



*Wharton County Junior College*

# Student Handbook

2024  
2025





# ***Wharton County Junior College***

## **Student Handbook 2024-2025**

This *Student Handbook* contains information about many of the services available to Wharton County Junior College (WCJC) students, as well as policies and regulations that govern our community. The policies and procedures included in this handbook are to assist you by establishing a set of community standards designed to promote student safety and success. You are encouraged to become familiar with this information.

WCJC makes every effort to include accurate and current information on policies, services, programs and procedures of the College in the *Student Handbook*. However, the College reserves the right to make changes considered expedient for its general well-being or that of any of its constituencies. Furthermore, the provisions of the *Student Handbook* do not constitute an irrevocable contract between any student and the College, and all provisions of the *Student Handbook* remain subject to revision at any time for any reason and without prior notice.

## WCJC MISSION STATEMENT

Wharton County Junior College is a public, two-year comprehensive college offering a wide range of post-secondary educational programs and services including associate degrees, certificates, continuing education courses, cultural affairs, and leisure-time activities for the benefit of the community and a population of students that varies in age, background, and ability.

The college affords opportunities for individual growth and expression and promotes the development of the total person through scholarly and creative activity and application of knowledge for the good of society.

Its curricular and co-curricular activities lay a foundation for lifelong learning and involved citizenship and encourage the pursuit of knowledge, innovation, experimentation and excellence in human endeavor. It prepares the student for entry-level positions, for advancement in various occupations and professions, for a broad understanding of the liberal arts and sciences, and for transfer to baccalaureate granting institutions.

- Offers associate of arts and associate of applied science degrees;
- Offers transfer curricula in preparation for the baccalaureate degree;
- Offers career/vocational curricula leading to certificates and associate degrees;
- Offers remedial and development courses and services, as well as adult basic education, to assist under- prepared students to achieve competency in basic skills and thus gain access to college-level programs;
- Supports excellence in instruction in all academic areas by the encouragement of faculty professional development for the improvement of teaching and learning through innovative teaching methodologies, research and public service;
- Provides library and other instructional resources as integral parts of the educational process;
- Supports students in the learning process through counseling and academic advising;
- Offers continuing education noncredit courses and programs to meet the needs of business, industry, government, and the community-at-large, and to contribute to the economic development of its service region;
- Provides varied cultural opportunities, recreational activities, and community services to enhance the quality of life in the service region;
- Actively cooperates with school districts, vocational-technical schools, other colleges, and universities to promote a more productive educational environment within its service region;
- Encourages the innovative and effective use of technology to increase and enrich education opportunities for students and the community.

Wharton County Junior College is an institution that emphasizes personal attention to students, innovation and flexibility in its credits and non-credit offerings, and responsiveness to the diversity of communities it serves. The college is dedicated to providing an educational environment that recognizes individuality, stresses the importance of human relationships, and reflects the democratic values of our society.

## CAMPUS LOCATIONS

**Wharton Campus**  
911 Boling Highway  
Wharton, Texas 77488  
979-532-4560

**Richmond Campus**  
5333 FM 1640  
Richmond, Texas 77469  
281-239-1500

**Sugar Land Campus**  
14004 University Blvd.  
Sugar Land, Texas 77479  
281-243-8447

**Bay City Campus**  
4000 Avenue F, Suite B  
Bay City, Texas 77414  
979-244-4236

## WCJC FACTS

Wharton County Junior College was founded in 1946.

### Student and Faculty

- Credit Students – 5,687
- Faculty – 273
- Average Class Size – 17

### Student Makeup

- Females – 3,242 (57%)
- Males – 2,445 (43%)
- Asian / Pacific Islander – 739 (13%)
- Black, Non-Hispanic – 682 (12%)
- Hispanic – 2,616 (46%)
- White, Non-Hispanic – 1,536 (27%)
- Other – 114 (2%)

### Programs

- Associate of Applied Science
- Associate of Arts
- Associate of Science
- Certificates and Certifications
- Continuing Education
- Distance Learning
- Dual Credit and Concurrent Enrollment
- Youth Activities
- Senior Citizens Program
- Workforce Development

Note: data based on fall 2023 enrollment

## CAMPUS DIRECTORY

WCJC Main Line: 979-532-4560

**Wharton Campus  
Security  
979-532-6523**

**Richmond Campus  
Security  
281-239-1501**

**Sugar Land Campus  
Security  
713-743-3333**

**Bay City Campus  
Security  
979-244-4552**

Academic Advising ----- 979-532-6388

Admissions and Registration----- 979-532-6303

Athletics ----- 979-532-6480

Automotive Services ----- 979-532-5608

Bookstore (Wharton) ----- 979-532-6414

Bookstore (Richmond) ----- 281-239-1513

Business Office / Cashier----- 979-532-6412

Career & Transfer Services----- 979-532-6388

Campus Life ----- 979-532-6519

Counseling Services ----- 979-532-6966

Continuing Education ----- 281-239-1531

Cosmetology Services ----- 979-532-6422

Dean of Student Success ----- 979-532-6966

Dental Hygiene Services ----- 979-532-6429

Disability Services ----- 979-532-6966

Dining Services ----- 979-532-6323

Financial Aid ----- 979-532-6345

Fitness Center ----- 979-532-6372

Housing ----- 979-532-6368

IT Help Desk ----- 979-532-6568

Library (Wharton) ----- 979-532-6509

Library (Sugar Land) ----- 281-633-5100

Testing (Richmond) ----- 281-239-1532

Testing (Sugar Land) ----- 281-243-8434

Testing (Wharton) ----- 979-532-6386

Title IX Coordinator for Students -- 979-532-6905

Veterans Services ----- 281-239-1540

### ACADEMIC DIVISIONS

Allied Health ----- 979-532-6428

Communications and Fine Arts ----- 979-532-6978

Life Sciences ----- 979-532-6460

Math and Physical Sciences ----- 979-532-6396

Social and Behavioral Sciences ----- 281-239-1581

Technology and Business ----- 979-532-6342

Vocational Science ----- 979-532-6575

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## **SECTION 1: STUDENT SERVICES AND RESOURCES**

### **ACADEMIC, CAREER AND TRANSFER ADVISING**

Academic, Career and Transfer advisors provide students with academic support and guidance as they explore their natural talents and develop academic and career goals. Advisors, located on the Wharton, Richmond, and Sugar Land campuses, assist students with a wide array of academic services including degree planning, course selection and scheduling, choosing and declaring a major, understanding program requirements, developing skills for academic success, and general academic support. Advisors can also assist with career and vocational guidance to include resume development, job search resources and interview skills; as well as transfer services to include individualized transfer plans, university information, and application assistance.

### **ADMISSIONS AND REGISTRATION**

The Office of Admissions and Registration supports students as they navigate their journey through WCJC; from application to graduation. OAR staff provide students with assistance in a variety of areas, including: admissions; registration; drops and withdrawals; degree evaluations; transcript requests; graduation applications; and commencement activities.

### **BUSINESS OFFICE**

The Business Office processes all student payments for tuition and fees, as well as any other fees applied to students' accounts. Students can pay fees online, by mail or in person on the Wharton, Richmond and Sugar Land campuses. Installment plans are also available.

### **CAMPUS LIBRARIES**

WCJC has two libraries available to students on campus - the J.M. Hodges Library is located on the Wharton campus, and the Fort Bend County Library is located on the Sugar Land campus. WCJC also maintains a cooperative agreement with the Fort Bend Public Library System and the Matagorda County Library System for library services to students enrolled in courses at Richmond and Bay City campuses. All students can freely access all library locations.

The libraries offer a variety of learning resources, materials and equipment to support instructional programs. The resources include over 28,000 books, physical and digital periodical subscriptions, multiple online databases, streaming video services, e-books, audiobooks, and DVDs. The libraries also provide computers, photocopiers, microfilm services, and internet access. Library patrons must adhere to the WCJC Internet Use Policy. The library offers laminating and comb binding services for a small fee. In general, library materials may be checked out for 14 days. Materials may not be held between semesters. Located within the library on the Wharton campus is the Learning Center and Open Computer Lab, Testing Center, TRIO Student Support Services, and the Academic, Career and Transfer Advising Center.

### **CAMPUS LIFE**

The Office of Campus Life, located on the second floor of the Pioneer Student Center, on the Wharton Campus, coordinates events and student enrichment activities throughout the year. This office also oversees student clubs and advises campus leadership and honor societies.

## **COUNSELING SERVICES**

[Counseling Services](#) offers confidential counseling services to students at no additional cost and is available on the Richmond, Sugar Land, and Wharton campuses. Services include personal counseling and consultation, group counseling, crisis intervention, community resources and referrals, educational workshops, and mental health and wellness programs. Licensed Professional Counselors are on staff to provide brief counseling and referrals for a variety of student concerns including stress, test anxiety, family or relationship issues, coping with grief and loss, dealing with academic pressures, and other personal or college-related issues. The counselors are trained professionals who can respond to students in an objective and nonjudgmental manner. The counseling relationship is unique in that it provides an environment in which a student can speak freely, privately and confidentially within the limits of the law. In addition, the WCJC Counseling website has community resources for mental health and counseling in the area. Students who need on-going, therapeutic counseling or whose cases are beyond the scope of the WCJC counseling services are referred to an outside agency or professional resource in the community. All costs incurred by those referrals are the student's responsibility.

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION**

The Continuing Education Department provides a wide range of non-credit training and educational opportunities to the community and local industry. Programs are available to assist students in getting started in the workplace, advancing their career, enhancing current skills, and working to meet licensure/certification requirements.

## **DISABILITY SERVICES**

[Disability Services](#) provides disability services for students who may need academic accommodations for learning disabilities, health impairments, physical limitations, and psychiatric conditions. Accommodations can also be provided for temporary conditions or injuries such as broken bones or minor surgery with standard recovery times.

WCJC is committed to providing a discrimination-free environment for its students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are encouraged to inform the college of any assistance they may need upon application. Early self-identification will allow the student to receive reasonable accommodations soon as possible.

Students with documented disabilities seeking accommodations should contact the Disability Services office directly, at 979-532-6966 or [disabilityservices@wcjc.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@wcjc.edu), to set up an appointment. Please note that in order to receive accommodations, current medical and/or psychological documentation verifying the student's disability must be provided.

## **EMERGENCY AID**

The [Student Emergency Aid Program](#), funded by the WCJC Foundation, helps students persist by providing immediate assistance when they face unanticipated financial emergencies that could derail their educational goals. Through this program, students can apply for an Emergency Aid Grant for up to \$500. Each student can only receive one grant during their time as a student at WCJC. Financial assistance is based on availability of funds. Students must be currently enrolled and attending classes to apply for aid.



## **FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS**

The [Office of Financial Aid](#) operates with the goal of providing students with financial assistance through scholarships, grants, loans, and on campus employment (work study). Every student is encouraged to apply for financial aid. There are also a number of scholarships available to students that can be viewed on the Financial Aid webpage.

## **THE HOMESTEAD – FOOD PANTRY**

[The Homestead: Pioneer Country Store food pantry](#) is a nonprofit organization that distributes food to needy individuals who are enrolled at Wharton County Junior College. This service is available to all students who express a need.

## **HOUSING**

[Residence halls](#) are provided for the primary purpose of allowing students to live on campus while pursuing their education. Residence Hall staff work to create an environment where every individual feels secure, independent, respected and at home. There are two on-campus traditional residence halls - Mullins Hall and Frankie Hall. Mullins Hall is the home to approximately 53 female residents, and Frankie Hall is the home to approximately 74 male residents.

## **IT HELP DESK**

The [IT Help Desk](#) assists students with accessing their myWCJC Portal, student email, Online Services, and BrightSpace. To request IT assistance, students can complete an [IT Support Request](#) through the WCJC website or call a Help Desk associate at 979-532-6568.

## **LEARNING CENTERS AND COMPUTER LABS**

[Learning Centers](#), located on the Wharton, Richmond and Sugar Land campuses, provide tutorial services, writing assistance, and academic success strategies and resources to students. Each Center also offers an open computer lab for students to work on assignments, write papers, and access the online tutoring platform, Brainfuse.

Brainfuse is free to enrolled students and provides online tutorial services for enrolled students and can be accessed via BrightSpace. Online services are available for a variety of subjects including math, writing, life and physical sciences, accounting, economics and Spanish. The availability of services varies by discipline.

## **PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS**

Resources and accommodations are available for students who are [pregnant and/or parenting](#). In addition to these supports, WCJC provides lactation rooms on each campus.

## **TESTING SERVICES**

The Testing Centers, located on the Wharton, Sugar Land and Richmond campuses, administers a variety of tests and assessments to help students achieve their academic, personal and vocational goals.

Testing services include:

- TSI – Texas Success Initiative Assessment of College Readiness
- TEAS – Test of Essential Academic Skills
- HSE – High School Equivalency

- CLEP – College Level Examination Program
- ACT – American College Test
- NREMT – National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians
- TCEQ – Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
- TCFP – Texas Commission on Fire Protection
- SFFMA – State Firefighters’ and Fire Marshals’ Association of Texas
- Nelson-Denny Reading Test
- Correspondence Exams
- Pre-TASP – Texas Academic Skills Program
- WCJC Instructor Exams for students requiring testing accommodations

To schedule an appointment, contact the applicable campus Testing Center directly.

Wharton Campus – 979-532-6386

Richmond Campus – 281-239-1532

Sugar Land Campus – 281-243-8434

### **TITLE IX COORDINATOR**

The College’s Title IX Coordinator is a designated agent of the College with primary oversight for coordinating College Title IX compliance responsibilities. The Title IX Coordinator’s responsibilities are important to the overall development, implementation, and monitoring of the College’s efforts to comply with Title IX legislation and regulations. The Title IX Coordinator works to ensure a fair and neutral process for all parties. Students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator for Students (Lindsey McPherson) with questions or to discuss Title IX related matters – McPhersonLI@wcjc.edu.

### **TRiO STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

[TRiO Student Support Services](#) is a federally funded program on the Wharton Campus. It is designed to support your educational journey by providing you with the information and services you need to be successful in college. Services include academic support, course selection and advising, financial literacy, assistance in applying for financial aid, and graduation/transfer assistance. To be eligible, students must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident. Students must also meet at least one of the following criteria: be a first-generation college student, meet U.S. Department of Education income guidelines, or have a documented disability. If you are interested in registering with TRiO or would like to learn more, email FalconJ@wcjc.edu.

### **VETERANS SERVICES**

[Veterans Services](#) works with military veterans and their dependents to process educational benefits. Email veterans@wcjc.edu with questions.

### **VOCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES**

[Vocational Support Services](#) provides eligible vocational students with a broad range of support services including advising, childcare, and transportation allowances and referral services. For more information on Vocational Support Services, contact 979-532-6483 or email Perkins@wcjc.edu.

### **CAMPUS BOOKSTORE**

Visit the [WCJC Bookstore](#), located on the Wharton campus in the Hutchins Memorial Building and on the Richmond campus, to purchase textbooks, school supplies, snacks, WCJC t-shirts, and other gift items.

The Bookstore also offers textbook rental. Visit the Bookstore website to see store hours and contact information. You can also order textbooks and gifts through their online store.

### **DINING SERVICES**

Restaurant style dining is available in the cafeteria on the Wharton campus, in the Hutchins Memorial Building. There is also a snack bar located in the Pioneer Student Center on the Wharton campus. Both the cafeteria and snack bar take cash and cards. Students also have the option to purchase a meal card (10 meals for the price of 9) at the cafeteria.

#### Cafeteria Hours:

Monday-Friday –	Saturday –	Sunday –
Breakfast: 7:15 AM – 9:00 AM	Lunch: 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Lunch: 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Lunch: 11:00 AM – 1:15 PM	Dinner: 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM	
Dinner: 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM		

#### Snack Bar Hours: Monday-Friday – 7:30 AM – 1:30 PM

You can also pick up a drink or to-go food and pastries on the Sugar Land campus at the Cougar Corner, which is open Monday-Thursday, 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM, and Friday, 7:30 AM – noon. Snacks are also available in the Bookstore on the Richmond and Wharton campuses.

### **AUTOMOTIVE SERVICES**

The college's Automotive Technology students provide [automotive services](#) to students at an inexpensive rate. Student work is strictly supervised. For more information about these services, contact the Automotive Technology Department on the Wharton campus.

### **COSMETOLOGY SERVICES**

Students may receive [cosmetology services](#) for minimal cost at the college's Cosmetology departments, located on the Wharton and Richmond campuses.

### **DENTAL HYGIENE SERVICES**

The Dental Hygiene Department is located at the M.G. and Lillie A. Johnson Health Occupations Center at the Wharton campus. WCJC students may contact the Dental Hygiene Department to schedule an appointment for the [preventative dental care services](#) by contacting 979-532-6429 or [dentalhygiene@wcjc.edu](mailto:dentalhygiene@wcjc.edu). These services are performed at no cost to the student by dental hygiene students under the direct supervision of licensed dental hygienists and dentists. Available services include:

- Oral prophylaxis (scaling and polishing the teeth)
- X-Rays
- Fluoride treatments
- Preventative care (sealants) and oral health counseling

### **TY PATE FITNESS CENTER**

The [Fitness Center](#), located on the Wharton campus in the Gene Bahnsen Gymnasium, provides a weight-room area and cardiovascular equipment and a variety of weight resistance machines along with numerous free weights. Locker room facilities are also provided. View the [website](#) for fees and hours.

