separation from the school.
7. Use or possession of a weapon (firearm, knife that does not fall within specific guidelines or related materials) is prohibited and will likely lead to separation from the school.
8. Harassment, intimidation, bullying, and/or hate speech directed against a member of the school community are prohibited and will likely lead to separation from the school. Regardless of race, color, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, geographic location, religion, or other distinguishing expressions or characteristics, GSSM shows respect for all community members.
9. A consistent failure to cooperate with school rules and regulations over an extended period of time demonstrating a failure to accept the fundamental standards of community will likely lead to separation from the school.
10. Public conduct inconsistent with school values bringing public discredit to the school is prohibited and will likely lead to separation from the school.
11. Unauthorized use of facilities or the property of others, which includes destruction of property is prohibited and will likely lead to separation from the school.
12. Failure to meet academic standards and/or engaging in academic dishonesty will likely lead to separation from the school.

I further understand that these policies are designed to protect the safety of the individuals in the school community and to support our mission of student-centered excellence to include institutional values.

*Lastly, I have read the **Student Handbook** and agree to abide by the policies therein.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name – Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name – Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Appendix B**  
**Title IX Policy**  
Section A  
Sexual Harassment Complaints and Procedures for Resolution

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**Section 1: Introduction**

- 1.1 Policy Statement:** The South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Mathematics (GSSM) is committed to creating and maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from unlawful discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in Education Programs or Activities and Title VII, which prohibits sex discrimination in employment. Sexual harassment and Retaliation under this Policy will not be tolerated by GSSM, and are grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including, permanent dismissal from GSSM and/or termination of employment.
- 1.2 Purpose:** GSSM takes all reported sexual misconduct and sexual harassment seriously. GSSM will apply appropriate sanctions to individuals within its control who are found responsible for violating this Policy. Additionally, reported sexual misconduct, harassment, and retaliation that does not meet the definitions and jurisdiction of this Policy will be referred for review under the student or employee conduct policy.
- 1.3 Applicability:** This Policy applies to students and employees as follows:
- a. To Students:** Where the Respondent is a student at GSSM at the time of the alleged conduct, the alleged conduct includes sexual harassment under this Policy, the alleged conduct occurs in GSSM's Education Program and Activity, the alleged conduct occurs against a person in the United States, and the Complainant is participating in or attempting to participate in GSSM's Education Program or Activity.
  - b. To Employees:** Where the Respondent is an employee at GSSM at the time of the alleged conduct, where the alleged conduct includes sexual harassment under this Policy, the alleged conduct occurs in GSSM's Education Program and Activity, the alleged conduct occurs against a person in the United States, and the Complainant is participating in or attempting to participate in GSSM's Education Program or Activity.
- 1.4 Title IX Coordinator and Key Title IX Officials:** The Title IX Coordinator is the GSSM employee who oversees GSSM's compliance with Title IX. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for administrative response to reports and Formal Complaints of sexual harassment. The Title IX Coordinator is available to discuss the grievance process, coordinate supportive measures, explain GSSM's policies and procedures, and provide education on relevant issues. Any member of GSSM's community may contact the Title IX Coordinator with questions. GSSM's Title IX Coordinator is:

Dr. Lance Riddle  
Email: [riddle@governors.school](mailto:riddle@governors.school)  
Phone: 843-383-3901 ext. 4021  
Location: 401 Railroad Ave, Hartsville, SC 29550

In addition to the Title IX Coordinator, GSSM appoints investigators, decision makers and informal resolution facilitators who have roles in the formal grievance process more fully explained in later sections of this Policy.

The Title IX Coordinator, investigators, decision makers, and informal resolution facilitators will receive annual training in compliance with Title IX. All GSSM employees in these roles will not rely on sex stereotypes and will provide impartial investigations and adjudications of Formal Complaints of sexual harassment. All materials used to train these administrators will be publicly made available on GSSM's website ([www.scgssm.org](http://www.scgssm.org)) in accordance with Title IX requirements.

The Title IX Coordinator, investigators, decision makers, and informal resolution facilitators shall not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or an individual Complainant or Respondent.

- 1.5 Notification:** GSSM may use email, phone calls, or USPS for purposes of communication and notification under this Policy.
- 1.6 Dissemination of Policy:** This Policy will be made available to all GSSM faculty, staff, and students online at [www.scgssm.org](http://www.scgssm.org) and in the student handbook and employee handbook.
- 1.7 Effective Date:** The effective date of this Policy is August 1, 2022.
- 1.8 Retaliation and False Statements Prohibited:** Neither GSSM nor any other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or this Policy or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this Policy.
  - a. Alleged violations of Retaliation will be referred to the student or employee conduct policy.
  - b. Charging an individual with a conduct policy violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance proceeding under this Policy does not constitute Retaliation prohibited under Policy. However, a determination regarding responsibility, alone, is not sufficient to conclude that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.
- 1.9 Other GSSM Policies:** This Policy takes precedence over other GSSM policies and procedures concerning sexual harassment under Title IX in the event of a conflict.
- 1.10 Modification and Review of this Policy:** GSSM reserves the right to modify this policy when applicable legal requirements are changed. GSSM will regularly review this Policy to determine whether modifications should be made.
- 1.11 Additional GSSM Policy Violations:** Alleged violations of the student or employee conduct policy that arise from the same events as alleged sexual harassment under this policy will be investigated and resolved under the grievance process in this policy unless the sexual harassment has been dismissed under Section 5.2 of this policy.
- 1.12 Role of Parent or Guardian:** Nothing in this Policy may be read in derogation of any legal right of a parent or guardian to act on behalf of a "Complainant," "Respondent," "party," or other individual, subject to this Policy including, but not limited to, filing a Formal Complaint.
- 1.13 Role of Advisor:** Either party may be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by the advisor of their choice. However, neither party's advisor will be permitted to question witnesses. Neither party's advisor may participate in interviews or meetings in which the represented party is not a participant.

## Section 2: Definitions

### 2.1 Definitions of Prohibited Conduct Under this Policy\*

**2.1.1 Sexual harassment** means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

(1) An employee of GSSM conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of GSSM on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;

(2) Unwelcome conduct determined by a Reasonable Person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to GSSM's education program or activity<sup>1</sup>; or

(3) Sexual Assault, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence or Stalking as defined in this Policy.

**2.1.2 Sexual Assault** means an offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, including Rape, Fondling, Incest, and Statutory Rape as defined in this Policy.

**2.1.3 Rape**<sup>2</sup> means the penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.

**2.1.4 Fondling**<sup>3</sup> means the touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental incapacity.

**2.1.5 Incest**<sup>4</sup> means sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.

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<sup>1</sup> A severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive assessment includes, but is not limited to, a consideration of the frequency of the offensive conduct, the nature of the unwelcome sexual acts or words, such as whether the harassment was physical, verbal or both; whether the harassment was merely an offensive utterance; and the number of victims involved and the relationship between the parties including, but not limited to, the ages of the harasser and the victim. In evaluating whether conduct is severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive, GSSM will look at the totality of the circumstances, expectations and relationships.

<sup>2</sup> Rape as defined in the Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR) includes:

Forcible Rape: The carnal knowledge of a person, forcibly and/or against that person's will or not forcibly or against the person's will in instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.

Forcible Sodomy: Oral or anal sexual intercourse with another person, forcibly and/or against that person's will or not forcibly or against the person's will in instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her youth or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.

Sexual Assault with and Object: -To use an object or instrument to unlawfully penetrate, however slightly, the genital or anal opening of the body of another person, forcibly and/or against that person's will or not forcibly or against the person's will in instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her youth or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.

<sup>3</sup> Fondling is referred to as Forcible Fondling in the UCR.

<sup>4</sup> Incest is a Nonforcible Offense in the UCR.

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\* Applicable South Carolina Laws can be accessed at <https://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/title16.php>.

**3.1.1 Statutory Rape**<sup>1</sup> means sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent.

**3.1.2 Dating Violence** means violence committed by a person-

(A) who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and

(B) where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:

- The length of the relationship,
- The type of relationship,
- The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

Dating violence includes, but is not limited to, sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse.

**3.1.3 Domestic Violence** includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by:

- a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim,
- a person with whom the victim shares a child in common,
- a person who is cohabitating with, or has cohabitated with, the victim as a spouse or intimate partner,
- a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of South Carolina, or
- any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of South Carolina.

**3.1.4 Stalking** means engaging in a Course of Conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a Reasonable Person to-

- fear for his or her safety or the safety of others; or
- suffer Substantial Emotional Distress.

## 3.2 Definitions Related to Sexual Harassment: Consent, Course of Conduct, Incapacitation, Reasonable Person, Substantial Emotional Distress

**3.2.1 Consent** is affirmative, conscious, voluntary, and revocable. Consent to sexual activity requires of each person an affirmative, conscious, and voluntary agreement to engage in sexual

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<sup>1</sup> Statutory Rape is a Nonforcible Offense in the UCR.



activity. Consent may not be given in some circumstances based upon incapacitation, force, coercion or age.

It is the responsibility of each person to ensure they have the affirmative consent of the other to engage in the sexual activity. Lack of protest, lack of resistance, or silence do not, alone, constitute consent. Affirmative consent must be ongoing and can be revoked at any time during sexual activity.