## SECTION 2: CAMPUS LIFE AND ACTIVITIES

### STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Many of the beneficial experiences students have in college are associated with extracurricular activities, which provide students with opportunities for the development and expression of special interests and abilities, for acquiring social graces, for practicing the mechanics of group action, for developing leadership, and/or for recreation.

For information including a list of current student organizations, meeting times and campus locations, how to start a new club, policies and procedures for clubs, and resources, contact the Office of Student Life or visit the [Student Life website](#).

### INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

The Pioneers' varsity athletic program participates in the NJCAA Region XIV Conference and the NIRA Conference. WCJC's varsity sports include rodeo, baseball and volleyball. [View Schedules and Rosters for all teams](#). Students interested in trying out for one of the WCJC teams should contact the athletic department.

### PIONEER STUDENT CENTER

The Pioneer Student Center (PSC) is located on the Wharton campus and houses the Offices of the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Campus Life, Residence Life, Counseling and Disability Services and the Title IX Coordinator. Not only can students gather, socialize, study and grab a bite to eat in the PSC, there are also meeting spaces available for club meetings, events, and study groups.

### HONOR & LEADERSHIP SOCIETIES

**Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society (PTK)** recognizes academic achievement at two-year colleges. Membership in PTK carries key advantages for two-year students. The Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society offers support from fellow scholars of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, economic levels, and fields of study. Invitation into membership in Phi Theta Kappa can be extended only by the WCJC Zeta Xi Chapter. To be eligible, you must be enrolled at WCJC in an associate degree program or certificate program; have completed at least 12 hours of course work towards an associate or bachelor's degree or at least 6 hours of coursework toward a certificate of 1 year; and have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.50. If you meet these general eligibility standards, contact the Office of Student Life.

**National Technical Honor Society** recognizes academic achievement at two-year colleges to those students enrolled in technical programs. NTHS supports its members through its Core Four Objectives: career development, leadership development, service opportunities, and recognition. Scholarships are awarded annually, as well. To be eligible, you must be enrolled at WCJC in a technical program, completed at least 12 hours of course work towards completion of your program and have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0. If you meet these general eligibility standards, and want to learn more about this Society, contact the Office of Student Life.

**The National Society of Leadership and Success (NSLS)** helps students identify career goals, hone their leadership skills, and turn ambitions into action. The NSLS chapter at WCJC is an online chapter through the national organization that provides members with access to essential tools to excel in your future and make a change in the world. As a member of the NSLS, you're part of a community of goal-oriented people with access to professional leadership training, exclusive scholarships, an online job bank,

networking events, a celebrity speaker series, enhancement of your professional resume, and more. Invitations are sent to students that qualify for membership in the fall semester of each year. WCJC student members will have the chance to attend leadership, volunteer, and on-campus events dedicated to NSLS members.

**Alpha Delta Nu Associate Degree Nursing Honor Society** is a national honor society established to promote scholarship and academic excellence in the profession of nursing. The Organization for Associate Degree Nursing (OADN) has established the Alpha Delta Nu Honor to recognize the academic and professional nursing excellence of students during the study of Associate Degree Nursing. The honor society provisional candidate presents a capstone project approved by the faculty advisor which includes projects dealing with community service, health education, and promotion of the nursing profession. Contact the Nursing Department for more information.

## **SECTION 3: WCJC STUDENT LOGISTICS**

### **STUDENT EMAIL**

WCJC student email is considered the official method of communication by the college. The college has the right to expect that such communications will be received and read in a timely manner. Students are expected to check their WCJC student email on a frequent and consistent basis in order to remain informed of college-related communications. Students have the responsibility to recognize that certain communications may be time-critical. Students are responsible for the consequences of not reading, in a timely fashion, college-related communications sent to the official WCJC student email address.

All students should use their respective official WCJC student email address when conducting WCJC business (i.e. communicating with professors or other offices on campus). Errors encountered in forwarding emails or emails returned to the college with “Mailbox Full” or “User Unknown” are not acceptable excuses for missing official college communications via WCJC student email.

All students are assigned an email address upon admission the college. If you do not know your WCJC student email address or need to set up your account in order to access your email, [submit an IT Help Support Request](#) for assistance.

Students are responsible for taking all reasonable precautions, including safeguarding and changing passwords, to prevent the use of their WCJC student email accounts by unauthorized individuals. Students should not share this information or access to college resources with others, including family members. No one at WCJC will ask a student to provide WCJC with his/ her WCJC student email account password.

WCJC is not responsible for the handling of e-mail by outside service providers or servers. Redirecting WCJC student e-mail to another account does not absolve a student from the responsibilities associated with timely reading of communications sent to an official WCJC student e-mail address.

### **PARKING INFORMATION**

Wharton County Junior College requires students and employees to register their vehicle and have a parking decal clearly displayed on vehicles parked on campus. The procedures for obtaining a parking permit and the costs associated with the permits may vary according to the campus in which you will be parking your vehicle.

- WCJC will issue a parking permit that allows for parking at the Wharton, Richmond and Bay City campuses.
- If you will be attending classes on the Sugar Land campus, you will need to purchase a [UH parking permit](#), in addition to obtaining a WCJC parking permit. UH holds authority over the parking permits issued for students and employees parking on the Sugar Land campus. If you prefer not to purchase a parking permit at UH, you can park in the [pay lot near Brazos Hall](#).

Visit the [Office of Security and Public Safety](#) to learn details about parking at each campus, including parking permits and fees, fines, parking spaces, vehicle registration and decals.

### **BICYCLES AND SKATEBOARDS ON CAMPUS**

Bicycles are permitted on campus and must be stored in the bicycle racks outside of buildings. Indoor storage is not permitted. Skateboards, skates or hover boards are not permitted on campus.

### **STUDENT ID**

Although student IDs are not required on campus at this time, WCJC encourages all students get a [student ID](#). It is also recommended that all students carry some form of identification on them at all times while on campus. Student IDs are free to enrolled students and can be made on all WCJC campuses.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

The college is not responsible for articles left on campus. Lost articles, if found, are to be turned into the Office of Campus Security and Public Safety on the Wharton campus, to the Security Offices at the Sugar Land and Richmond campuses, or to the Campus Specialist at the Bay City campus. Students can also visit the above offices to seek out a lost item.

### **STUDENT ZOOM ACCOUNTS**

Students will often need access to a Zoom account for meetings, classroom discussions, study groups, etc. To sign up for a free account, go to Zoom.us and click “Sign up. It’s Free”. Enter your date of birth and WCJC email address; then, select “sign up.” You will receive an email to your WCJC email address to activate your Zoom account.

### **ONLINE SERVICES**

Students should access their student account through Online Services in order to register for classes, apply for financial aid, drop or withdraw, and check for holds on their account. In addition, students can access various features through their Online Services account, including Touchnet to pay for classes or set up and installment plan, College Scheduler to plan their course schedule, or Parchment to order an official transcript.



## SECTION 4: COLLEGE LINGO

<b>Academic Advisor</b>	Advisors guide and advise students to make informed choices related to their program of study, course selection, career choice and transfer plans. Note that students bear ultimate responsibility for completing all requirements for graduation.
<b>Academic Calendar</b>	The Academic Calendar lists pertinent dates related to academic programming including academic deadlines, holidays, final exam dates, withdrawal deadlines, etc. The Academic Calendar can be found in the College Catalog and on the College website.
<b>Academic Dishonesty</b>	Allegations which include, but not limited to cheating on an exam, plagiarism and collusion. Punitive actions and sanctions may be imposed.
<b>Academic Map</b>	A document which lays out the required and elective courses needed to complete a program of study.
<b>Academic Probation</b>	Students are placed on academic probation when their cumulative institutional GPA falls below a 2.0.
<b>Academic Suspension</b>	Failure to achieve the required minimum standard of work (minimum 2.0 semester GPA) while on academic probation results in academic suspension from the College for the following regular semester.
<b>Academic Year</b>	From August to July, including Fall and Spring semesters and summer sessions.
<b>Add / Drop Period</b>	The add/drop period at the beginning of the semester is the time in which students may make schedule changes.
<b>College Catalog</b>	Publication which gives college information, degrees/programs, admissions and graduation requirements. The College Catalog is available online. Print versions are available on campus in the Registrar and Advising offices.
<b>Commencement</b>	Commencement is the formal name of the graduation ceremony held each May.
<b>Course Number</b>	All credit courses are identified with a 4 digit number. The first number identifies the level of course (0-developmental; 1-freshman; 2-sophomore), the second number indicates the credit hour value for the course, and the third and fourth numbers distinguish the courses within a program area.
<b>Core Curriculum</b>	Also known as the “Basics”. All degrees at WCJC require a “general education core” and are required at all Texas public institutions.
<b>Co-Req</b>	Co-Requisite courses are courses that have to be taken at the same time as another course.
<b>Credit Hour</b>	Course offerings are measured in credit hours. A credit hour is equivalent to about 1 hour of class time per week / semester. Students may refer to how many credit hours, or credits, they are taking in a particular semester. A typical, full-time course load is 12 – 15 hours, approximately 4-5 courses.

<b>Curriculum</b>	Set of courses or program of student outlined in a degree plan, or lessons taught in a course.
<b>Dean's List</b>	The Dean's List is produced each semester identifying those students who have met a high academic standard. Students who receive a 3.50 semester GPA are recognized on the Dean's List for that semester.
<b>Drop</b>	Voluntary or involuntary official withdrawal from a single course.
<b>Elective</b>	A course you choose to take that is not a required part of your regular curriculum.
<b>Final Exams</b>	Final exams are given during the final week of the semester. The dates and times are different from regular class time and are listed online.
<b>FAFSA</b>	The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is an application form administered by the U.S. Department of Education and used to determine a family's eligibility for federal student aid programs. A FAFSA must be completed and filed each year a student attends college to be eligible for such aid.
<b>Full Time Student</b>	Student taking 12 or more credit hours in a semester.
<b>GPA</b>	Grade Point Average (GPA) is a calculation of a student's overall grade average on a 4-point scale. The semester GPA is the average for a particular semester. The cumulative GPA is the average for all courses taken at the institution.
<b>Hold</b>	Prevents registration and indicates the action that the students need to take before they can register for classes.
<b>Hybrid Course</b>	Combines traditional lecture, discussion or lab sections with online learning. Hybrid courses move a significant part of the course work online, which reduces the amount of time you will spend in a traditional face-to-face classroom.
<b>Instructor</b>	Also known as Faculty. Teaches college level courses.
<b>Major</b>	Students select a major, preferably in the first or second semester of college, that serves as their focus of study in a degree program.
<b>Mid-Term Exams</b>	When given, mid-term exams generally occur in the middle of each semester and tests students on material covered to date.
<b>Mini-Session</b>	A mini-session is a three week term where students can enroll in one online course, which is equivalent to one semester-long course. Mini-sessions occur in May and December.
<b>Pre-Req</b>	Pre-requisites (pre-req) are courses that students are required to take prior to registering for a particular course.
<b>PSC</b>	The Pioneer Student Center (PSC) is the student union building on the Wharton campus. It houses a snack bar, ping pong tables, event space, and the Offices of the Dean of Student Success, Counseling and Disability Services, Student Life, Residence Life, and Recruitment.

<b>RA</b>	Resident Assistants (RAs) are trained student leaders responsible for supervising a group of resident students. They assist with questions, social issues, roommate issues, and other problems that might arise. They also assist with enforcing college policies within the residence halls.
<b>RAVE</b>	RAVE refers to the campus emergency notification system that allows Campus Security to communicate quickly with students in the event of an emergency.
<b>Registrar</b>	The college official responsible for creating and maintaining permanent academic records, maintaining student academic files, and forwarding official student transcripts to employers and universities upon request.
<b>Registration</b>	The process of becoming officially enrolled in classes for a semester.
<b>Residential Student</b>	Students who live in one of the campus residence halls.
<b>Semester</b>	A semester is a period for which a class is offered. The fall and spring semester is typically 16 weeks long. The summer semester is five or 11 weeks in length, depending on the course selected.
<b>6-drop Rule</b>	Colleges may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, to include any courses a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education. Students can request an exemption with Admissions and Registration and provide proof of just cause.
<b>Student ID</b>	Students are issued a photo identification card that includes their Student ID number.
<b>Student ID Number</b>	Random number generated to identify each WCJC student. All WCJC student ID numbers begin with an “@”.
<b>Syllabus</b>	An overview of the assignments and activities to be included in a course. A contract between the student and instructor. Students are encouraged to read their course syllabi carefully and refer to them often throughout the semester.
<b>Transcript</b>	The official record of a student’s academic history. It includes all courses attempted and the grade earned in each.
<b>Withdrawal</b>	Withdrawal refers to the process of formally removing a student from all classes. Established procedures must be followed and withdrawal deadlines (found on the Academic Calendar) are strictly adhered to.

## **SECTION 5: STUDENT ACCOUNTS AND RECORDS**

### **CHANGE OF NAME OR ADDRESS**

Students who change their home or local address after registration or students who change their name after enrollment should notify the Office of Admissions and Registration of this change immediately. Communications from the college are mailed to the name and address on record. Diplomas are also printed using the official names on record. Students must note that changing an address does not automatically change a residency status.

Students are responsible for all material sent to them by the college. A student who fails to update their address with the college is still responsible for all communications sent to their address on file at the college. Find the forms to change name and address on the [WCJC website](#) under [Information for Current Students](#).

### **DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS AND RECORDS**

Students who owe the college on any account will have their grade records withheld, be denied access to future registration, have their transcripts withheld, and be denied access to advising transcripts in their [Online Services](#) account.

Students are required to complete all aspects of their admissions file and keep it current, return college-owned property, and make full-payment of tuition, fees, and fines owed to the college. Inaccurate or incomplete student records may result in the withholding of transcripts and registrations.

### **TRANSCRIPTS**

A [transcript](#) of college credits is an official copy of the student's permanent records bearing the college seal and the signature of the Dean of Enrollment Management/Registrar. Students can order official copies of their transcripts via [Parchment](#). All admission information must be on file and all holds must be cleared before a transcript can be released. Transcript fee is \$10 each.

## **SECTION 6: FERPA – FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974**

### **RIGHTS UNDER FERPA FOR POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS**

FERPA affords students certain rights with respect to their educational records. These rights include:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the college receives a request for access. A written request can be submitted to the Registrar and must identify the record the student is requesting to view. The college official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the college official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate. Students may ask the college to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the college official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the college decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the college will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his or her right to a hearing regarding a request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the college in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the college has contracted (such as

an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Optional: Upon request, the college discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll (Note: FERPA requires an institution to make a reasonable attempt to notify the student of the records request unless the institution states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.)

- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the college to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202

Further information concerning this policy and laws on which it is based is available through the Office of Admissions and Registration.

### **DISCLOSURE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

Under FERPA, students have the right to prevent the disclosure of “Directory Information.” Directory Information is described as follows: name, address, telephone number, dates of attendance, class, previous institutions attended, major field of study, awards, honors, degree(s) conferred (including dates), past and present participation in officially recognized sports and activities, physical factors (height, weight of athletes), date and place of birth. To prevent disclosure of directory information, complete the [Request to Prevent the Disclosure of Directory Information form](#) and send it to the Office of Admissions and Registration. A notification is sent to students each semester regarding the process to prevent disclosure of directory information. It is the student’s responsibility to read the notification. This form must be signed and received in the WCJC Office of Admission and Registration prior to the 12th class day in fall or spring semester and the 4th class day of the summer term to prevent disclosure for that semester. If not received by that date, it will be assumed that the above information may be disclosed for the remainder of the current semester. A new form for non-disclosure must be completed for each semester.

The Solomon Amendment requires that colleges provide information to military recruiters, upon request. This information is usually a subset of the directory information, but can include additional items.

### **DISCLOSURE TO PARENTS**

FERPA permits post-secondary institutions to disclose any and all information from a student’s education records, without consent, to that student’s parents if the student is a dependent for tax purposes under IRS rules. The burden of proof, however, is on the parent to prove that the student is a dependent. Any student may sign a [release form](#) authorizing release of their educational records to their parents or others. FERPA also allows institutions to disclose information to appropriate officials in a health or safety emergency, including parents, if the emergency involves their child. FERPA permits a post-secondary institution to inform parents of students under the age of 21 when a student has violated any law or policy concerning the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance.

## SECTION 7: ACADEMIC STANDARDS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

The [College Catalog](#), published annually, is intended to provide a description of programs and activities offered at WCJC. It also includes a full list of academic standards, policies, procedures and definitions. All students are encouraged to refer to the [College Catalog](#) throughout their time at WCJC.

### ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The [Academic Calendar](#) is the official calendar of the College. On the Academic Calendar, you will find the start and end dates of each semester, drop deadlines, holidays, final exam dates, etc. for each academic term.

### CLASSIFICATION OF STUDENTS

Enrolled students are classified according to the number of hours completed and the number of hours in which they are enrolled.

- Freshman: A student enrolling in college for the first time or who at the time of registration has earned fewer than 30 semester hours of credit.
- Sophomore: A student who, at the time of registration, has earned at least 30 semester hours.
- Full-Time: A student who is enrolled for at least 12 semester hours.
- Part-Time: A student who is enrolled for at least one semester hour, but less than 12 semester hours.

### COURSE OFFERINGS AND REGISTRATION

The College exercises the prerogative of choosing the courses to be offered during any semester. This offering is announced in the official schedule of classes for the semester. Courses are offered via face-to-face, hybrid and online instruction.