The existence of a dating relationship or past sexual relations between the Complainant and Respondent will never by itself be assumed to be an indicator of consent (nor will subsequent sexual relations or dating relationship alone suffice as evidence of consent to prior conduct).

The Respondent's belief that the Complainant consented will not provide a valid defense unless the belief was actual and reasonable. In making this determination, the decision maker will consider all of the facts and circumstances the Respondent knew, or reasonably should have known, at the time. In particular, the Respondent's belief is not a valid defense where:

- (1) The Respondent's belief arose from the Respondent's own intoxication or recklessness;
- (2) The Respondent did not take reasonable steps, in the circumstances known to the Respondent at the time, to ascertain whether the Complainant affirmatively consented; or
- (3) The Respondent knew or a reasonable person should have known that the Complainant was unable to consent because the Complainant was incapacitated, in that the Complainant was:
  - asleep or unconscious
  - unable to understand the fact, nature, or extent of the sexual activity due to the influence of drugs, alcohol, or medication
  - unable to communicate due to a mental or physical condition.

**3.2.2 Course of Conduct** means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts in which the individual directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about, a person, or interferes with a person's property.

**3.2.3 Incapacitation** means that a person lacks the ability to actively agree to sexual activity because the person is asleep, unconscious, under the influence of alcohol or other drugs such that the person does not have control over their body, is unaware that sexual activity is occurring, or their mental, physical or developmental abilities render them incapable of making rational informed decisions. Incapacitated is a state beyond drunkenness or intoxication. A person is not necessarily incapacitated merely as a result of drinking, using drugs, or taking medication.

A person violates this policy when they engage in sexual activity with another person who is Incapacitated and a Reasonable Person in the same situation would have known that the person is Incapacitated. Incapacitation can be voluntary or involuntary. Signs of Incapacitation may include, without limitation: sleep; total or intermittent unconsciousness; lack of control over physical movements (e.g., inability to dress/undress without assistance; inability to walk without assistance); lack of

awareness of circumstances or surroundings; emotional volatility; combativeness; vomiting; incontinence; unresponsiveness; and inability to communicate coherently. Incapacitation is an individualized determination based on the totality of the circumstances.

**3.2.4 Reasonable Person** means a reasonable person under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the victim.

**3.2.5 Substantial Emotional Distress** means significant mental suffering or anguish that may but does not necessarily require medical or other professional treatment or counseling.

### 3.3 Other Defined Terms

**3.3.1 Actual Knowledge** means Notice of Sexual Harassment allegations to any employee of GSSM (Officials with Authority), except that Actual Knowledge is not met when the only individual with Actual Knowledge is the Respondent.

**3.3.2 Business Day** means any weekday not designated by GSSM as a holiday. When calculating a time period of Business Days specified in this Policy, the Business Day of the event that triggers a time period is excluded.

**3.3.3 Complainant** means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment. Complainants and Respondents are referred to collectively as "parties" throughout this Policy.

**3.3.4 Disciplinary Sanctions** are imposed only after a finding of responsibility through the grievance process or an agreement through the informal resolution process.

**3.3.5 Education Program or Activity** includes locations, events, or circumstances over which GSSM exercises substantial control over both the Respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs. This includes conduct that occurs on GSSM's property, during any GSSM activity.

**3.3.6 Formal Complaint** means a document filed by a Complainant (or parent or guardian of the complainant) or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a Respondent and requesting that GSSM investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.

**3.3.7 Official with Authority** means any employee of GSSM.

**3.3.8 Remedies** are designed to restore or preserve equal access to GSSM's Education Program or Activity. Remedies may include, but are not limited to, the same individualized services as Supportive Measures; however, Remedies need not be non-disciplinary or non-punitive and need not avoid burdening the Respondent.

**3.3.9 Respondent** means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment. Complainants and Respondents are referred to collectively as "parties" throughout this Policy.

**3.3.10 Retaliation** means intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for conduct policy violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination,  
or

a report or Formal Complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or this Policy.

**3.3.11**        **Supportive Measures** means non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the Complainant or the Respondent before or after the filing of a Formal Complaint or where no Formal Complaint has been filed.

Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to GSSM's Education Programs or Activities without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or GSSM's educational environment, or deter sexual harassment.

Supportive measures may include, but are not limited to, counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, changes in work locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the property, and other similar measures.

## **Section 3: Reporting Sexual Harassment and Preservation of Evidence**

### **3.1 Reporting to GSSM**

**3.1.1 Reporting to Title IX Coordinator:** Reports of sexual harassment may be made to the Title IX Coordinator in any of the following ways, by anyone, at any time: email, phone, in person or by USPS mail. After Title IX Sexual Harassment has been reported to the Title IX Coordinator, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly offer supportive measures to the Complainant, regardless of whether the Complainant was the reporter of the sexual harassment.

**3.1.2 Reporting to Employees of GSSM:** If employees of GSSM are notified of sexual harassment, they shall promptly report such sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator who will take immediate action under this Policy.

**3.2 Reporting to Law Enforcement:** Reports may be filed with local law enforcement agencies. The Title IX Coordinator can assist with contacting law enforcement agencies. Law enforcement investigations are separate and distinct from the GSSM's investigations.

GSSM Public Safety - 843 992-0377

Darlington County Sherriff's Office - 843 398-4501

**3.3 Reporting to Outside Agencies:** Students and employees may report complaints to:

Office for Civil Rights

U. S. Department of Education

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html>

32 Old Slip, 26<sup>th</sup> Floor

New York, NY 10005-2500

646 428-3800

[ocr.newyork@ed.gov](mailto:ocr.newyork@ed.gov)

**Time Limits on Reporting.** There are no time limits on reporting sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator or GSSM. If the Respondent is no longer subject to GSSM's Education Program or Activity, or if significant time has passed, GSSM may have limited ability to investigate, respond and/or provide disciplinary Remedies and Sanctions.

#### **Section 4: Initial Response to Reported Sexual Harassment**

Upon receipt of a report of sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly contact the Complainant, regardless of whether the Complainant was the individual who initiated the report. During the initial contact with the Complainant, the Title IX Coordinator will:

- Provide the Complainant with notice of their option to have an advisor;
- Explain the process for filing a Formal Complaint;
- Explain the Grievance Process;
- Discuss the availability of Supportive Measures regardless of whether a Formal Complaint is filed;
- Consider the Complainant's wishes with respect to Supportive Measures.

#### **Section 5: Formal Complaint:**

GSSM will investigate all allegations of sexual harassment in a Formal Complaint.

**5.1 Filing a Formal Complaint:** A Formal Complaint must:

- (1) Contain an allegation of sexual harassment against a Respondent;
- (2) Request that GSSM investigate the allegation; and
- (3) Be signed by the Complainant (or parent or guardian of the Complainant) or Title IX Coordinator.

In limited circumstances, if a Complainant does not sign a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator may sign a Formal Complaint. In determining whether to sign a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will consider factors that include but are not limited to:

- Whether there have been other reports of sexual harassment or other relevant misconduct concerning the same Respondent whether or not the incidents occurred while the Respondent was an GSSM student or employee;
- Whether the Respondent threatened further sexual harassment or other misconduct against the Complainant or others;
- Whether the alleged sexual harassment was committed by multiple Respondents;
- The nature and scope of the alleged sexual harassment including whether the sexual harassment was perpetrated with a weapon;
- The ages and roles of the Complainant and the Respondent;
- Whether GSSM can pursue the investigation without the participation of the Complainant (e.g., whether there are other available means to obtain relevant evidence of the alleged sexual harassment such as security cameras or physical evidence);

- Whether the report reveals a pattern of perpetration (e.g., perpetration involving illicit use of drugs or alcohol) at a given location or by a particular group.

## **5.2 Dismissal of a Formal Complaint**

**5.2.1 Required Dismissal:** The Title IX Coordinator will dismiss a Formal Complaint for purposes of sexual harassment if:

- (1) The conduct alleged in the Formal Complaint would not constitute sexual harassment as defined in this Policy even if proved;
- (2) The conduct alleged did not occur in GSSM's Education Program or Activity; or
- (3) The Conduct alleged in the Formal Complaint did not occur against a person in the United States.

Dismissal of a Formal Complaint does not preclude action under other provisions of GSSM's policies and procedures. If a Formal Complaint is dismissed under this section, the matter will be reviewed to determine whether the matter will be pursued under GSSM's student or employee conduct policy.

**5.2.2 Permissive Dismissal:** The Title IX Coordinator may dismiss a Formal Complaint or any allegations within the Formal Complaint, if at any time during the investigation or hearing:

- (1) A Complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the Complainant would like to withdraw the Formal Complaint or any allegations within the Formal Complaint,
- (2) The Respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by GSSM, or
- (3) Specific circumstances prevent GSSM from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the Formal Complaint or allegations within the Formal Complaint.

**5.2.3 Appeal of Dismissal:** Either party may appeal the dismissal of a Formal Complaint or any allegations therein. See Section 9 for bases and process for appeals.

**5.3 Consolidation of Formal Complaints:** The Title IX Coordinator may consolidate Formal Complaints as to allegations of sexual harassment against more than one Respondent or by more than one Complainant against one or more Respondents where the allegations arise out of the same facts or circumstances.