- Face to Face: Instruction offered in-person on a WCJC campus or location.
- Online: Conducted almost, if not entirely, online. Some instructors may require that students come to campus for orientations, field trips, or to take exams in an approved testing location. Students must have access to the internet and a computer with an external webcam if enrolled in an online course at WCJC. Students should also be familiar with email, the web, creating and saving documents, and uploading files.
- Hybrid: Any course that includes a combination of online learning and face-to-face instruction. These courses provide 50-85% of class instruction in an online setting. The remainder of the instruction takes place in a traditional face-to-face setting. Students must have access to the internet and a computer with an external webcam if enrolled in an online course at WCJC. Student should also be familiar with email, the web, creating and saving documents and uploading files.

All available courses are listed in the [College Catalog](#). Students should refer to their academic or vocational map when selecting courses. Academic Advisors are also available to assist students in course selection, if needed. However, students have the ultimate responsibility for all decisions regarding course registration. During the [registration period](#), students are able to register for their courses through [Online Services](#).



## **CREDIT HOURS**

The unit of measurement for academic work is the credit hour. One credit hour represents the credit earned in a course that is scheduled for one class hour a week for a semester. Most courses meet three hours a week and have a credit value of three semester hours.

## **COURSE LOAD**

The normal course load for the fall or spring semester shall be 15 semester hours. A student is considered a full-time student when registered for 12 semester hours. Course loads in excess of 19 semester hours shall require approval by the Vice President of Instruction.

The normal course load for the summer session shall be six (6) semester hours for each five-week term or 12 semester hours for an 11-week summer semester. Course loads in excess of seven (7) semester hours per five-week-part-of-term or 14 semester hours per 11-week summer semester shall require approval by the Vice President of Instruction.

The normal load during a mini semester shall be one course of three or four credits.

## **FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

As a condition of a student's enrollment, tuition and fees are due at the time of registration and may be paid with cash, credit card, check, financial aid, scholarship or a third party. If a student becomes delinquent regarding any debt with the institution, the student will be denied future enrollments and release of official academic transcripts.

## **ADDING COURSES**

Courses can be added to your schedule throughout the registration period and through the second day of classes during a regular, 16-week session of the fall and spring semesters (through the first day of a 17-week, 14-week, or 5-week part-of-term or any mini or summer semester). Late registration fees apply for registration after the semester begins. No courses may be added after the second day of classes during the 16-week semester or after the first class day for any other part-of-term.

## **DROPPING COURSES**

Once classes begin, you must officially drop a course through your Online Services account or by submitting a [Course Drop form](#) to the Admissions and Registration Office. Students may drop a course up until the official course drop deadline (see [Academic Calendar](#)) and may withdraw completely from ALL courses up until the last day of classes for that semester, prior to the start of final exams. Students are expected to meet all financial obligations for the course per the College's "Drops and Withdrawals" deadlines, updated each semester on the College's website. Please keep in mind that dropping a course or withdrawing from the college completely may affect current and future financial aid and could result in a student owing money to the college. It is recommended that students check with the Financial Aid office prior to dropping a course.

See the [Academic Calendar](#) for specific withdrawal deadline dates.

## **LIMITATIONS ON NUMBER OF DROPPED COURSES**

Students are not permitted to drop more than six (6) courses taken while enrolled at WCJC or another public institution of higher education. For the limit to apply:

- The student must be permitted to drop the course without receiving a grade or being penalized

academically;

- The student's transcript must indicate or will indicate the student was enrolled in the course; and
- The student must not have dropped the course to withdraw from the College.

A student shall be permitted to exceed the limit on the number of dropped courses for any of the following reasons:

- A severe illness or other debilitating condition that affects the student's ability to satisfactorily complete a course;
- The care of a sick, injured, or needy person if providing that care affects the student's ability to satisfactorily complete a course;
- The death of a member of the student's family as defined by law;
- The death of a person who has a sufficiently close relationship to the student as defined by law;
- The student's active military duty service;
- The active military service of a member of the student's family or a person who has a sufficiently close relationship to the student; or
- A change in the student's work schedule that is beyond the student's control and affects the student's ability to satisfactorily complete the course.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular class attendance and participation is conducive to optimum achievement. A student enrolled in a course may be advised to withdraw from the course by the instructor if the student acquires absences in excess of two weeks' work and cannot, in the instructor's judgment, achieve the minimum course objectives. All instructors must include in the course syllabus a statement defining specific attendance policies for their individual courses.

Absences necessitated by participation in college-sponsored activities which are not class related must be authorized in advance by the Office of the Dean of Student Success. Absences which are class related must be authorized in advance by the Office of the Vice President for Instruction.

## **FINAL EXAMS**

All academic courses administer final exams. The final exam schedule is available on the [Academic Calendar](#).

## **GRADING AND GRADE POINTS**

The College considers grades extremely important permanent records and requires instructors to communicate their specific grading policies for each class at the beginning of the semester. At the end of the semester, the College requires instructors to submit final grades for all officially enrolled students.

Grade notations are as follows:

A	Excellent	4 grade points per semester hour
B	Good	3 grade points per semester hour
C	Average	2 grade points per semester hour

D	Poor	1 grade point per semester hour
F	Failure	0 grade points per semester hour
I	Incomplete: This grade is allowed for an extenuating circumstance, such as an emergency, and the instructor has the discretion to allow make-up work, contingent upon division chair approval. By mid-semester of the next full 16-week term, an "I" not made up will convert to an "F".	
W	Withdrawn: This grade indicates an official withdrawal from a course by the student or by administrative action after the attendance verification day and prior to the official drop date. This grade does not count toward the six-drop limit.	
WX	Withdrawn: This grade indicates an official withdrawal from a course by the student or by administrative action after the attendance verification day and prior to the official drop date. This grade does count toward the six-drop limit.	
X	Audit: No credit and no grade.	

GPA is calculated by adding the total number of grade points earned and then dividing by the total number of hours attempted at the College.

#### **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

Failure to achieve the required minimum standard of work (institutional cumulative average of at least 2.0 GPA) will result in a student being placed on academic probation for the next semester in which they are enrolled.

Students on academic probation are encouraged to reduce their course load and to reexamine and adjust their educational objectives, their workloads and their study habits.

Students on academic probation are removed from probation when they have achieved the required minimum standard of work of a 2.0 institutional cumulative GPA or higher.

#### **ACADEMIC SUSPENSION**

Failure to achieve the required minimum standard of work while on academic probation results in academic suspension from the College for the following regular semester (full fall, spring or summer term). A student who has been academically suspended from the College for poor scholarship and who re-enters after sitting out one full semester, re-enters on academic probation.

Students who are academically suspended for the first time and have a cumulative institutional GPA between 1.50 and 1.99, are eligible to appeal the suspension and request readmission. Students who meet these qualifications and would like to appeal their suspension should submit their appeal through the [Petition for Readmission form](#). Appeals must be received at least 10 calendar days prior to the start of the academic term.

#### **GRADUATION**

Before applying for [graduation](#), students need to verify they meet all degree requirements for graduation. To do this, a student can process a degree evaluation through [Online Services](#) to verify all course requirements have been met. After verifying all degree requirements have been met, the student can submit an application for graduation by the published deadline.

## TRANSCRIPTS

A transcript of college credits is an official copy of the student's permanent record bearing the college seal. For a fee, students may obtain copies of his or her transcript by requesting transcripts through [Parchment](#). All admission information must be on file, and all holds must be cleared before a transcript can be issued.

## APPEAL OF ACADEMIC DECISIONS

If a student feels that their rights have been violated, [Policy FLD - Student Complaints](#) provides the policy and process for working through a grievance. Grievances can include both non-academic (i.e. discrimination, actions of college or other students) and academic (grade appeal, academic decisions) concerns. The Section 10 in this handbook on student grievance procedures details the process for filing a grievance.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Every offense against academic honesty seriously undermines the teaching-learning process for which the College exists; such offense will be dealt with expeditiously according to the following criteria.

- A. Academic Dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism and collusion.
  - a. Cheating, which includes, but is not limited to:
    - Copying from another student's test or class work.
    - Using test materials not authorized by the person administering the test.
    - Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test without permission from the test administrator.
    - Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, or soliciting, in whole or in part, the contents of an unadministered test, paper, or another assignment.
    - The unauthorized transporting or removal, in whole or in part, of the contents of the unadministered test.
    - Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for one's self, to take a test.
    - Bribing another person to obtain an unadministered test or information about an unadministered test.
    - Manipulating a test, assignment, or final course grade.
  - b. Plagiarism – the appropriating, buying, receiving as a gift or obtaining by any means another's work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's own written work.
  - c. Collusion – the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of course requirements.
  - d. Any other conduct which would be recognized as dishonest in an academic setting
- B. Charge of Academic Dishonesty
  - a. Faculty who consider that they have a valid case of academic dishonesty against a student must inform the student of the charge and the resulting penalty, outlined in the course syllabus.
  - b. A record of the offense will be held in the Dean of Student Success office.
  - c. A student wishing to appeal the charge of academic dishonesty may submit an academic grievance. Only the charge of academic dishonesty can be grieved, not the penalty.

### C. Multiple Offenses

- a. Multiple academic dishonesty offenses may result in immediate suspension from the College and /or other sanctions as deemed by the Dean of Student Success or Vice President of Instruction.
- b. Some campus programs have academic dishonesty procedures / sanctions specific to their program. Please see the program handbook for how academic dishonesty is handled in the specific program.

## SECTION 8: FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS

### APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid is provided to students through scholarships, grants, loans and on-campus or community service employment. All students are encouraged to file for financial aid. Inquiries concerning student aid should be addressed to the [Student Financial Aid Office](#) at (979) 532-6345 or [finaid@wcjc.edu](mailto:finaid@wcjc.edu). Applications for financial aid should be completed accurately and received in the Financial Aid Office along with any additional required forms by the priority deadline. Notifications to students regarding their financial aid processes (missing documents, award information, status, updates, etc.) will be posted in a student's [Online Services](#) account.

Students should open their [Online Services](#) account as soon as they receive notification via their WCJC email that their account is available, and then monitor that account on a regular basis.

### SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

Under current federal law, all students who receive federal or state financial aid must be making satisfactory progress as defined by the college in order to receive or continue to receive that aid. View the College Catalog for the most current Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy.

The following are the requirements at Wharton County Junior College:

- All recipients of financial aid must be enrolled in a program of study leading to an associate's degree, an eligible certificate, or program that is transferable toward a baccalaureate degree.
- Students receiving financial aid must maintain a 2.0 term and cumulative grade point average on all college level credit hours (this includes developmental studies credit hours) attempted at WCJC in order to remain eligible for financial aid.
- Students receiving financial aid must successfully complete 67% of all institutional and transferable credit hours attempted regardless of whether financial aid was received for the credit hours.
- A student is only eligible for financial aid up to 150% of the credit hours required in their program. (Eligibility is lost beyond this limit). Example: An Associate of Arts Degree requires 60 credit hours.  $60 \text{ credit hours} \times 150\% = 90 \text{ credit hours}$ . After 90 credit hours, eligibility for financial aid is lost.
- Satisfactory progress will be measured three times per year, at the end of each semester, fall, spring, and summer. The evaluation will be made regardless of the number of credit hours attempted during the semester.
- Course work attempted and grades earned in semesters forgiven through the State of Texas

- “Academic Fresh Start” program will be included in the Satisfactory Progress calculation.
- Grades of A, B, C, and D are considered credit hours attempted and successfully completed (earned).
  - Grades of F, I (Incomplete), and W (Withdrawals and Drops), are counted as credit hours attempted but not successfully completed (unearned).
  - Course repeats are counted as attempted credit hours and either earned or unearned depending upon the grade assigned as noted above. Last grade is included for GPA purposes.
  - Only the first two attempts of a course completed with a passing grade can be paid by financial aid. The third attempt cannot be included for payment purposes.
  - Financial aid is available for only the first 30 semester credit hours of remedial coursework attempted. Remedial coursework is counted in the 67% completion rate.
  - Students not meeting the minimum Satisfactory Academic Progress criteria at the end of their warning (probation) period will be suspended from receiving financial aid.
  - Students placed on “suspension”, may continue to enroll at the college but must pay for their coursework from their own funds.
  - Financial aid eligibility will be reinstated after a student meets the Satisfactory Academic Progress criteria (listed above), both the completion rate (67%) and term and cumulative institutional grade point average (2.0).
  - A student who has been suspended from financial aid for failure to meet the satisfactory progress requirements outlined in this policy due to mitigating circumstances may appeal the decision by completing an appeal form, explaining their mitigating circumstances, and providing appropriate documentation to support their claim. Appeals without documentation will not be considered.
  - A student must be able to meet the satisfactory academic progress requirements within one semester or an appeal cannot be approved.
  - When a student has an appeal approved, they are placed on a financial aid probationary status for one semester. Probationary students who do not meet the satisfactory progress requirements will again be suspended.
  - When the number of credit hours required for completion of a degree plus the number of credit hours attempted (including transfers) exceeds 150% of the hours required for a degree, the student becomes immediately ineligible for further financial aid. (Maximum Time Frame Suspension).
  - Appeals for attempting beyond the maximum time frame require a copy of a degree plan and an appeal form explaining why the additional coursework is necessary. The student must be meeting the 67% and 2.0 term and cumulative GPA for all institutional hours attempted in order for the appeal to be reviewed by the committee.

## SUMMARY OF SAP REQUIREMENTS

SAP Standard Measurements		
GPA	Completion Rate (Total Hours Successfully Completed/ Total Hours Attempted)	Maximum Timeframe Hours
Institutional GPA of 2.0, cumulative	67% successful completion of all attempted institutional and transferrable credit hours	150% of certificate/degree requirements – all attempted coursework applicable to program counted



## **SAP AND VETERAN BENEFITS**

Students receiving veteran benefits must adhere to the academic progress policy of the state or federal program to achieve and maintain eligibility. Students may appeal a Suspension status.

VA's Standard of Academic Progress:

- VA regulations require that a student receiving VA educational benefits make satisfactory progress according to the Academic Standing section in the WCJC catalog. If a student is placed on suspension, the VA will suspend the student's VA benefits for the following fall or spring semester.
- Students will only be certified for classes on certificate/degree plan.

Hazlewood Standards of Academic Progress:

- Meet the GPA requirement (2.0) of the institution's satisfactory academic progress policy in a degree or certificate program as determined by the institution's financial aid policy and, as an undergraduate student, not be considered to have attempted an excessive amount of credit hours.
  - This requirement does not apply to spouses or children of veterans who died from a service-related injury or illness, or who were classified as missing in action (MIA) or killed in action (KIA).
- Students will only be certified for classes on certificate/degree plan.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING FINANCIAL AID**

Students are responsible for understanding and monitoring their own satisfactory progress status. Although the Financial Aid Office attempts to notify students of their financial aid status, failure to receive notice does not affect the calculated status and is not a reason to appeal. Students can monitor their status in [Online Services](#).

## **FINANCIAL AID REQUIREMENTS**

Financial Aid will NOT be provided for certain courses. Please be aware of the following stipulations:

- All recipients of financial aid must be enrolled in a program of study leading to an associate degree, an eligible certificate, or program that is transferable toward a baccalaureate degree.
- Students may only receive aid at one institution per semester.
- Students can only receive financial aid for classes that are required as part of their WCJC degree or certificate plan. Financial aid does not apply to courses taken by audit, credit hours earned by placement tests, continuing education courses, and courses taken outside a student's degree plan.
- Students must have a diploma from an accredited high school or a recognized equivalent of a high school diploma, typically a General Education Development (GED) certificate. Transcripts from private and foreign schools and home school transcripts will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. WCJC reserves the right to deny financial aid to any student who does not have a high school diploma or GED from a recognized and accredited institution.
- Financial aid is available for only the first 30 semester credit hours of remedial or developmental coursework attempted. Remedial or developmental coursework is counted in the 67% completion rate. Remedial coursework includes courses that are not part of the student's program plan but are prerequisite courses for entry into courses that are part of the student's program plan.

## **FINANCIAL AID CENSUS DATE**

Financial Aid Census Date, also known as a “Freeze Date,” is the day the WCJC Financial Aid Office will review all students receiving financial aid enrollment for the semester. The number of eligible registered hours on the Freeze Date will determine the Financial Aid for the semester.

This date is important to know because if a student increases or decreases their enrollment level prior to the Financial Aid Census Date (Freeze Date), financial aid amounts will be adjusted, as appropriate, to ensure that the allocation is correct.

## **RETURN OF TITLE IV FUNDS**

WCJC returns unearned funds received from Federal student assistance programs to the proper program accounts or lenders in accordance with Federal Title IV student assistance regulations, as amended, under 34CFR, section 668.22(d) of the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and with rules of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

The student receiving assistance from Federal Title IV programs is required to complete a minimum number of hours for which assistance was received. If the student completely withdraws from school during the semester, or quits attending, but fails to officially withdraw, the student may be required to return the unearned part of funds which were received to help pay educational expenses for the semester.

## **SECTION 9: STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES / CODE OF CONDUCT**

The College recognizes the necessity of establishing clear guidelines for student conduct to ensure the protection of rights for the individual and for the college as an institution of education. In addition to other formal rules and policies, the following statements adopted by the College apply to all individuals of the college community, as well as, its guests.

A student is defined as an individual who is currently enrolled in the College and any prospective or former student who has been accepted for admission or readmission to the College.

### **STUDENT RIGHTS**

The following rights of all members of the college community shall remain inviolable:

1. To learn, teach, study, and search for truth without interference or harassment.
2. To move about the campus and in campus buildings freely and without interference or harassment.
3. To express opinions freely and without interference, individually or in groups, as long as such expression does not interfere with any other individual rights hereby guaranteed or result in damage to property. To be treated at all times with courtesy and respect, regardless of ethnic origin, cultural background, sex, creed or ideology, as long as one displays regard for the rights of others that are provided in this statement of individual rights.