## **Section 6: Grievance Process**

The grievance process within this Policy is designed to treat Complainants and Respondents equitably. Remedies are provided to a Complainant where a determination of responsibility for sexual harassment has been made against the Respondent and Disciplinary Sanctions are not imposed against a Respondent prior to the completion of the grievance process.

### **6.1 General Grievance Process Information:**

**6.1.1 Burden of Proof and Burden of Gathering Evidence:** All investigations and proceedings, including hearings, relating to sexual harassment will be conducted using a "preponderance of the evidence" (more likely than not) standard. The burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility rests on GSSM, not the parties.

- 6.1.2 Presumption of Not Responsible:** The Respondent is presumed to be not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the end of the grievance process.
- 6.1.3 Time Frames for Grievance Process:** GSSM strives to complete the grievance process within ninety (90) calendar days, which begins the day after the Formal Complaint is signed by the Title IX Coordinator. Delays and/or extensions of the time frames within this Policy may occur for good cause. Written notice will be provided to the parties of the delay and/or extension of the time frames with explanation of the reasons for such action. Examples of good cause for delay/extensions include, but are not limited to, considerations such as the absence of a party, a party's advisor, or a witness; concurrent law enforcement activity; or the need for language assistance or accommodation of disabilities.
- 6.1.4 Medical Records:** GSSM will not access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional's or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party, unless GSSM obtains that party's voluntary, written permission to do so for the grievance process within the Policy.
- 6.1.5 Privileged Information:** GSSM will not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions or evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure of, information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding the privilege has waived the privilege.
- 6.1.6 Range of Disciplinary Sanctions:** The sanctions which may be applied if an individual is found responsible for violating GSSM policy, for students, are listed in the Student Handbook, and for employees, are listed in the Employee Handbook.
- 6.1.7 Notice of Meetings, Interviews, and Hearings:** Parties and witnesses will be provided notice of any meeting, interview, and/or hearing with sufficient time to prepare to participate. This notice will include the date, time, location, participants and purposes of the meeting, interview and/or hearing.
- 6.2 Notice of Allegations:** Upon receipt of a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will provide Notice of Allegations to the parties who are known. The Notice of Allegations will include:
- (1) Notice of the party's rights and options
  - (2) Notice of GSSM's grievance process
  - (3) Notice of GSSM's informal resolution process and options
  - (4) Notice of the allegations of sexual harassment including:
    - The identities of the parties involved in the incident, if known,
    - The conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and
    - The date and location of the incident, if known.
  - (5) Notice that the Respondent is presumed not responsible of the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.

(6) Notice that the parties may have an advisor of their choice, and that the advisor may inspect and review evidence.

(7) Notice of GSSM's conduct policy provision that prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

The Notice of Allegations will be updated, and written notice provided to the parties if at any time during the investigation, GSSM decides to investigate allegations about the Complainant or Respondent that are not included in the initial Notice of Allegations.

**6.3 Investigation of Formal Complaint.** GSSM will conduct an investigation following a Formal Complaint and Notice of Allegations. During all meetings and interviews the parties may be accompanied by an advisor of their choice. The advisor's role is limited to assisting, advising, and/ or supporting a Complainant or Respondent. An advisor is not permitted to speak for or on behalf of a Complainant or Respondent or appear in lieu of a Complainant or Respondent.

**6.3.1 Opportunity to Provide Information and Present Witnesses:** Each party will be provided an equal opportunity to provide information to the investigator and present witnesses for the investigator to interview. The information provided by the parties can include inculpatory and exculpatory evidence. The witnesses can include both fact witnesses and expert witnesses.

**6.3.2 Opportunity to Inspect and Review Evidence:** Each party will be provided an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in the Formal Complaint, including evidence upon which GSSM does not intend to rely upon in reaching a determination regarding responsibility. This review includes inculpatory and exculpatory evidence that is obtained by a party, witness, or other source. Each party and their advisor (if any) will be provided an electronic copy of the evidence for inspection and review. The parties will have ten (10) business days to review and submit a written response to the investigator. The investigator will consider the written responses prior to completing an investigative report.

**6.3.3 Investigative Report:** Following the opportunity to inspect and review evidence directly related to the allegations raised in the Formal Complaint, the investigator will create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence obtained during the investigation.

**6.3.4 Review of the Investigative Report:** At least ten (10) business days prior to the determination of responsibility the investigator will provide each party and the party's advisor (if any) an electronic copy of the investigative report for their review and written response.

**6.3.5 Investigation Timeframe:** The investigation of a Formal Complaint will normally be concluded within 30-60 calendar days from the filing of a Formal Complaint. The parties will be provided updates on the progress of the investigation, as needed.