If a student feels that their rights have been violated, [Policy FLD - Student Complaints](#) provides the policy and process for working through a grievance. Grievances can include both non-academic (i.e. discrimination, actions of college or other students) and academic (grade appeal, academic decisions) concerns. Section 10 in this handbook on student grievance procedures details the process for filing a

grievance.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

As a student of Wharton County Junior College, an individual assumes responsibility of observing a proper standard of conduct at all times. Students are also expected to understand and comply with all college policies and procedures.

All students shall obey the law, show respect for properly constituted authority, and observe proper standards of conduct. Each student shall:

- Demonstrate courtesy, even when others do not.
- Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline.
- Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
- Prepare for each class and take appropriate materials and assignments to class.
- Obey all classroom rules.
- Respect the rights and privileges of students, faculty, and other WCJC staff and volunteers.
- Respect the property of others, including College property and facilities.
- Cooperate with and assist the College staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline.

## **PROHIBITED CONDUCT**

All students shall obey the law, show respect for College administration, faculty, staff, employees, and shall observe correct standards of conduct. In addition to activities prohibited by law and/or other College policies or regulations, the following types of behavior shall be prohibited and subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to, possible dismissal from WCJC.

1. Federal, State and Local Laws – violations of federal, state, or local law or WCJC policies procedures, or rules, including those in this Student Handbook.
2. Prohibited Weapons – Possession, distribution, sale or use of firearms, location-restricted knives, clubs, knuckles, firearm silencers, or other prohibited weapons to include fireworks, as described in [College Policy CHF](#), without prior approval.
3. Drugs and Alcohol – Behaviors regarding drugs and alcohol and associated paraphernalia as described in [Policy FLBE](#).
  - a. A student shall be prohibited from using, possessing, controlling, manufacturing, transmitting, distributing, selling, or being under the influence of intoxicating beverages on College premises and at college-sponsored activities.
  - b. No student shall possess, use, control, manufacture, transmit, distribute, sell or attempt to possess, use, control, manufacture, transmit, distribute, sell or be under the influence of, any of the following substance on College premises or at College sponsored activities.
    - Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate.
    - Any abusable glue, aerosol paint, or any other volatile chemical substance or inhalation.
    - Any performance-enhancing substance, including steroids.

- Any designer drug.
  - Any other intoxicate or mood-changing, mind-altering or behavior-altering drug.
- c. Paraphernalia – The use, possession, control, manufacture, transmission, distribution, or sale of paraphernalia related to any prohibited substance.
4. Debts – Owing a monetary debt to the College that is considered delinquent or writing an “insufficient funds” check to the College.
5. Disruptions – Disorderly conduct or disruptive behavior. Disorderly conduct shall include any of the following activities occurring on premises owned or controlled by WCJC:
- a. Behavior of a boisterous or tumultuous character such that there is a clear and present danger of alarming persons where no legitimate reason for alarm exists.
  - b. Interference with the peaceful and lawful conduct of persons under circumstances in which there is reason to believe that such conduct will cause or provoke a disturbance.
  - c. Violent and forceful behavior at any time such that there is a clear and present danger that free movement of other persons will be impaired.
  - d. Behavior involving personal abuse or assault when such behavior creates a clear and present danger of causing assaults or fights.
  - e. Violent, abusive, indecent, profane, boisterous, unreasonably loud, or otherwise disorderly conduct under circumstances in which there is reason to believe that such conduct will cause or provoke a disturbance.
  - f. Willful and malicious behavior that interrupts the speaker of any lawful assembly or impairs the lawful right of others to participate effectively in such assembly or meeting when there is reason to believe that such conduct will cause or provoke a disturbance.
  - g. Willful and malicious behavior that obstructs or causes the obstruction of any doorway, hall, or any other passageway in a College District building to such an extent that the employees, officers, and other persons, including visitors, having business with the College District are denied entrance into, exit from, or free passage in such building.
6. Behavior Targeting Others –
- a. Threatening another person, including a student or employee.
  - b. Intentionally, knowingly, or negligently causing physical harm to any person.
  - c. Engaging in conduct that constitutes harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, or bullying directed toward another person, including a student or employee as written in [College Policy FFDA](#), [College Policy FFDB](#) and [College Policy FFE](#).
    - Prohibited harassment of a student is defined as physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on the student’s race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, gender or on any other basis prohibited by law, that adversely affects the student. Read full policy at [College Policy FFDB](#).
    - Prohibited sexual harassment, which includes sexual violence, dating and domestic

violence and stalking, is defined as unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical, verbal, and non-verbal conduct or other conduct or communication of a sexual nature when the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it limits or denies the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the College's educational program or activities. Read full policy at [College Policy FFDA](#).

- Bullying, which may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft, name-calling, rumor spreading or ostracism, is strictly prohibited. Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on College premises or at a College sponsored activity and that:
  - has the effect or have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or
  - Is so sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive that the action or threat limits or denies a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the College's educational program.

Read full policy at [College Policy FFE](#).

- A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a College investigation regarding discrimination or harassment shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

- d. Hazing with or without the consent of a student.
- e. Initiations by organizations that include features that are dangerous, harmful, or degrading to the student, a violation of which also renders the organization subject to appropriate discipline.
- f. Endangering the health or safety of members of the College community or visitors to the premises.

7. Property –

- a. Intentionally, knowingly, or negligently defacing, damaging, misusing, or destroying College property or property of others.
- b. Stealing or theft of College property or the property of others.
- c. Theft, sabotage, destruction, distribution, or other use of the intellectual property of the college or third parties without permission.

8. Directives –

- a. Failure to comply with the directive of a College official.
- b. Failure to provide identification upon request.

9. Tobacco and E-cigarettes – Possession or use of tobacco products or e-cigarettes on College property without authorization [[Policy FLBD](#)]

10. Misuse of Technology –

- a. Violating policies, rules, or agreements signed by the student regarding the use of technology resources.
- b. Attempting to access or circumvent passwords or other security-related information of the College District, students, or employees or uploading or creating computer viruses.
- c. Attempting to alter, destroy, disable, or restrict access to College District technology resources including but not limited to computers and related equipment, College District data, the data of others, or other networks connected to the College's system without permission.
- d. Using the internet or other electronic communications to threaten College students, employees, or volunteers.
- e. Sending, posting, or possessing electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal.
- f. Using email or websites to engage in or encourage illegal behavior or threaten the safety of the College, students, employees, or visitors.
- g. Possessing published or electronic material that is designed to promote or encourage illegal behavior or that could threaten the safety of the College, students, employees, or visitors.

11. Dishonesty –

- a. Scholastic dishonesty, which includes cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.
  - Cheating, which includes, but is not limited to:
    - Copying from another student's test or class work.
    - Using test materials not authorized by the person administering the test.
    - Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test without permission from the test administrator.
    - Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing or soliciting, in whole or in part, the contents of an unadministered test, paper, or another assignment.
    - The unauthorized transporting or removal, in whole or in part, of the contents of the unadministered test.
    - Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for one's self, to take a test.
    - Bribing another person to obtain an unadministered test or information about an unadministered test.
    - Manipulating a test, assignment, or final course grade.
  - Plagiarism – the appropriating, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's own written work.
  - Collusion – the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of course requirements.



- b. Making false accusations or perpetrating hoaxes regarding the safety of the college, students, employees or visitors.
  - c. Intentionally or knowingly providing false information to the College.
  - d. Intentionally or knowingly falsifying records, passes or other College related documents.
12. Gambling or Other Conduct – Gambling or engaging in any other conduct that College officials might reasonably believe will substantially disrupt the college program or incite violence.

Students are directed to [College Policy FLB](#) to read full policy on Student Conduct.

## **DISCIPLINE**

A student shall be subject to discipline, including suspension, in accordance with [College Policy FM](#) and [College Policy FMA](#), if the student violates this policy:

- 1. While on College premises;
- 2. While attending a College activity; or
- 3. While elsewhere if the behavior adversely impacts the educational environment or otherwise interferes with College operations or objectives.

## **DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE**

Students are directed to [College Policy FMA](#) to read full policy on Disciplinary Procedures.

- 1. Reports of Alleged Misconduct – Alleged violations of WCJC policies or procedures will be submitted to the Dean of Student Success or designee (henceforth known as the Dean) within a reasonable amount of time following an alleged incident, not to exceed ten (10) business days. Allegations must be submitted in writing, through the [Incident Report Form](#), and must describe the incident and alleged violation and any surrounding facts.

The Dean shall investigate the matter as necessary. If an allegation is deemed to be unfounded, the Dean shall dismiss the allegation and shall provide the student written notice that the allegation of misconduct was made against the student and that the allegation was dismissed.

Exception: Reports of sex discrimination or sexual harassment shall be submitted in accordance with [College Policy FFDA](#), as appropriate.

- 2. Conference – If it is determined that the allegation warrants further consideration, the Dean shall summon the student for a conference to be held within a reasonable time, not to exceed ten (10) business days, following the receipt of the allegation of misconduct.

At the conference, the Dean shall notify the student of the allegation(s) and provide the student an opportunity to respond.

- 3. Unfounded Allegations – After conferring with the student, if the Dean determines that the student did not commit a violation, the allegation(s) shall be dismissed as unfounded. The student shall be provided written notice of the dismissal.
- 4. Misconduct Warranting a Penalty – If the Dean determines that the student committed misconduct that warrants a penalty other than suspension or expulsion, the Dean shall provide the student

written notice of the penalty and the student's right to appeal.

a. Penalties for Misconduct include:

- Reprimand – A verbal or written warning to the student following a rule violation. Repetition of such misconduct may result in more severe disciplinary action.
- Restitution – Reimbursement for damage to or misappropriation of property. Reimbursement may take the form of appropriate service to repair or otherwise compensate for damage.
- Scholastic Penalties – The assignment of a failing grade on an assignment or examination or in a course by an instructor based on scholastic dishonesty; including cheating, collusion, and plagiarism; committed by a student. The instructor shall submit a written report of the incident and of the planned action to the instructor's dean.
- Educational – Referral to drug and alcohol counseling or rehabilitation programs or student assistance programs. (Per [College Policy FLBE](#))
- Conditional Probation – The placing of a student on notice that continued infraction of regulations may result in suspension or expulsion from the College District. Conditional probation may include restrictions on a student's rights and privileges or specified community service. The probation may be for a specified length of time or for an indefinite period according to the relative severity of the infraction or misconduct. Failure to fulfill the terms of the probation may lead to suspension or expulsion.
- Suspension – Forced withdrawal from the College District for either a definite period of time or until stated conditions have been met. Normally, suspension shall extend through a minimum of one regular long semester (with summer sessions not counting in the one semester minimum time lapse). However, suspension may exceed the one semester minimum.
- Expulsion – Permanent forced withdrawal from the College District. A student receiving disciplinary expulsion shall have the action noted in the student's permanent record.

Refer to [College Policy FM](#) to read full policy.

- b. Suspension – If the Dean determines that the student committed misconduct that warrants a suspension, the Dean shall inform the student in writing of the determination, and a hearing shall be scheduled for consideration by the disciplinary appeals committee as described below.
- c. Expulsion – If the Dean determines that the student committed misconduct that warrants expulsion, the official shall inform the student in writing of the determination. The Dean shall forward the determination and all evidence collected during the investigation and conference to the College President in order to schedule an expulsion hearing before the Board.
- d. Interim Disciplinary Action – The Dean may take immediate disciplinary action, including suspension pending a hearing, against a student for policy violations if the continuing presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the educational environment.

## 5. Disciplinary Appeals Committee

- a. The disciplinary appeals committee shall be convened:
  - On request of a student appealing a penalty other than suspension or expulsion. The request must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the College, within ten (10) business days of the date of the administration's written notice.
  - Automatically, if the Dean determines that a student committed misconduct warranting suspension.
- b. Composition of Committee – The Disciplinary Appeals Committee shall be composed of at least three WCJC employees and a minimum of one student. All members of the committee shall be eligible to vote during the hearing.
- c. Hearing Notice – The Dean shall notify the student by letter of the date, time, and place for the hearing. Unless the student and the Dean otherwise agree, the hearing shall take place within a reasonable time period, not to exceed ten (10) business days after the date of the student's request for a hearing or the Dean's determination that the student should be suspended. The Notice shall:
  - Direct the student to appear on the date and at the time and place specified.
  - Advise the student of his or her rights
    - To have a private hearing.
    - To be assisted by an advisor or legal counsel at the hearing.
    - To call witnesses, request copies of evidence in the College's possession, and offer evidence and agreement on his or her own behalf.
    - To make an audio recording of the proceedings, after first notifying the Dean in advance of the hearing, or, at the student's own expense, to have a stenographer present at the hearing to make a stenographic transcript of the hearing.
    - To ask questions of each witness who testified against the student.
  - Contain the names of witnesses who will testify against the student and a description of documentary and other evidence that will be offered against the student.
  - Contain a description of the allegations of misconduct in sufficient detail to enable the student to prepare his or her defense against the charges.
  - State the proposed punishment or range of punishments that may be imposed.
- d. Failure to Appear for Hearing – The disciplinary appeals committee may impose appropriate punishment upon a student who fails without good cause to appear for the hearing; for purposes of assessing punishment, the committee may proceed with the hearing in the student's absence.
- e. Hearing Procedure – The hearing shall proceed as follows:
  2. The chairperson shall read the description of the misconduct.

3. The chairperson shall inform the student of his or her rights.
4. The designated official or representative shall present the College's case.
5. The student or representative shall present the student's defense.
6. The designated official or representative shall present rebuttal evidence.
7. The committee members may ask questions of witnesses testifying on behalf of the student or the College.
8. The designated official or representative shall summarize and argue the College's case.
9. The student or representative shall summarize and argue his or her case.
10. The designated official or representative shall have an opportunity for rebuttal argument.
11. The committee members shall deliberate in closed session. The committee members shall vote on the issue of whether or not the student violated College policies and procedures, including the rules for student conduct.
12. If the committee finds the student did commit misconduct, the committee shall determine whether the penalty assessed, or proposed in the case of suspension, by the Dean is appropriate and, if necessary, shall assess a different or additional penalty.
13. The committee chairperson shall communicate the decision and any findings of facts in support of the committee's decision to the student in writing within ten (10) business days of the hearing. The notice shall include procedures for appealing the committee's decision to the College President.

All hearings shall be recorded by the College.

f. Evidence – Evidence shall be handled in accordance with the following:

- Legal rules of evidence do not apply; the committee chairperson may admit evidence or exclude evidence considered to be irrelevant, immaterial, and unduly repetitious.
- At the hearing, the College shall be required to prove by a preponderance of the evidence that the charges are true.
- A student may not be compelled to testify.
- The committee shall determine if a violation has occurred and assess an appropriate penalty based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing.

6. Appeal to College District Administration – A student may, within ten (10) business days of receiving notice of the disciplinary appeal committee's decision, petition in writing the College President to review the decision. The student's petition shall state with particularity why the decision is believed to be incorrect. After receiving notice of the appeal, the disciplinary appeals committee chairperson shall forward all evidence considered during the hearing, the audio recording of the hearing, and the digest of the hearing, if applicable, to the College President.

The College President shall hold a conference within ten College District business days after the appeal notice is filed. At the conference, the student may provide information concerning any

documents or information relied on by the committee. The College President may set reasonable time limits for the conference. The conference shall be audio recorded.

The College President shall provide the student a written response, stating the basis of the decision, within ten College District business days following the conference. In reaching a decision, the College President may consider the evidence included in the student's petition, provided during the conference, and forwarded by the committee chairperson. The College President may act to affirm, modify, remand, or reverse the decision of the disciplinary appeals committee.

7. Appeal to Board - If the College President affirmed or modified the decision of the disciplinary appeals committee or if the time for a response has expired, the student may appeal the decision to the Board. The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the College District, within ten College District business days after receipt of the written response from the College President, or, if no response was received, within ten College District business days of the response deadline.

The College President or designee shall inform the student of the date, time, and place of the Board meeting at which the appeal will be on the agenda for presentation to the Board.

The College President or designee shall provide the Board the evidence presented to the College President, as well as the audio recording of the College President's conference with the student and the written response provided by the College President to the student.

The College District shall determine whether the appeal will be presented in open or closed meeting in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and other applicable law. [See BD]

The presiding officer may set reasonable time limits and guidelines for the presentation, including an opportunity for the student and the administration to each make a presentation and provide rebuttal and an opportunity for questioning by the Board. The Board shall hear the appeal and may request that the administration provide an explanation for the decisions at the preceding levels.

In addition to any other record of the Board meeting required by law, the Board shall prepare a separate record of the hearing. The hearing, including the presentation by the student or the student's representative, any presentation from the administration, and questions from the Board with responses, shall be recorded by audio recording, video/audio recording, or court reporter.

The Board shall then consider the evidence. It may give notice of its decision orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. If for any reason the Board fails to reach a decision regarding the evidence by the end of the next regularly scheduled meeting, the lack of a response by the Board upholds the Dean of Student Success's decision.

8. Expulsion Hearing - If the Dean determines that the student's misconduct warrants expulsion [see Conference, above], the Board shall convene to conduct an expulsion hearing. The College President or designee shall inform the student of the date, time, and place of the Board meeting at which the appeal will be on the agenda for presentation to the Board. The notice shall contain the contents described at Disciplinary Appeals Committee—Contents of Notice, above.