**Section 7: Question and Answer Period:** After the investigation, the Decision Maker will afford each party the opportunity to:

- 1) submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness;
- 2) provide each party with the answers; and
- 3) allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.



**7.1 Evidence and Questions Excluded:** The Decision Maker will make determination regarding relevancy prior to sending questions to parties or witnesses. The following questions and evidence are considered not relevant:

- a. Sexual Predisposition or Prior Sexual Behavior of the Complainant:** Questions and evidence about the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the Complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the conduct alleged by the Complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the Complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the Respondent and are offered to prove Consent.
- b. Privileged Information:** No person will be required to disclose information protected under a legally recognized privilege. The decision maker must not allow into evidence or rely upon any questions or evidence that may require or seek disclosure of such information, unless the person holding the privilege has waived the privilege. This includes information protected by the attorney-client privilege.
- c. Medical Records:** Evidence or records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional's or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party, are not permitted to be used during a hearing unless the party provides voluntary, written permission to do so for the grievance process within this Policy.

**Section 8: Determination Regarding Responsibility:** After the question and answer period, the Decision Maker will provide the Complainant and the Respondent with a written determination simultaneously. The determination regarding responsibility becomes final either on the date that GSSM provides the parties with the written determination of the result of the appeal, if an appeal is filed, or, if an appeal is not filed, the date on which an appeal would no longer be considered timely. The written notice will include:

- a. Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment;
- b. A description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the Formal Complaint through the determination, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, methods used to gather other evidence, and hearings held;
- c. Findings of fact supporting the determination;
- d. Conclusions regarding the application of this Policy to the facts;
- e. A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions that the GSSM imposes on the Respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to GSSM's Education Program or Activity will be provided by the GSSM to the Complainant<sup>1</sup>; and
- f. The procedures and permissible bases for the Complainant and Respondent to appeal.

**Section 9: Appeals:** Either party may appeal the determination regarding responsibility, or the dismissal of a Formal Complaint or any allegations therein within three (3) business days of the receipt of

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<sup>1</sup> The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for the implementation of any remedies.

the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal. The appeals must be made in writing and delivered to the Title IX Coordinator.

**9.1 Bases for Appeal:** Appeals of the determination of responsibility or the dismissal of a Formal Complaint may be made on the following bases:

- Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
- New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; or
- The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decision maker had a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or the individual Complainant or Respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

**9.2 Appeal Procedures:** If an appeal is submitted, GSSM will

**(1)** Notify the other party in writing when an appeal is filed and implement appeal procedures equally for both parties.

**(2)** Ensure that the decision-maker for the appeal is not the same person as the decision maker that reached the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal, the investigator or the Title IX Coordinator.

**(3)** Provide the non-appealing party with five (5) business days from receipt of the notification of appeal to submit a written statement in support of the outcome of the determination or dismissal.

**(4)** Issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result which may be from the following:

- Affirm the decision maker's determination regarding the Respondent's responsibility and affirm the disciplinary sanctions and remedies, if applicable;
- Affirm the decision maker's determination regarding the Respondent's responsibility and amend the disciplinary sanctions and remedies, if applicable;
- Remand the process back to the question and answer stage for the decision maker to remedy any procedural irregularity or consider any new evidence;
- Reverse the decision maker's determination of the Respondent's responsibility and amend the disciplinary sanctions and remedies, if applicable; or
- Affirm or amend the sanctions and/or remedies outlined in the determination issued under this Policy.

**(5)** Provide the written decision simultaneously to both parties.

**9.3 Appeal Timeframe:** The appellate decision-maker will release the written decision within twenty (20) business days of receiving the appeal.

**Section 10: Informal Resolution Process.** At any time after a Formal Complaint has been signed and before a determination regarding responsibility has been reached, the parties may voluntarily agree to participate in an informal resolution facilitated by GSSM, that does not involve a full investigation and adjudication. Types of informal resolution include, but are not limited to, mediation, facilitated dialogue, conflict coaching, and restorative justice and resolution by agreement of the parties.

**10.1 Informal Resolution Notice:** Prior to entering the informal resolution process, GSSM will provide the parties a written notice disclosing:

(1) The allegations;

(2) Consequences resulting from the informal resolution process, including that the records will be maintained for a period of seven (7) years but will not be used by investigators or decision makers if the formal grievance process resumes.

**Informal Resolution Agreement:** Prior to entering the informal resolution process, the parties must voluntarily agree, in writing to the use of the informal resolution process.

**10.2 Informal Resolution Availability:** The informal resolution process is not permitted to resolve allegations that an employee committed sexual harassment against a student.

**10.3 Informal Resolution Timeframe:** Informal resolutions of a Formal Complaint will be concluded within 30 business days of notice to GSSM that both parties wish to proceed with the informal resolution process. Such notice that the parties wish to proceed with an informal resolution process will "pause" the counting of the timeframe to conclude the Grievance Process of this Policy, should the informal resolution process fail and the parties continue with the Grievance Process.

**10.4 Informal Resolution Documentation:** Any final resolution pursuant to the Informal Resolution process will be documented and kept for seven (7) years. However, no recording of the informal resolution process will be made and all statements made during the informal resolution process will not be used for or against either party (and the decision maker and/or appellate decision maker may not consider any such statement made during informal resolution) should the parties resume the grievance process. Failure to comply with an informal resolution agreement may result in disciplinary action.

## **Section 11: Emergency Removal and Administrative Leave.**

**11.1 Emergency Removal** At any time after the Title IX Coordinator is on notice of sexual harassment, GSSM may remove a student Respondent on an emergency basis. GSSM will only conduct an emergency removal after:

- (1) Undertaking and individualized safety and risk analysis,
- (2) Determining that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal, and
- (3) Providing the Respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision to the Title IX Coordinator, within two (2) business days following the removal.

**11.2 Administrative Leave:** GSSM may place an employee Respondent on administrative leave during the pendency of the grievance process in this Policy.

**Section 12: Recordkeeping:** GSSM will maintain all of the documentation related to reports of sexual harassment, Formal Complaints, the grievance process, and information resolution process for seven (7) years in accordance with state and federal records laws and requirements. The documentation of all records is private and confidential to the extent possible under law. Student records of the grievance process are disciplinary records under Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Employee records of the grievance process are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and applicable state laws and included in the employee's official employment record.

**Section 13: Additional Conduct Violations Related to This Policy:** Alleged violations of the terms in this section will be sent to the Office of the Vice President for Student Development for student Respondents or the Office of Human Resources for employee Respondents for investigation and adjudication under the GSSM student or employee conduct policy.

- a. **Retaliation**
- b. **False Information**
- c. **Interference with Grievance Process**
- d. **No Contact Directive Violation**

# Title IX Policy

## Section B

### Non- Harassment Title IX Discrimination Complaints and Procedures For Resolution

#### **Section 1: Applicability**

The procedures in this section shall be used to investigate and resolve reported Title IX matters that allege discrimination that falls outside of Section A of this Policy. These procedures shall be used in conjunction with Section A of this Policy for purposes of identification of key Title IX officials (Section 1), definitions (Section 2), and reporting options (Section 3).

Discrimination prohibited under this policy includes the exclusion from participation in, denial of the benefits from, or subjection to unfavorable treatment in GSSM's Program or Activity on the basis of sex, including pregnancy status and sexual orientation and gender identity.

#### **Section 2: Advisors**

Complainants and Respondents may be accompanied by an advisor of their choice throughout the investigation. An advisor's role is limited to assisting, advising, and/ or supporting a Complainant or Respondent. An advisor is not permitted to speak for or on behalf of a Complainant or Respondent or appear in lieu of a Complainant or Respondent.

#### **Section 3: Investigation Procedures**

If the allegations fall within the scope of this policy and the matter does not resolve using the informal resolution process, GSSM will conduct a prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation of the reported discrimination. The Title IX Coordinator or their designee will appoint one or more investigators who will conduct investigative meetings, gather information and evidence, and make an independent determination as to whether a violation of the policy occurred using a preponderance of the evidence standard.

The Respondent is presumed not responsible until a determination has been reached by the investigator.

**Section 3.1: Notice of Allegations:** A written Notice of Allegations will be sent to the Complainant and Respondent, constituting the initiation of the investigation. The Notice of Allegations will contain a summary of the allegation(s) or conduct at issue. This will include the identities of the parties involved, the date and location of the incident (if known), and a link to the appropriate policies. Once the Notice of Allegations has been sent to the parties, the investigation begins.

**Section 3.2: Investigation Process:** The Complainant and Respondent will have an equal opportunity to be heard, identify witnesses, and provide information and evidence. The investigator will gather additional information and evidence as appropriate, including, but not limited to, social media information, text messages, email messages, videos, and other records. The investigator has the discretion to determine the relevance of information and witnesses and decide whether information or evidence should be excluded as irrelevant.

**Section 3.3: Timing of the Investigation:** GSSM strives to complete the investigation within ninety (90) business days from the issuance of the Notice of Allegations. All extensions of this time frame will be communicated with the parties in writing.

**Section 3.4: Report:** At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator will draft a report with a finding regarding responsibility based on a preponderance of the evidence standard. The report will include the applicable sanctions if there is a finding of "responsible." Sanction determinations will be made in collaboration with the Human Resources Manager or their designee if the Respondent is a faculty or staff member, or the Vice President for Student Development or their designee if the Re-

spondent is a student. A copy of the report will be provided simultaneously to the Complainant and Respondent.