The College President or designee shall provide the Board the documentation presented by the Dean of Student Success.

The Board shall proceed according to the procedures set out at Disciplinary Appeals Committee— Failure to Appeal for Hearing, Hearing Procedure, and Evidence, above, with the Board substituted for references to the committee and the presiding officer of the Board substituted for the committee chairperson.

## **SECTION 10: STUDENT GRIEVANCE**

The College strives to provide a safe, humane and responsive learning environment for students. When conflicts arise, students are encouraged to resolve the complaint/grievance informally, first by meeting with the person directly involved with the grievance. In the case that an issue cannot be resolved informally, the student has a right to initiate a formal complaint. Student complaints or grievances may include, but are not limited to, a grade appeal, academic decision, classroom instruction, campus services or offices or issues with other students.

### **Filing a Formal Grievance / Complaint / Appeal**

The student must file a grievance of an academic or non-academic decision within 15 business days of the date the student first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or grievance. The student must submit the appeal in writing on the [Grievance Form](#). No anonymous grievances will be accepted. Documentation that supports the grievance should be submitted with the Grievance Form. If unable to submit documents at that time, documents may be presented at the Level One conference; however, no new documents may be submitted by the student after the Level One conference unless the student did not know the documents existed before the Level One conference.

The written appeal must state:

- a description of the decision being challenged and
- the action or outcome the student is seeking.

### **Procedures**

The College encourages students to discuss an academic concern with the appropriate instructor or a non-academic concern with the campus administrator who has the authority to address the concern. This informal resolution shall not extend any deadlines in the appeal process, except by mutual written consent. Either party may invite a witness or mediator to attend any meetings in which the appeal is discussed. A student whose concern is resolved in the informal resolution may withdraw a formal complaint at any time.

The appropriate administrator shall investigate an appeal as necessary and schedule a conference with the student within 10 business days after receipt of the written complaint. The student will be notified in writing of a decision within 10 business days following the conference. Any further appeals must be initiated within 10 business days of the date of the written response from the previous appeal or, if no response was received, within 10 business days of the response deadline.

1. Level One: Appeal to the Division Chair for Academic Complaints or Dean of Student Success (Dean) for Non-Academic Complaints

- a. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the instructor (academic) or campus administrator (non-academic), the student may appeal in writing (through the [Grievance Form](#)) to the Division Chair (academic) or Dean of Student Success (non-academic).
  - b. The student may provide supporting documents prior to or during the conference.
2. Level Two: Appeal to the Vice President of Instruction
  - a. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Division Chair/Dean, the student may appeal in writing (through the [Grievance Form](#)) to the Vice President of Instruction (VPI).
  - b. The Division Chair/Dean forwards Level One records to include the original Grievance Form, any documents submitted by the student at Level One, Division Chair/Dean written response noting the basis of the decision, and any other documents relied upon by the Division Chair/Dean in reaching the decision.
3. Level Three: Appeal to the College President
  - a. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the VPI, the student may appeal in writing (through the [Grievance Form](#)) to the College President.
  - b. The VPI forwards the Level One records, the written response of the VPI, and any other documents relied upon by the VPI in reaching the decision.
4. Level Four: Appeal to the Board
  - a. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the President, the student may appeal in writing (through the [Grievance Form](#)) to the Board.
  - b. The President forwards the Level One and Level Two records, the written response of the President, and any other documents relied upon by the President in reaching the decision.
  - c. The President informs the student of the date, time, and place of the Board meeting at which the complaint will be on the agenda for presentation to the Board.
  - d. The Board determines if the complaint will be presented in open or closed meeting. The presiding officer may set reasonable time limits and guidelines for presentations.
  - e. The Board shall prepare a separate record of the Level Four presentation and all components of presentations and questions shall be recorded.
  - f. The Board may give notice of its decisions orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. Lack of response by the Board upholds the administration decision at Level Three.

#### Other Processes

1. If a student fails to appear at a scheduled conference, the College may hold the conference and issue a decision in the student's absence.
2. The day a complaint or document is filed is "day zero"; the following day is "day one."
3. All time limits shall be strictly followed unless modified by mutual written consent.
4. If a complaint form or appeal notice is not timely filed, the complaint may be dismissed, on written notice to the student, at any point during the complaint process. The student may appeal the dismissal by seeking review in writing within 10 days from the date of the written dismissal notice, starting at the level at which the complaint was dismissed. Such appeal shall be limited to the issue of timeliness.

[\[WCJC Policy FLD\]](#)



## **SECTION 11: SAFETY AND SECURITY**

### **CAMPUS SECURITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

The Campus Security and Public Safety office has a presence on all campus locations, with the main office located on the Wharton campus, in the Campus Security Building (next to the Pioneer Student Center). Additionally, there are emergency call boxes located throughout the Wharton campus which connect directly with campus security officers. Campus Security Officers enforce college policy and regulations and have working relationships with local and state law enforcement agencies and calls upon them to enforce city, state and federal laws. Campus security officers can provide security escorts on campus if requested and are ready to assist the campus community with issues regarding campus parking, emergency management, as well as all aspects of personal safety.

The Office of Security and Public Safety can be reached at the following numbers:

Wharton Campus – 979-532-6523

Richmond Campus – 281-239-1501

Sugar Land Campus – 281-275-3302

Bay City Campus – 979-244-4552

### **DISCLOSURE OR CAMPUS SECURITY AND CAMPUS CRIME STATISTICS**

In compliance with the Federal Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (20 U.S.C. 1092 (f)), the Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act (Public Law 101-542), the Higher Education Technical Amendments of 1991 (Public Law 102-26), and the Higher Education Amendments of 1992 (Public Law 102-325), WCJC publishes specified information on campus crime statistics and campus policies and has established procedures to satisfy the stipulations of the Acts.

The Annual Security Report, which includes college policies and a crime statistics report, is published annually and can be found on the [Office of Security and Public Safety website](#).

To view the College's daily crime log, contact the Office of Security and Public Safety at 979-532-6523.

### **ACCIDENTS ON CAMPUS**

All accidents that occur on campus property or at a campus-sponsored event should be reported to the Office of Security and Public Safety and to the Dean of Student Success.

### **MISSING PERSONS**

Reports regarding any student attending school or living in the residence halls who is missing must be referred immediately to the Office of Security and Public Safety, 979-532-6523 or 979-282-1993. Students living in the residences halls are required to identify a contact person(s) whom the college will attempt to notify after the student is determined by Campus Security to be missing. In addition to any additional contact person designated by the student, if the student is less than 18 years of age and not emancipated, the college will attempt to notify a custodial parent or guardian not more than 24 hours after the student is determined to be missing by Campus Security. The Office of Security and Public

Safety will initiate emergency contact procedures once a student, for whom a missing persons report has been filed, has been missing for 24 hours.

### **EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM**

WCJC has partnered with RAVE Mobile Safety to provide an emergency alert system capable of delivering messages to your WCJC and personal email addresses, as well as land lines and cell phones, in the case of an emergency. Students' WCJC emails are automatically enrolled in RAVE; however, students are encouraged to add their personal email, cell phone, and home phone numbers into the [RAVE system](#) as well, to ensure receipt of emergency notifications.

Students should login to the [RAVE system](#) each semester to confirm contact information and choose notification preferences.

Note: Cellular phone provider may charge a per-text message fee for the delivery of emergency notifications to your phone.

### **CLOSING AND SUSPENSION OF ACTIVITIES**

The College President is responsible for suspending college activities or the closing of any college facility due to weather, transportation, or other emergency conditions. Notice of suspended classes or the closing of facilities shall be posted on the college's website and may also be disseminated to the local media. Notices of suspended classes and other emergencies may also be sent out via RAVE, our emergency notification system.

In the event of cancellation of classes, the classes missed may be made up by holding classes on weekends, evenings, and/or holidays, or by extending the year end of a session or semester. Students are responsible for monitoring the college notices sent out regarding closings and suspension of activities.

### **FIREARMS ON CAMPUS**

WCJC prohibits the use, possession, or display of a firearm on College District property or at College District sponsored events or related activities. WCJC also prohibits the open carry of handguns or other firearms on College District property. However, per [WCJC Policy CHF](#), an individual who possesses a valid License to Carry (LTC) may carry a concealed handgun on or about their person on WCJC campuses and in buildings, except in designated Exclusion Zones, notated with signage. Handguns must be carried in a retention holster that covers the trigger. It is the responsibility of the individual who has a valid LTC to conceal any handgun so that it is not partially or wholly visible to another person.

In compliance with Texas Penal Code, Section 46.035(a-1), a LTC holder may not carry a partially or wholly visible firearm on campus premises or on any college driveway, street, walkway, sidewalk, parking lot, parking garage or other parking area.

The above information is a summary of WCJC policy on Campus Carry – [WCJC Policy CHF](#). Students are strongly encouraged to review the WCJC policy on Campus Carry for detailed information regarding concealed firearms on WCJC property. It should be noted that WCJC Sugar Land Campus is regulated by the University of Houston Campus Carry policy.

## SECTION 12: SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND HARASSMENT

### Statement of Nondiscrimination

The College District prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any student on the basis of sex or gender. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of College District policy and is prohibited.

### Definitions

- Discrimination - Discrimination against a student is defined as conduct directed at a student on the basis of sex or gender that adversely affects the student.
- Sexual Harassment by an Employee - Sexual harassment of a student by a College District employee includes unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:
  - A College District employee causes the student to believe that the student must submit to the conduct to participate in a college program or activity, or that the employee will make an educational decision based on whether or not the student submits to the conduct; or
  - The conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it limits or denies the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the College District's educational program or activities.
- Sexual Harassment by Others - Sexual harassment of a student, including harassment committed by another student, includes unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct when the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it limits or denies a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the College District's educational program or activities.
- Sexual Violence – "Sexual violence" is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence includes physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victim's use of drugs or alcohol or due to an intellectual or other disability.
- Dating Violence - "Dating violence" means violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on the reporting party's statement and with consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.
- Domestic Violence – "Domestic violence" means 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;
  - Any other member of the victim's family as defined by state law;
  - Any other current or former member of the victim's household as defined by state law;

- A person in a dating relationship with the victim as defined by state law; or
- Any other person who acts against the victim in violation of the family violence laws of this state or the jurisdiction where the conduct occurs.
- Stalking - “Stalking” means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for the person's safety or the safety of others or suffer substantial emotional distress.

For the purposes of this definition:

- “Course of conduct” means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts in which the stalker 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.
- “Reasonable person” means a reasonable person under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the victim.
- Gender Based Harassment – “Gender-based harassment” includes physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on the student’s gender, the student’s expression of characteristics perceived as stereotypical for the student’s gender, or the student’s failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity. For purposes of this policy, gender-based harassment is considered prohibited harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct limits or denies a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the College District’s educational program. Acts of gender-based harassment may also be considered sex discrimination or sexual harassment.
- Prohibited Conduct - In this policy, the term “prohibited conduct” includes discrimination, harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and retaliation as described by this policy, even if the behavior does not rise to the level of unlawful conduct.
- Complainant - In this policy, the term “complainant” refers to an applicant for admission or a student who is alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct. The term also includes a former student who is alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct while participating, or attempting to participate, in the College District’s educational program or activity.
- Respondent - In this policy, the term “respondent” refers to a person who is alleged to have committed prohibited conduct.
- Confidential Employee - A “confidential employee” is a person who holds a professional license requiring confidentiality, such as a counselor or medical provider, who is supervised by such a person, or a person who is a nonprofessional counselor or advocate designated in administrative procedures as a confidential source.
- Days – “Days” shall mean College District business days, unless otherwise noted. In calculating timelines under this policy, the day a document is filed is “day zero.” The following business day is “day one.”

- Extension of Timelines – Timelines established by this policy and associated procedures may be subject to a limited extension if good cause, as defined in this policy and College District regulations, exists. The College District shall promptly provide written notice to the parties of an extension and the reason for the extension.

### **Reporting Procedures**

A victim of prohibited conduct has the right to report the incident to the College District and to receive a prompt and equitable resolution of the report.

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited conduct or believes that another student has experienced prohibited conduct should immediately report the alleged acts to the Title IX Coordinator, the College President, or another employee. A report against the College President may be made directly to the Board. If a report is made directly to the Board, the Board shall appoint an appropriate person to conduct an investigation. A student shall not be required to report prohibited conduct to the person alleged to have committed the conduct.

Alternatively, a student may submit the report electronically through the College District's website. The submission of an anonymous electronic report may impair the College District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

A victim of a crime has the right to choose whether to report the crime to law enforcement, to be assisted by the College District in reporting the crime to law enforcement, or to decline to report the crime to law enforcement.

It is important that a victim of prohibited conduct go to a hospital for treatment and preservation of evidence, if applicable, as soon as practicable after the incident.

### **Title IX Coordinator for Students**

Reports of discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment and gender-based harassment, may be directed to the Title IX Coordinator. The College District designates the following person to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, and related state and federal laws:

Title IX Coordinator for Students: Lindsey McPherson, Dean of Student Success  
 Address: 911 Boling Highway, Wharton, TX 77488  
 Physical Location: Pioneer Student Center, Wharton Campus, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
 Telephone: 979-532-6905  
 Email: McPhersonL@wcjc.edu

### **Timely Reporting**

A failure to immediately report prohibited conduct may impair the College District's ability to investigate and address the conduct.

### **Advisor**

Each party to the complaint may be assisted by an advisor of the party's choice who may participate in the proceedings in a manner consistent with College District procedures.

## Investigation of the Report

The College District may request, but shall not require, a written report. If a report is made orally, the Title IX Coordinator, or designee, shall reduce the report to written form.

- A. Initial Assessment** - Upon receipt or notice of a report, the Title IX Coordinator shall determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by this policy. If so, the Title IX Coordinator shall promptly offer supportive measures to the complainant. The Title IX Coordinator shall explain the process for filing a formal complaint and assess any request not to investigate. If the College District moves forward with the investigation, the Title IX coordinator shall immediately provide notice to the known parties to the complaint. If the Title IX Coordinator determines that the allegations, if proven, would not constitute prohibited conduct as defined by this policy but may constitute a violation of other College District rules or regulations, the Title IX Coordinator shall refer the complaint for consideration under the appropriate policy.
- B. Request Not to Investigate** - The complainant may request that the College District not investigate the allegations. If the complainant requests that the allegations not be investigated, in deciding whether to initiate the investigation, the College District must consider the factors described by law and any other factors the College District considers relevant. The College District shall promptly notify the complainant of the decision regarding whether it will conduct the investigation. If the College District decides not to investigate the allegations, the College District shall take reasonable steps to protect the health and safety of the College District community.
- C. Formal Complaint** - To be considered a formal complaint under Title IX, the complainant or the Title IX Coordinator must sign the written report.
- D. Notice to Parties** - The notice to the parties must describe the allegations and the formal and informal options for resolution of the complaint. The notice must state that the respondent is presumed not responsible until a determination regarding responsibility is made. The notice must also include information regarding the option to select an advisor, the opportunity to inspect and review evidence, and the prohibition on knowingly making false statements or submitting false information during the investigation and any ensuing proceedings. If the allegations are subsequently amended, the College District shall provide an updated notice reflecting the new allegations.
- E. Informal Resolution** - The College District may offer to the parties a process for the informal resolution of a formal complaint as defined by law. If the parties voluntarily agree in writing to participate in informal resolution of the complaint, the Title IX Coordinator shall determine within three days if informal resolution is appropriate for the complaint. If the Title IX Coordinator determines that informal resolution is appropriate, then the Title IX Coordinator or designee may facilitate that resolution within ten (10) days. If the Title IX Coordinator does not determine informal resolution to be appropriate, then the complaint will be subject to the formal resolution process. This process is not available in situations where an employee is alleged to have sexually harassed a student.

- F. Formal Resolution** - If the complaint is not subject to the informal resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator shall authorize or undertake an investigation, except as provided below at Criminal or Regulatory Investigation.
- G. Supportive Measures** - If appropriate and regardless of whether a criminal or regulatory investigation regarding the alleged conduct is pending, the Title IX Coordinator shall promptly provide supportive measures intended to address prohibited conduct, protect the safety of the parties and others, and protect the parties from retaliation prior to the completion of the investigation. Examples of possible supportive measures include academic accommodations, such as extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments and modifications of class schedules; housing and dining modifications; temporary removal from an education program or activity in accordance with law; counseling; health services; campus escort services; mutual restrictions on contact between the parties; and increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus.
- H. College District Investigation** - The investigation may be conducted by the Title IX coordinator or designee or by a third party designated by the College District, such as an attorney. The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the respondent, and others with knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the allegations. The investigation may also include analysis of other information or documents related to the allegations. The parties shall be provided an equal opportunity to present witnesses and evidence and to inspect and review any directly related evidence obtained by the College District so that the parties may meaningfully respond during the investigation process. The parties expected to participate in an investigative interview or other meeting shall be provided written notice in enough time to prepare to participate. At least ten (10) days prior to the completion of the investigation report, the College District must send each party and the party's advisor evidence subject to inspection and review. The parties may submit a written response for consideration by the investigator.
- I. Criminal or Regulatory Investigation** - If a law enforcement or regulatory agency notifies the College District that a criminal or regulatory investigation has been initiated, the College District shall confer with the agency to determine if the College District's investigation would impede the criminal or regulatory investigation. The College District shall proceed with its investigation only to the extent that it does not impede the ongoing criminal or regulatory investigation. After the law enforcement or regulatory agency has completed gathering its evidence, the College District shall promptly resume its investigation. Any delay under this provision shall constitute good cause for an extension of timelines established by this policy and associated procedures.

### **Concluding the Investigation**

The investigation shall be completed within a reasonable time, not to exceed 30 days from the date of the report.

The investigator shall prepare a written report of the investigation. The investigation report shall be filed with the Title IX Coordinator within five days following the completion of the investigation.

- A. Notification of the Report** - The Title IX Coordinator shall provide the investigation report, within the extent permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or other law, to



the complainant and the respondent promptly following receipt. The parties shall be given ten (10) days to respond to the report.

### **College District Action**

The Title IX Coordinator shall submit the investigation report and any response from the parties to the Case Decision Maker promptly after receipt of the parties' response but no later than the expiration of the parties' deadline to respond.

The Decision Maker, or designee, shall summon the parties for a hearing to be held within a reasonable time, not to exceed ten (10) days, following the receipt of the investigation report. The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with law and College District procedures.

After the hearing, the Decision Maker, or designee, shall determine whether each individual allegation of prohibited conduct occurred using a preponderance of the evidence standard and determine the appropriate disciplinary or corrective action. In making the determination, the Decision Maker, or designee, shall evaluate all relevant evidence objectively and shall not make credibility assessments based on a person's status as the complainant, the respondent, or a witness. The Decision Maker, or designee, shall create a written determination regarding responsibility in accordance with law and College District procedures within five (5) days following the hearing and submit the determination to the parties simultaneously.

### **Disciplinary or Corrective Action**

If the Decision Maker, or designee, determines that prohibited conduct occurred, the College District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary or corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct.

Examples of disciplinary or corrective action may include:

- Implementing the disciplinary measures described in [WCJC Policy FM](#) (for students) or [WCJC Policy DH](#) and [DM](#) series (for employees);
- Providing a training program for those involved in the complaint;
- Providing a comprehensive education program for the College District community;
- Providing counseling for the victim and the party who engaged in prohibited conduct;
- Permitting the victim or student who engaged in the prohibited conduct to drop a course in which they both are enrolled without penalty;
- Conducting follow-up inquiries to determine if any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred;
- Involving students in efforts to identify problems and improve the College District climate;
- Increasing staff monitoring of areas where prohibited conduct has occurred;
- Reaffirming the College District's policy against discrimination and harassment; and
- Taking other actions described in College District regulations.

## Dismissal of Complaint

- A. Mandatory Dismissal** - An allegation presented as a formal complaint under Title IX is subject to the mandatory dismissal procedures under law.
- B. Permissive Dismissal** - Any complaint may be dismissed at any time on request of a complainant. The Title IX Coordinator must first assess the request in accordance with this policy at Request Not to Investigate, above. A complaint may also be dismissed if specific circumstances prevent the College District from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the complaint or allegations.
- C. Notice of Dismissal** - Upon dismissal of a complaint, the Title IX Coordinator shall provide the parties written notice of the dismissal.

## Confidentiality

To the greatest extent possible, consistent with law, the College District shall respect the privacy of the complainant or the respondent or a person who makes a report or serves as a witness. Limited disclosures may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this policy and associated regulations and to comply with applicable law.

## Retaliation

The College District prohibits retaliation against any person for the purpose of interfering with a right or privilege under this policy; the complainant; or a person who, in good faith, makes a report or complaint, serves as a witness, or otherwise participates or refuses to participate in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this policy. This prohibition does not apply to discipline of a person who perpetrated or assists in the perpetration of the prohibited conduct.

A person who is alleged to have experienced retaliation may pursue a claim under this policy or [WCJC Policy DIAA](#), as appropriate.

## Appeal

- A. Suspension** - If the Decision Maker, or designee, determines that a student committed prohibited conduct that warrants a suspension, the official shall forward the determination and all evidence collected during the investigation and hearing to the College President. A conference shall be scheduled within ten (10) days of the notice of determination in accordance with [WCJC Policy FMA](#), beginning at "Appeal to College District Administration."
- B. Expulsion** - If the Decision Maker, or designee, determines that the student committed prohibited conduct that warrants expulsion, the official shall forward the determination and all evidence collected during the investigation and hearing to the College President to schedule an expulsion hearing before the Board in accordance with [WCJC Policy FMA](#).
- C. Other Action** - If the Decision Maker, or designee, determines that the student committed prohibited conduct that warrants other discipline or corrective action, the Decision Maker or designee shall inform the student that the student may appeal the determination within ten days in accordance with [WCJC Policy FMA](#), beginning at "Appeal to College District Administration."

## **Records Retention**

Retention of records shall be in accordance with the College District's records retention procedures.

## **SECTION 13: HEALTH INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

### **ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE AWARENESS**

The legal drinking age in the state of Texas is 21 years or older. [WCJC Policy FLBE](#) prohibits the use, possession or distribution of narcotics or dangerous drugs or alcoholic beverages on college-owned or college-controlled property or at any college sponsored event or activity. Possession of such items on college property or at college-sponsored events is grounds for disciplinary action, up to suspension or expulsion from the College. The College reserves the right to inspect vehicles, residence hall rooms, and other items.

Health effects of alcohol and other drugs can be found on the [WCJC Alcohol and Drug Abuse Resources webpage](#). On this same webpage, you will find policies pertaining to Alcohol and Drug use, as well as assistance and educational programs and community resources.

Students concerned about personal alcohol or substance use and abuse or that of a family member or friend, should contact a WCJC counselor. Counselors are available to provide referrals for treatment programs and specialized counseling. Information shared with the College's counselors will remain confidential.

### **TOBACCO USE AND POSSESSION**

Tobacco use is prohibited on campus, except in parking lots. This includes all forms of tobacco, including e-cigarettes.

Effective September 1, 2019, the legal age to possess, purchase, or use tobacco products changed from 18 to 21 years old, per Texas Senate Bill 21. The new law states the following:

- Possession of Tobacco by a Minor - A minor commits an offense if the minor possesses, purchases, consumes, or accepts a cigarette or tobacco product.
- Misrepresentation of Age by a Minor - A minor commits an offense if the minor falsely represents himself or herself to be 18 years of age or older by displaying proof of age that is false, fraudulent, or not actually proof of the individual's own age in order to obtain possession of purchase, or receive a cigarette or tobacco product.

### **BACTERIAL MENINGITIS**

Bacterial meningitis, an inflammation of the membranes that surround the brain and spinal cord, is a serious, potentially deadly disease that can progress extremely quickly. It is easily spread by direct contact, or by droplets of respiratory secretions (coughing, sneezing, kissing, and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation). This disease strikes about 3,000 Americans each year, including 100-125 on college campuses, leading to 5-15 deaths among college students every year. Although treatment is available, those who survive may develop severe health problems or disabilities.

Bacterial meningitis symptoms are often confused with the common flu. However, the symptoms can progress rapidly and lead to long-term severe health problems or death.

Vaccines are the most effective way to protect against certain types of bacterial meningitis. There are vaccines for 4 types of bacteria that can cause meningitis.

- Meningococcal vaccines help protect against *N. meningitidis*
- Pneumococcal vaccines help protect against *S. pneumoniae*
- *Haemophilus influenzae* serotype b (Hib) vaccines help protect against Hib
- Bacille Calmette-Guérin vaccine helps protect against tuberculosis disease, but is not widely used in the United States

Risks associated with vaccines include soreness, redness, or swelling where the shot is given, tiredness, fatigue, headache, muscle or joint pain, fever, chills, nausea, or diarrhea can happen after meningococcal B vaccination. Some of these reactions occur in more than half of the people who receive the vaccine.

Texas Senate Bill 1107 requires all students entering an institution of higher education, who are 21 years of age or younger, to demonstrate proof of vaccination against bacterial meningitis. Vaccinations must have been received within the previous five (5) years, and no later than 10 days prior to the first day of the semester.

For more information, visit the Center for Disease Control website.

## **AIDS / HIV**

HIV is the virus that causes AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). HIV damages your immune system, making it easier for you to get sick. If HIV is left untreated, it can wreak havoc on a person's immune system, making the body less able to fight off infections. According to the CDC, about 1.5 million adults and teens are living with HIV infection in the U.S. You cannot have AIDS without being infected with HIV, but people can, and do, live long lives (on treatment) with HIV and never develop AIDS.

### **How does HIV Spread?**

HIV is carried in semen, vaginal fluids, anal mucus, blood and breast milk, and most people contract HIV through anal or vaginal sex or sharing needles syringes. HIV is not transmitted through saliva, sweat, or tears. It is not spread through casual contact like hugging, holding hands, coughing or sneezing. And you can't get it from toilet seats, bedding, swimming pools or insect bites.

If you know you've been exposed to HIV, the best way to feel confident in your status is to get tested. HIV can't be cured, but it can be controlled and much of the damage from the infection can be reversed or prevented. However, if HIV is left untreated, serious infections and cancers occur because of the weakened immune system.

### **HIV Prevention**

There are many ways to prevent the spread of HIV. Using condoms every time you have sex and not sharing needles can help protect you and your partners from HIV. If you don't have HIV, there is also a

daily medication called PrEP that can protect you from HIV.

### **WCJC POLICY REGARDING COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

WCJC does not discriminate in enrollment against any student solely on the grounds that the student has a communicable disease. A student may not be denied access to College facilities, programs, functions or activities solely on the grounds that the student has a communicable disease. However, if the College makes a medically based determination that the restriction is necessary for the welfare of the person who has the communicable disease and/or the welfare of the campus community, WCJC reserves the right to exclude a person with a communicable disease from College facilities, programs, functions or activities. [Read full WCJC Policy FFAC on Communicable Diseases.](#)

## **SECTION 14: COUNSELING AND DISABILITY SERVICES**

Licensed Professional Counselors are available to provide WCJC students with short-term, solution-focused counseling and referrals. WCJC Counselors provide an objective and nonjudgmental setting in which students can discuss any number of concerns, including but not limited to:

- Stress and anxiety
- Family or relationship issues
- Coping with grief or loss
- Managing academic pressure
- And other personal or college-related concerns

Counseling services on campus are free to enrolled WCJC students and are confidential.

Cases where concerns are beyond the scope of the WCJC counseling services will be referred to an outside agency or professional resource within their community. All costs incurred by those referrals are the responsibility of the student. Counselors are available to meet with students in person or virtually.

To schedule an appointment, email [counseling@wcjc.edu](mailto:counseling@wcjc.edu).

In addition, the Counseling Services department offers group counseling on a variety of topics including but not limited to:

- Grief and bereavement
- Sexual assault survivors support
- Art therapy
- LGBTQIA support
- New student orientation

More information is available on their [website](#).

### **Disability Services for Students**

The Office also provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities. The College abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and other legal mandates that stipulate qualified students with disabilities receive accommodations to provide equal access to programs and opportunities at the College. If a

student has a documented disability, reasonable and appropriate academic accommodations for students who qualify under the law are available. Disabilities may be defined by the following:

- learning disabilities
- physical limitations
- health impairments
- psychiatric disabilities

Students should set an appointment with the Director of Counseling and Disability Services to review the nature and history of the disability as well as present concerns related to the educational environment. Students who receive services are responsible for sending their accommodation letters to their instructors, in addition to renewing services each semester. Accommodations are not retroactive. For information regarding the procedures required to obtain academic accommodations at WCJC, please visit the [Disability Services webpage](#). For an appointment or additional information, contact the Counseling and Disability Services office at [DisabilityServices@wcjc.edu](mailto:DisabilityServices@wcjc.edu).

### **Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Complaint Process**

The ADA complaint process was established to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA")/Section 504 mandate to "provide for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited." If an individual has been denied an accommodation that they requested and would like to appeal the denial, the individual may file a complaint through the process detailed below. During the complaint process an individual should continue to fulfill academic requirements until a final determination has been provided.

A faculty or staff member, who is asked to implement an approved accommodation for an individual but does not agree with the determination, may also utilize the Disability Services Complaint Process. A faculty or staff-initiated complaint cannot delay the implementation of an accommodation which Disability Services believes to be in compliance with ADA – Section 504.

Any individual who requires an accommodation to participate in the Disability Services Complaint Process may request that accommodation by contacting Disability Services or the Director of Counseling and Disability Services for assistance. The contact information is shown at the bottom of this screen.

#### **Step 1:**

If informal discussions with appropriate WCJC personnel have not resolved the issue, the individual shall submit a written or recorded complaint to the Director of Counseling and Disability Services or their designee no later than twenty (20) working days of notification of the accommodation or its denial.

The complaint shall include the reason for the appeal as well as any additional information the individual would like to submit regarding the disability-related need for the accommodation.

#### **Step 2:**

The Director of Counseling and Disability Services shall meet with the individual within seven (7) working days of the receipt of the complaint.

During the discussion with the Director of Counseling and Disability Services, or designee, the individual should be prepared to explain why the denied accommodation is needed to address the current impacts of their disability at WCJC (having received an accommodation from a previous institution or in the K-12

system is not in itself a sufficient basis). If the individual is objecting to the approval of an accommodation they are to implement, they should be prepared to explain the basis for their objection.

The Director of Counseling and Disability Services, or designee, will make a decision regarding the individual's appeal within five (5) business days. The Director's decision will be in writing and will be sent to the individual's WCJC email address. If through the appeal process the accommodation is granted, then the accommodation will be granted moving forward. Accommodations are not retroactive.

Step 3:

If the individual still feels the issue is not resolved, the individual may then file an appeal with the AVP for Academic Affairs within ten (10) business days of the Director's determination. This is the final step – the decision of the AVP for Academic Affairs or their designee is WCJC's final determination on the matter.

In order to appeal at this level, the individual must provide the AVP for Academic Affairs with:

- New information that was not provided to the Director of Counseling and Disability Services, or
- Information that the individual believes shows they were not provided with due process by Director of Counseling and Disability Services.

The AVP for Academic Affairs or their designee will review and address the matter. In undertaking a review of the complaint, the Dean of Student Success may interview, consult with, and/or request a written response to the issues raised in the complaint from any individual they believe to have relevant information.

The AVP for Academic Affairs or designee will make a decision regarding an individual's appeal within seven (7) business days. The AVP's decision will be in writing and will be sent to the individual's WCJC email. (If the individual does not have a WCJC email, it will be sent to the provided email.) If through the appeal process the accommodation is granted, it will be granted moving forward. Accommodations are not retroactive. Should additional time be necessary, the AVP will notify the individual and the Director of Counseling and Disability Services in writing.

### **Disability Nondiscrimination Policy**

The College District prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any student on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, religion, age, or any other basis prohibited by law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of College District policy and is prohibited.

Definitions -

- **Discrimination** against a student is defined as conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, religion, age, or on any other basis prohibited by law, that adversely affects the student.
- **Prohibited harassment** of a student is defined as physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on the student's race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct limits or denies a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the College District's educational program.
- **Prohibited conduct** includes discrimination, harassment, and retaliation as defined by this policy, even if the behavior does not rise to the level of unlawful conduct.



**Retaliation** - The College District prohibits retaliation by a student or College District employee against a student alleged to have experienced discrimination or harassment or another student who, in good faith, makes a report of harassment or discrimination, serves as a witness, or otherwise participates in an investigation.

**False Claims** - A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a College District investigation regarding discrimination or harassment shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

### **Reporting Procedures**

**Student Report** - Any student who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited conduct or believes that another student has experienced prohibited conduct should immediately report the alleged acts to a responsible employee.

**Employee Report** - Any College employee who suspects and any responsible employee who receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced prohibited conduct shall immediately notify the appropriate College official listed in this policy and shall take any other steps required by this policy.

**Exceptions** - A person who holds a professional license requiring confidentiality, such as a counselor, or who is supervised by such a person shall not be required to disclose a report of prohibited conduct without the student's consent.

A person who is a nonprofessional counselor or advocate designated in administrative procedures as a confidential source shall not be required to disclose information regarding an incident of prohibited conduct that constitutes personally identifiable information about a student or other information that would indicate the student's identity without the student's consent, unless the person is disclosing information as required for inclusion in the College's annual security report under the Clery Act. [See [College Policy GCC](#)]

**Responsible Employee** - For purposes of this policy, a "responsible employee" is an employee:

- Who has the authority to remedy prohibited conduct.
- Who has been given the duty of reporting incidents of prohibited conduct.
- Whom a student reasonably believes has the authority to remedy prohibited conduct or has been given the duty of reporting incidents of prohibited conduct.

The College designates the following persons as responsible employees: any instructor, any administrator, or any College official defined below.

**Definition of College Officials** - For the purposes of this policy, College officials are the ADA/Section 504 coordinator and the College President.

**ADA / Section 504 Coordinator** - Reports of discrimination based on disability may be directed to the ADA/Section 504 coordinator. The College designates the following person to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, which incorporates and expands the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended:

Rachel Bahnsen, Dean of Human Resources  
911 Boling Highway, Wharton, TX 77488  
(979) 532-6442

Lindsey McPherson, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs is designated to handle Student coordination, specifically. Contact Information: 911 Boling Highway, Wharton, TX 77488 / 979-532-6905.

Other Anti-Discrimination Laws - The College President or designee shall serve as coordinator for purposes of College District compliance with all other antidiscrimination laws.

### **Alternative Reporting Procedures**

A student shall not be required to report prohibited conduct to the person alleged to have committed the conduct. Reports concerning prohibited conduct, including reports against the ADA/Section 504 coordinator, may be directed to the College President.

A report against the College President may be made directly to the Board. If a report is made directly to the Board, the Board shall appoint an appropriate person to conduct an investigation.