#### **Section 4: Appeals**

The Complainant or Respondent may appeal the decision of the investigator based only on the following grounds:

- The existence of a procedural irregularity that materially affected the outcome;
- The existence of new evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility that could have affected the outcome;
- The Title IX Coordinator and/or investigator(s) had a conflict of interest or bias that affected the outcome;

Appeals must be made in writing and submitted to the Title IX Coordinator within three (3) business days of the receipt of the final decision. The appellate decision maker will notify the other non-appealing party of the appeal and allow for written response from the non-appealing party. A determination regarding the appeal will be made by the appellate decision maker within twenty (20) business days.

#### **Section 5: Acceptance of Responsibility**

The Respondent may, at any time, request to resolve the investigation process or resolve specific allegation(s) by accepting responsibility for the alleged misconduct. The Title IX Coordinator will complete a summary report of the information gathered. The Title IX Coordinator will consider the request; if the request is granted, the Title IX Coordinator, in consultation with the Human Resources Manager or their designee if the Respondent is a faculty or staff member, or the Vice President for Student Development or their designee if the Respondent is a student, will determine the appropriate sanction.

#### **Section 6: Informal Resolution**

The Complainant and Respondent may agree to Informal Resolution at any time prior to a determination regarding responsibility if the Title IX Coordinator deems the matter appropriate for Informal Resolution.<sup>12</sup> The Title IX Coordinator will consider the following when determining whether to permit a matter to move to Informal Resolution:

- The nature of the allegations;
- The dynamics of power or control associated with the alleged offense or the parties involved;
- The Respondent's prior known conduct;
- Whether there would be a continuing safety threat to GSSM's community after resolution of allegations;
- Whether multiple parties are involved;
- Any other factor deemed relevant by the Title IX Coordinator in the interest of overall GSSM's safety or safety of the parties involved.

Participation in Informal Resolution is a choice, and either party can request to end the Informal Resolution process and pursue an investigation at any time, including if Informal Resolution is unsuccessful at resolving

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<sup>12</sup> The Title IX Coordinator may, at any time, withdraw approval for the Informal Resolution and return the matter to investigation.

the matter. Similarly, either party can request to end an investigation and pursue Informal Resolution at any time, though entering Informal Resolution must be agreed to in writing by the parties.

If an agreement is reached through Informal Resolution, the parties will be provided simultaneously with a Notice of Outcome. An appeal of the Informal Resolution process or result is not permitted.

### **Section 7: Allegations Related to Culture**

Allegations related to a culture of Sexual Harassment or Non-Harassment Title IX Discrimination by a group, organization, department, division, or GSSM as a whole will be investigated and resolved as closely as possible to this policy. Resolutions for a group, organization, division or GSSM will be communicated with the highest-ranking member of the group, organization, department, division or GSSM.

### **Section 8: Recordkeeping**

GSSM will maintain all of the documentation related to reports of sexual harassment, Formal Complaints, the grievance process, and information resolution process for seven (7) years in accordance with state and federal records laws and requirements. The documentation of all records is private and confidential to the extent possible under law. Student records of the grievance process are disciplinary records under Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Employee records of the grievance process are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and applicable state laws and included in the employee's official employment record.

### **Section 9: Intersection of Policies**

The procedures in this policy are the exclusive means of resolving complaints of alleged violations of Title IX involving complaints of Non-Harassment Title IX Discrimination brought against GSSM faculty, staff, or students. To the extent there are any inconsistencies between these procedures and other GSSM grievance, complaint, or discipline procedures, these complaint resolution procedures will control the resolution of complaints alleging Non-Harassment Title IX Discrimination.

Note: Complaints and matters involving inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature or gender discrimination that do not fall within the scope of GSSM's Title IX Policy will be addressed in accordance with the Student Discipline and Honor Code.

**Appendix C**  
**Student Walking Boundaries**  
**Popular Destinations for GSSM Students**



Dining

- Bow Thai Cuisine
- Crema Coffee Bar
- Fuji Express
- Golden Dragon II
- Hoof and Hound
- The Midnight Rooster
- Pita Pit
- Sonic Drive-In
- Sophia's Pizzeria
- The Blind Pig
- Wildheart
- Maxyne's

Shopping & More

- The Nook
- Belk
- Dollar General
- Goodwill
- Hartsville Public Library
- Minnie's Giftique
- Walgreens
- Walmart

Hartsville is a small town with a lot to offer – the list above is only meant to highlight some of the many businesses within walking boundaries. There are several churches within walking boundaries and some faith organizations in our broader community provide transportation for interested students.





true

Helpful

inspiring

necessary

kind