### **Timely Reporting**

Reports of prohibited conduct shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair the College's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

### **Investigation of the Report**

The College may request, but shall not require, a written report. If a report is made orally, the College official shall reduce the report to written form.

- A. Initial Assessment - Upon receipt or notice of a report, the College District official shall determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by this policy. If so, the College District official shall immediately authorize or undertake an investigation, except as provided below at Criminal Investigation.

If the College District official determines that the allegations, if proven, would not constitute prohibited conduct as defined by this policy but may constitute a violation of other College District rules or regulations, the College District official shall refer the complaint for consideration under the appropriate policy.

- B. Interim Action - If appropriate and regardless of whether a criminal or regulatory investigation regarding the alleged conduct is pending, the College District shall promptly take interim action calculated to address prohibited conduct prior to the completion of the College District's investigation.
- C. College District Investigation - The investigation may be conducted by the College official or a designee or by a third party designated by the College, such as an attorney. The investigator shall have received appropriate training regarding the issues related to the complaint and the relevant College's policy and procedures.

The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the person making the report, the person against whom the report is filed, and others with knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the

allegations. The investigation may also include analysis of other information or documents related to the allegations.

- D. Criminal Investigation - If a law enforcement or regulatory agency notifies the College District that a criminal or regulatory investigation has been initiated, the College District shall confer with the agency to determine if the College District's investigation would impede the criminal or regulatory investigation. The College District shall proceed with its investigation only to the extent that it does not impede the ongoing criminal or regulatory investigation. After the law enforcement or regulatory agency has completed gathering its evidence, the College District shall promptly resume its investigation.

### **Concluding the Investigation**

Absent extenuating circumstances, such as a request by a law enforcement or regulatory agency for the College to delay its investigation, the investigation should be completed within ten (10) College business days from the date of the report; however, the investigator shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

The investigator shall prepare a written report of the investigation. The report shall be filed with the College official overseeing the investigation.

Notification of the Outcome - The College District shall provide written notice of the outcome, within the extent permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or other law, to the victim and the person against whom the complaint is filed.

### **College Action**

Prohibited Conduct - If the results of an investigation indicate that prohibited conduct occurred, the College shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary or corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct, in accordance with College policy and procedures [see [FM](#) and [FMA](#)].

Corrective Action - Examples of corrective action may include a training program for those involved in the complaint, a comprehensive education program for the College community, counseling for the victim and the student who engaged in prohibited conduct, follow-up inquiries to determine if any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving students in efforts to identify problems and improve the College climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where prohibited conduct has occurred, and reaffirming the College's policy against discrimination and harassment.

Improper Conduct - If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct, the College may take disciplinary action in accordance with College policy and procedures or other corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct.

### **Confidentiality**

To the greatest extent possible, the College shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation and comply with applicable law.

## **Appeal**

A party who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through the applicable grievance policy beginning at the appropriate level [see [College Policy FLD](#)]. A party shall be informed of his or her right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.

## **Records Retention**

Retention of records shall be in accordance with the College's records retention procedures [see [College Policy CIA](#)].

## **Access to Policy, Procedures and Related Materials**

Information regarding this policy and any accompanying procedures, as well as relevant educational and resource materials concerning the topics discussed in this policy, shall be distributed annually to College employees and students in compliance with law and in a manner calculated to provide easy access and wide distribution, such as through electronic distribution and inclusion in the employee and student handbooks and other major College publications. Information regarding the policy, procedures, and related materials shall also be prominently published on the College's website, taking into account applicable legal requirements. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be readily available at the College's administrative offices and shall be distributed to a student who makes a report [see [college Policy FFDB](#)].

## **SECTION 15: ASSEMBLY ON CAMPUS**

Students are expected to be familiar with the following excerpts from House Bill #141 passed by the 61st Legislature of the State of Texas.

SECTION 1: No person or group of persons acting in concert may willfully engage in disruptive activity or disrupt a lawful assembly on the campus or property of any private or public school or institution of higher education or public vocational and technical school or institute.

SECTION 2: For purposes of this Act, "disruptive activity" means:

- Obstruction or restraining the passage of persons in an exit, entrance, or hallway of any building without the authorization of the administration of the school.
- Seizing control of any building or portion of a building for the purpose of interfering with any administrative, educational research, or other authorized activity.
- Preventing or attempting to prevent by force or violence any lawful assembly authorized by the school administration.
- Disrupting by force or violence or the threat of force or violence a lawful assembly in progress.
- Obstruction or restraining the passage of any person at an exit or entrance of the campus or property or preventing or attempting to prevent by force or violence or by threats there of the ingress or egress of any person to or from said property or campus without the authorization of the administration of the school.

For the purpose of this Act, a lawful assembly is disrupted when any person in attendance is rendered

incapable of participating in the assembly due to the use of force or violence or due to reasonable fear that force or violence is likely to occur.

SECTION 3: A person who violates any provision of this Act is guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction is punishable by a fine not to exceed \$500 or by confinement in jail for not less than one day nor more than 6 months, or both.

SECTION 4: Any person who is convicted the third time of violating this Act shall not thereafter be eligible to attend any school, college, or university receiving funds from the State of Texas for a period of two years from such third conviction.

SECTION 5: Nothing herein shall be construed to infringe upon any right of free speech or expression guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States or the State of Texas. For Appeal of Student Disciplinary Action, Wharton County Junior College provides students with a procedure for the review of disciplinary actions that they contend have been made unfairly, arbitrary, capriciously, illegally or on the basis of bias or prejudice, or have been made in error (that is, the student claims innocence.) See Disciplinary Appeals in this Handbook for more information.

College policies are available on the college website on the [“About Us” page](#). Students need to consult this regulation prior to starting the appeal process.

## **SECTION 16: RESIDENCE LIFE**

Residence halls are provided for the primary purpose of allowing students to live on campus while pursuing their education. The Residence Life staff work to create an environment where every individual feels secure, independent, respected, and at home. We therefore hold all residents and their guest to the highest intellectual and moral standard. It is the responsibility of each resident to become familiar with these Residence Hall policies and procedures, as well as the overall Student Handbook which states the rules, regulations and conduct expected of all WCJC students.

### **RESIDENCE HALLS**

There are two on-campus residence halls. Both Mullins Hall and Frankie Hall are traditional residential facilities, managed by a Residence Life Supervisor and resident assistants. Mullins Hall is the home to approximately 53 female residents each year, and Frankie Hall is the home to approximately 74 male residents each year.

Residence Halls are open throughout the fall and spring semesters and are closed during the summer terms and during winter break. The Halls will also close for college holidays such as Thanksgiving, Spring Break, and Easter Break.

A student must be enrolled in 12 or more semester credit hours to be eligible to live in campus housing. Children and/or spouses are not allowed to live in campus housing with the resident. To reserve a room, a student must complete a housing application and pay a deposit and criminal background check fee. All students residing in campus housing are required to purchase a meal plan.

### **HOUSING OFFICE**

Location: Pioneer Student Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
Phone: 979-532-6980

Students interested in living in campus housing, should contact Rhonda Clayton at 979-532-6368 or [claytonr@wcjc.edu](mailto:claytonr@wcjc.edu).

## **MAIL**

Incoming mail should be addressed as follows:

Student Name  
Wharton County Junior College  
Hall (Frankie or Mullins), Room #  
911 Boling Hwy.  
Wharton, TX 77488

The Residence Life staff will collect mail and package deliveries daily and distribute to residence hall residents. Residents are responsible for daily collection of their mail from the designated mail area in each hall. Residents should not attempt to pick up mail or packages from the campus mailroom. All received mail must be in the student's name. Any mail received that is not in the name of a current resident will be returned to sender.

At least two weeks prior to leaving campus housing, residents should notify creditors, magazine publishers, etc. of their change of address. Beginning on the day that a student moves out of campus housing, the College is not responsible for forwarding residents' mail and will return all mail and parcels to the original sender.

## **MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS**

Residents should report all maintenance requests directly to the Residence Life Supervisor, and requests should be made in writing. Only the Residence Life Supervisor may report problems to the maintenance department. For emergency requests, Residents should contact the Residence Hall Supervisor via telephone.

## **PARKING**

Residents must obtain a parking permit from the Office of Security and Public Safety to be able to park on campus. Residents must park in their designated parking areas, adjacent to each residence hall. Residents should not park in the "reserved" parking spot or visitor parking, at any time.

## **MEAL PLANS AND DINING SERVICES**

All residents are required to purchase a meal plan. Students must show their student ID card in the Dining Hall in order to use their meal plan. Guests can purchase meals in the cafeteria. Students are not allowed to purchase guest meals using their personal student meal plan.

### Dining Hall Schedule

Monday-Friday –	Saturday –	Sunday –
Breakfast: 7:15 AM – 9:00 AM	Lunch: 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Lunch: 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Lunch: 11:00 AM – 1:15 PM	Dinner: 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM	
Dinner: 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM		

## **PROXIMITY CARDS, STUDENT IDS AND ROOM KEYS**

All residents will be issued a proximity card to access the residence hall, a room key, and a student ID,

upon check-in. It is the responsibility of each resident to maintain the security of their proximity card, room key and student ID.

Student IDs should be carried by residents at all times. A student ID is required to use the meal plan in the dining hall, check out library books, and for identification if requested by a College administrator, security officer, or employee. Use of another student's ID card is strictly prohibited and can result in disciplinary action.

For the safety of all residents, lost proximity cards or rooms keys must be reported to the Residence Life Supervisor or Campus Security immediately. The following charges apply to lost items: Room Key - \$25; Proximity Card - \$10; Student ID - \$10.

## **LAUNDRY FACILITIES**

Laundry machines are available in each residence hall for the resident's clothing only. Students must comply with the hours the laundry rooms are open and must remove clothes from the washer and dryer as soon as they are finished so that the machines can be utilized by other residents. Clothes left in the laundry room may be stolen or misplaced. Do not remove another resident's clothes from a washer or dryer, unless you have permission from the Residence Life Supervisor. Do not wash or dry clothes with metal buttons or buckles, tennis shoes, or items that will cause noise during quiet hours. For easy access, rules for the laundry room are posted on the wall.

Use of machines is a privilege. Be respectful to others and remove clothing when finished. If you frequently leave clothing in machines for extended periods of time, you may lose this privilege.

## **RESIDENCE LIFE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The following policies and procedures apply to any person who is on residential properties of the College. We ask that all residents communicate policies to their guests, as guests are expected to respect and adhere to all policies outlined below when visiting residential facilities. Residents will be held responsible for their own actions and that of invited guests. It will be assumed that all residents have read and understand these policies.

### **A. Roommates**

1. Roommates must be of the same-gendered persons. Roommate relationships must be platonic. Under no circumstance will students who are in a romantic relationship be permitted to live together.
2. Roommate conflicts. Whenever roommates are experiencing conflict, the Residence Life staff will do its utmost to assist them in resolving their problem. Except in extreme circumstances, the staff will first attempt to resolve the conflict by using a roommate contract. If, after a roommate mediation or two-week waiting period, the residents have not resolved their conflict, they may be permitted to change roommates, provided space is available. When roommates are unable to decide upon who will relocate, the staff will assist in making that determination. Generally, the person who is requesting the change in roommates will be the one to move. The requestor may not demand that his/her roommate be forced to move.
3. Room changes. In order to provide ample opportunities for roommates to adjust to their new environments, room changes will not be considered until the third full week of classes. If a resident desires a new roommate, he/she must locate a new roommate. Generally, the person



who is requesting the change in roommates will need to be the one to move. The requestor may not demand that his/her roommate be forced to move. Additionally, space must be available to accommodate the change in roommates. The Housing Office must approve all housing changes. Any resident making an unauthorized change will incur a fine and may be required to return to his/her original space. A resident who is making an authorized room change must properly check out with the Residence Life Supervisor. The resident must then conduct a room inventory of the new room upon receipt of a new key. Failure to properly check out / in may result in a fine.

4. A resident who requests and is granted a room or roommate change will be expected to relocate within 48 hours of the request being approved.
5. Residents are expected to maintain a healthy and productive relationship with their roommate. The College may choose to sever its housing contract with the resident if the resident does not meet the minimum standards of a reasonable roommate, as determined by the Residence Life Supervisor, Director of Student Life or Dean of Student Success. The College may take such action for reasons including, but not limited to:
  - a. The resident is unwilling to maintain a clean, uncluttered living environment.
  - b. The resident verbally abuses his/her roommate or is otherwise considered to be a possible threat to the physical and/or emotional well-being of the roommate.
  - c. The resident created a disruptive living environment.
  - d. The resident uses or consumes his/her roommate's personal possessions without permission.
  - e. The resident consistently demonstrates an inability to compromise.
  - f. The resident refuses to speak to, or in any other way refuses to communicate with, his/her roommate.
  - g. The resident smokes / drinks alcoholic beverages in violation of policy.
  - h. The resident's family is creating a disruptive living community.
  - i. Roommates are found to be in a romantic relationship with one another.

#### **B. Decorations and Furniture**

1. Each room has essential furnishings (beds, desks, chairs, etc). The furnishings must remain in the room at all times. Residents cannot remove College furnishings from their rooms without approval from the Residence Life Supervisor. Residents must report to the Residence Life Supervisor before moving into any room. During check-in, students must complete a Room Inventory Form, on which they list all damages, missing furniture, or any other irregularities in the room. The resident is responsible for recording any damage that has occurred prior to the move-in date. Students are responsible for all room damages upon move out.
2. Beds may not be stacked.
3. Students may bring additional furniture as space permits. Furniture may not be moved from common areas to private areas or to other common areas without permission from the Residence Life Supervisor.
4. Mattress protectors and bed sheets are not furnished. Students are required to supply mattress protectors, and they must be kept on the beds.

5. In an effort to preserve our housing facilities, the following items are strongly prohibited in campus housing:
  - Candles, incense, scented wax warmers (except those heated by a light bulb), oil lamps, wax sculptures, or any other device that uses an open flame.
  - Space heaters, sun lamps
  - Electric blankets
  - Crock pots, electric skillets, grills, griddle, hot oil popcorn poppers, hot plates, oven broilers, sandwich makers, cookers, steamers, toasters, toaster ovens, coffee pot with a hot pot (Keurig machines or other similar styles are permitted)
  - Power tools, nails and/or screws, molly bolts
  - Flammable liquids, explosives, fireworks
  - Paint ball guns, water guns, water balloons
  - Waterbed or water chair
  - Weights, dart boards
  - Pets, aquariums
  - Drugs or alcohol, drug or alcohol paraphernalia, hookahs
  - Weapons
  - Pornography
  - Any other dangerous, illegal, or offensive item not listed
6. Residents can have the following appliances: microwave up to 700 watts, small refrigerators up to 3.2 cu ft, Keurig style coffee pots. If you want to bring an appliance that is not on this list, please consult the Residence Life Supervisor.
7. Resident may use painter's tape or command hooks only to hang posters and pictures. Residents should read and follow all instructions related to the use and removal of these hanging materials. Residents will be charged for all damages to rooms, even if these damages occurred after use of an approved hanging material. Residents should not mount items to their doors, ceilings or windows. Any décor that damages paint or varnish is unacceptable. Damage will be charged to the occupants in the room.
8. Residents cannot attach anything to the ceiling or tamper with ceiling tiles. Damages to ceiling tiles will be charged to the occupants in the room.
9. Residents should not hang anything in the windows. For safety reasons, blinds should be lowered and closed when occupants are not in the room and at night.
10. Items that may be viewed as racist, sexist, bigoted, or in any way offensive are prohibited in housing. Any resident who decorates their room with such items or places such items in public spaces, hallways, or common areas may lose the right to reside in campus housing. The definition of racist, sexist, bigoted, or in any way offensive will be deemed by the Director of Student Life.
11. Residents cannot paint their room. If a student paints the room, they will be charged the cost of repainting the room. All rooms are painted by WCJC on an as-needed basis during the summer term. If a room has places where paint is missing, it should be noted on the Room Inventory Form.

12. Light bulbs must not be removed from rooms or common areas. Installation of dimmer switches in rooms is prohibited. If you have a burned out light bulb, submit a report the Residence Life Supervisor.

### **C. Cleaning Responsibilities**

1. Residents are expected to keep their rooms reasonably cleaned, this includes the bathroom area.
2. The responsibility for maintaining a clean, shared bathroom rests with all residents who use the bathroom. When a shared bathroom is left in an unclean state, the responsibility will fall on all residents who use that bathroom. Upon move out, if the bathroom is left in an unclean state, all students using that bathroom will incur a fine.
3. Trash should be placed in the designated trash cans. Trash and dirt should not be swept into the hallway.
4. Prior to leaving for holidays or campus closures, all trash should be removed from the rooms and refrigerators cleaned out.
5. Food should not be disposed of in sinks, water fountains or commodes. Plumbing repair bills will be charged to the residents in the room or to all residents in the hall if food is found in the lines.
6. Student rooms will be inspected randomly for cleanliness and safety. Residents of rooms that fail inspection will be given 24-hours to resolve the issue identified. After 24 hours, a disciplinary infraction will be assessed for the responsible residents in the room. After the first infraction, the residents will have an additional 24 hours to resolve the issue. Failure to resolve the issue after the 24 hour time frame will result in disciplinary action.

### **D. Pets**

1. Pets are not allowed in campus housing.
2. Emotional Support Animal – Subject to the prior approval of the Office of Counseling and Disability Services and the Office of the Dean of Student Success, WCJC is committed to providing a supportive environment for students with disabilities. This includes full compliance with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Fair Housing Act (FHA). Under FHA, a person with a disability may keep an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in the individual's dwelling when there is an established need for the therapeutic nature of the animal that is connected to the individual's disability. An ESA provides emotional support to the person who has a disability-related need for such support. An ESA is indicated as necessary for an individual with a disability by an appropriate and relevant healthcare professional. Residents need to work with the Office of Counseling and Disability Services to start the process to have an ESA approved for Campus Housing. Emotional Support Animals cannot be brought to the residence halls until the accommodation has been officially granted by the Office of Counseling and Disability Services and all paperwork is complete.

### **E. Fire Safety**

1. Safety Equipment – The misuse of fire alarms, tampering with fire equipment, or blocking evacuation routes or exits is prohibited.

- a. Residents must not attach items to or hang items from sprinkler heads.
    - b. Smoke detectors must not be tampered with and batteries must not be removed.
    - c. Fire alarms and fire extinguishers must not be set off or used except in emergencies. If a fire extinguisher is discharged for any reason other than an emergency, damages will be charged to the student and disciplinary action will be taken.
    - d. A fee will be assessed to repair fire equipment or to reactivate a smoke detector.
  2. Power Strips and Surge Protectors
    - a. Power strips and surge protectors must be approved by a national testing agency (Underwriters Laboratory or Factory Mutual).
    - b. Do not plug a power strip or surge protector into another power strip/surge protector.
    - c. There should not be more than one power strip/surge protector plugged into a dual electrical outlet.
    - d. Use only power strips/surge protectors that have a built-in breaker. These units are designed to trip the breaker if the strip is overloaded or there is a surge of electricity.
  3. Cooking – Due to the possible fire hazard, residents are not permitted to use any cooking equipment in their rooms other than a microwave (less than 700 watts).
- F. **Other Safety Measures** – Responsibility for the security of personal items rests with each resident. If suspicious behavior occurs, residents should report it to the Residence Life Supervisor or Campus Security immediately. The College is not responsible for storing valuables or for replacing stolen items. Personal property insurance is recommended.

The College reserves the right to inspect residence hall rooms, refrigerators, safes, suitcases, backpacks, etc, as well as, vehicles parking in the college parking lots. Failure to comply with a directive for any onsite inspection will result in referral for disciplinary action.

1. Windows – Residents should not open windows, unless in the case of an emergency.
  - a. For safety reasons, blinds should remain down and closed when the room is vacant and in the evening hours.
  - b. Residents should not exit the room via the window, unless in the case of an emergency.
  - c. Throwing rocks or other items at windows is prohibited.
2. Doors – Doors must not be tampered with in any way and must be kept closed and locked at all times. Doors should not be propped open. Locks cannot be removed and additional locks cannot be added to doors.
3. Proximity Cards – All residents are issued a proximity card to be able to access the residence hall. Jeopardizing the security of the residence halls by giving the proximity card to someone outside of the hall is a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action and possible removal from the residence hall.
4. Room Safes – Each room is equipped with a lockable safe for each student residing in the room. Each safe is programmable by the student and is intended for storage of student valuables and personal property, including concealed carry handguns. The College maintains access to each safe. Students are responsible for the items left in the safe. Storing items for other students, guests, and non-students is strongly discouraged. Each safe is attached to a specific location in a residence hall room. Moving a safe or rendering a safe unusable will result in a \$200 fine.

5. Blocking Entrances or Exits – Residents may not block or obstruct entries, exits or corridors so that an individual is intentionally prohibited from passage.
  6. Roofs/Attics – Residents may not, at any time, for any reason, be on any housing facility roof or in the attic or crawl space.
  7. Illness – Residents should report illness to the Residence Life Supervisor.
- G. Building Evacuations and Campus Closures** – In the event of a building-wide emergency or evacuation, all residents are expected to exit the facility promptly and appropriately. Such emergencies will be signified by a text alert through the Campus emergency notification system, an emergency alarm or verbal instructions from the Residence Life Staff or designee, College or City official. Any person who impedes another's safe evacuation will be subject to severe disciplinary action.
1. All residents are required to sign up for the campus emergency alert system – RAVE. The instructions for RAVE will be sent to all students via WCJC email.
  2. In case of campus closure, students are encouraged to make prior arrangements for transportation to leave campus. No student can remain on campus if the campus is closed due to an emergency situation.
  3. All students are required to have an emergency contact on file with the Housing Office and designated locations that they will go in case of campus closure or evacuation.
- H. Weapons** –
1. Handguns – Per WCJC policy on Campus Carry, an individual who possesses a valid License to Carry (LTC) may carry a concealed handgun on or about their person on WCJC campuses and in buildings, except in designated Exclusion Zones, notated with signage. Handguns must be carried in a retention holster that covers the trigger. It is the responsibility of the individual who has a valid LTC to conceal any handgun so that it is not partially or wholly visible to another person.
- In compliance with Texas Penal Code, Section 46.035(a-1), a LTC holder may not carry a partially or wholly visible firearm on campus premises or on any college driveway, street, walkway, sidewalk, parking lot, parking garage or other parking area.
- The above information is a summary of WCJC policy on Campus Carry. Students are strongly encouraged to review the full regulation for detailed information regarding concealed firearms on WCJC property.
- A LTC holder who chooses to carry a handgun into the WCJC residence hall must adhere to all aspects of WCJC policy on Campus Carry and the Texas Penal Code. An LTC holder must use the safe provided in the residence hall to secure their handgun.
2. Knives – Per Texas Penal Code, Section 46.03, illegal knives are prohibited in the residence halls. An "illegal knife" is defined as (a) knife with a blade over five and one-half inches; (b) hand instrument designed to cut or stab another by being thrown; (c) dagger, including but not limited to a dirk, stiletto, and poniard; (d) bowie knife; (e) sword; or (f) spear.
  3. Other Prohibited Items – WCJC prohibits the possession of martial arts weapons, bows, arrows,

crossbows, BB guns, paintball guns, air rifles, water guns, pellet guns, CO2 guns, Tasers, sling shots, brass knuckles, explosives, or any other weapons that are potentially dangerous or hazardous in campus housing.

- I. **Alcohol** – Excessive consumption of alcohol diminishes a person’s ability to think reasonably and to make sound decisions. If you feel that you have a problem with excessive alcohol consumption, please make time to meet with one of our campus counselors to learn about resources and services available to you.
  - 1. The possession, consumption, or distribution of alcoholic beverages, in any form, is prohibited on the WCJC campuses and in campus housing.
  - 2. It is illegal to consume or possess alcohol if under the age of 21, on or off campus.
  - 3. Drunk and/or disorderly conduct in private or public by any resident will be considered cause for referral to the Dean of Student Success.
  - 4. The display of posters, banners, signs, etc. advertising alcohol is prohibited in the Residence Halls.
  - 5. Alcoholic beverage containers (empty or otherwise), shot glasses, or other alcohol branded materials cannot be used to decorate residence hall rooms.
- J. **Drugs and Drug Paraphernalia** – WCJC supports a Zero Tolerance Policy for the possession, use, sale or distribution of narcotics, drugs, and related paraphernalia on campus and in the residence halls. Random room inspections by authorized staff, accompanied by independent contractors with canine units may be conducted to enforce the WCJC Zero Tolerance Policy. The College reserves the right to inspect vehicles and personal belongings, if needed.
  - 1. **Drugs** – Any student who possesses, participates in, is in the presence of, under the influence of, uses or sells, manufactures, or distributes illegal drugs and/or mood enhancing substances will be subject to disciplinary action (including possible dismissal from the residence halls and college) and/or criminal proceedings.
  - 2. **Prescription Drugs** – Residents should not possess or use any medications not specifically prescribed for him/her. Residents must maintain their prescribed medication in the container in which it is distributed by the pharmacy. These containers must be clearly marked with the resident’s name, prescribing physician’s name, medication, date, pharmacy and dosage. Residents are strongly encouraged to store their prescribed medications in a safe location, such as their room safe.
  - 3. **Drug odor and drug paraphernalia**, including bong, promotional materials, hookah, pipes, clips, residue, seeds, a smoked filled residence hall room, or any other items used in the preparation or consumption of illegal drugs and/or mood enhancing substances are not permitted on the WCJC Campus or in residence halls.
  - 4. **Other Substances** – Residents should not use any substance, including household items and other items not readily identified as drugs, for inhaling, injecting, consuming or otherwise using the substance in a manner inconsistent with the manufacturer’s intended use.
- K. **Tobacco Usage and Possession** – Tobacco usage is prohibited on campus, except for in parking lots, and is not permitted in the residence halls. This includes all forms of tobacco including cigarettes,

e-cigarettes, and chewing tobacco.

1. Per Texas Senate Bill 21, it is illegal for a person under the age of 21 to possess, purchase, consume, or accept a cigarette or tobacco product.

**L. Privacy and Quiet Hours**

1. 24-Hour Courtesy Hours – In order for a community atmosphere to flourish, respect of and courtesy for one another must be shown at all times. Residents should always comply with the requests from fellow residents and neighbors to be quieter.
2. Quiet Hours – Residents should assume that other residents are either studying or sleeping and conduct themselves in such a manner as not to disturb anyone. The reasonable right to quiet will take precedence over the right of noise. Quiet hours are scheduled from 9:00 PM to 8:00 AM daily. During all hours not specifically designated as “quiet hours”, residents shall respect other residents by refraining from making unacceptable levels of noise.
3. 24-Hour Quiet Hours – 24-Hour Quiet Hours will be in effect forty-eight hours prior to the first scheduled final examination each semester and will end at the start of the last scheduled final exam for that semester.

**M. Guests and Visitation** – A visitor or guest is defined as anyone not assigned to a residence hall.

1. Residents should meet their guest at the front door and escort them to the common areas. The resident is responsible for the actions and conduct of their guest(s) and must accompany their guest(s) at all times.
2. No overnight guests are allowed in the residence halls.
3. Male guests are not permitted to enter the private rooms and/or private hallways in the women’s hall. Female guests are not permitted to enter the private rooms and/or private hallways in the men’s hall.
4. Visitation hours are 10:00 AM-11:00 PM, daily.

**N. Room Entry**

1. Routine entry, which may occur on a regular basis without additional notification, is characterized by the following:
  - a. Necessary repairs by the Maintenance personnel.
  - b. Maintenance checks by Residence Life staff and contracted personnel.
  - c. Air control and safety checks by staff and contracted personnel.
  - d. Pest extermination.
  - e. Emergencies where there is reasonable cause to believe a threat exists to life, safety, health, or property.
  - f. Failure of resident to respond to a request to turn off an alarm, stereo, or other appliance or equipment that is disruptive to others.
  - g. Health and Safety checks are conducted by Residence Life staff in college housing throughout the year to maintain a safe living environment for all residents.

2. Entry for non-compliance with policy
  - a. With reasonable cause to believe there is non-compliance with College policy, the College reserves the right to inspect residence hall rooms. Failure to comply with a directive for any onsite inspection will result in referral for disciplinary action.

**O. Transportation Devices**

1. Bicycles, skates, skateboards, and hover boards may not be used in the residence halls.
2. Bicycles should be stored in the bike racks outside each residence hall.
3. Usage of skateboards, skates and hover boards are not permitted on campus.

**P. Solicitation and Signage**

1. Soliciting and Selling – Salespersons are not allowed, under any circumstances, to canvas the halls or solicit from room to room (this includes residents). If approached by a solicitor, immediately contact the Campus Security office or the Residence Life Supervisor.
2. Signs, Advertisements, Posters – Signs, advertisements and posters may not be posted in or about campus housing without prior approval of the Residence Life Supervisor or Director of Student Life. Displays or advertising from commercial establishments are not permitted in the residence halls. In addition, private parties cannot be advertised.

**Q. Student Conduct**

1. General Conduct and Principles – The quality of community life within campus housing is dependent upon an understanding of, and respect for, both individual residents and the community as a whole. The following general responsibilities and corresponding rights are intended to define minimal expectations to ensure the quality of life within campus housing. Failure to adhere to the general conduct and principles below may lead to disciplinary action.
  - a. Respect for others and their rights.
  - b. Respect for the property of individual, groups, and the College.
  - c. Refrain from activities, which interfere with the regular operations of the College.
  - d. Present identification upon request of all authorized College officials.
  - e. Behave in a manner consistent with Residence Life regulations and College policies.
  - f. Abstain from lewd, indecent, obscene, mischievous, or malicious behavior.
  - g. Abstain from over exaggerated public displays of affection in the public areas.
  - h. Maintain modest attire when in public areas of Campus housing.
  - i. Refraining from acts which are irritating and/or offensive to other residents.
  - j. Timely collection of mail and reading and understanding all information (email, newsletters, memorandums, etc) forwarded to him/her by staff and/or all other College officials.
  - k. Responding to directives of a College official.
2. Honor Code – Residents are expected to immediately report unsanctioned activities within



campus housing to a housing or College official. This is not only for the protection of our community, but also for the protection of each individual resident. Residents will suffer the consequences of their roommate, guest(s), or roommate's guest(s) behavior if they fail to report known unsanctioned activity occurring within their contracted area.

3. Good Neighbors – it is the expectation of the college that our student residents will refrain from any actions/behaviors that might in any way reflect poorly upon themselves, their roommate and the entire College community. Residents are expected to demonstrate the highest respect and regard for their neighbors.
4. Bullying and Harassment – Verbal abuse, threat against any individual, unwanted touching, stalking, teasing, pestering, gossip, harassing, pranking, profanity, hate speech or other form of annoyance to another or intent to misrepresent self to another are not acceptable.
5. Physical Assault – Physical assault and/or threat of physical assault to anyone on college property, including in the residence halls, or at a college sponsored activity is consider a major violation of WCJC policy.
6. Sexual Misconduct – Sexual harassment, which includes all forms of sexual assault and misconduct is considered a major violation of WCJC policy and is grounds for removal from the residence all and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.
7. Gambling – Gambling, as defined by Texas state law, is not permitted on campus housing property.
8. Dishonesty – Any form of dishonesty is a violation of personal integrity and, as such, is unworthy of our academic community.
9. Pranks – If a prank, whether by design or not, causes emotional/psychological injury, physical harm, and/or distress to another or others and/or results in damage or destruction of property, the residents responsible for this prank will receive appropriate disciplinary action.
10. Rumors/Gossip – The intention or sharing of gossip or rumors is always inappropriate. The college will not tolerate behavior that ultimately serves no purpose other than to hurt another or defame another's character. Any resident found to have participated in this behavior may be subject to disciplinary action.
11. Destruction of Property – Willful destruction of property, damage to buildings or furnishings, or defacing College property are prohibited.
12. Dining Room Conduct – While in the dining hall, residents must be dressed appropriately (shirt and shoes included), must bus own tables, obtain meals during advertised hours, and show a student ID upon request.
13. Mandatory Meetings – Students are expected to attend all mandatory residence hall meetings. Meetings are called by the Residence Life Supervisor, the Director of Student Life, the Dean of Student Success and/or other college administrators. Failure to attend a mandatory meeting, without prior approval, can result in disciplinary action.
14. Babysitting – Babysitting is not allowed in the residence halls. Children under the age of 18 are only allowed in the lobby for a period of one hour during visiting hours but not during quiet hours.

## **R. Judicial Process**

1. All alleged behavior or conduct, disruptive or at variance with housing regulations and standards, which involves students residing in Campus Housing, will be referred to the Residence Life Supervisor, Director of Campus Life, and/or Dean of Student Success. To expedite the disciplinary process, policy violations that occur near the end of the academic semester may result in fines assessed to the resident in lieu of judicial proceedings.
2. Violations that counter local, state, or federal laws are amongst the most severe. Such violations may result in referral to the local authorities, referral to the Dean of Student Success, eviction from campus housing, or academic suspension and/or expulsion.
3. Other severe violations to include actions that are malicious in nature; multiple violations of the same or similar policy; possession of drug paraphernalia; actions that compromise the physical safety of the emotional/psychological well-being of others; and minor or moderate offenses committed more than once. Such violations may result in referral to the Dean of Student Success or designee, eviction from campus housing, academic suspension and/or expulsion.
4. The judicial process may result in verbal warning, written warning, fines, community service, educational sanctions, revocation of privileges, reparations being required of the violator, a resident being required to move rooms, referral to the Dean of Student Success, eviction from housing, academic suspension and/or expulsion.
5. Residents found responsible for violating a housing policy may appeal the decision to the Dean of Student Success.

## **S. Missing Students**

Students missing for 24 hours should be reported immediately to both:

**Lindsey McPherson, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs**

Pioneer Student Center, Room 207 – Wharton Campus

979-532-6905 / [McPhersonL@wcjc.edu](mailto:McPhersonL@wcjc.edu)

**Jeremy Eder, Director of Security and Public Safety**

Security Building, Room 103 – Wharton Campus

979-532-6465 / [EderJ@wcjc.edu](mailto:EderJ@wcjc.edu)

Students residing in facilities on-campus are provided the option to identify a contact person upon applying to Wharton County Junior College. This information will remain confidential. The listed person(s) will only be contacted in the event of a missing person investigation. Only college officials with authorization will have access to this information. The parent or guardian, in addition to the listed contact person of any student under the age of 18, will be contacted within 24 hours of being determined missing. Within 24 hours of the determination of a missing student, local law enforcement will be notified by the Director, Public Safety/Chief of Police or their designee.

## **T. Contract Cancellation and Check Out Procedures**

1. Termination of Contract – The College may require a resident to terminate occupancy during a semester if the resident:

- a. Fails to abide by College and/or Residence Life policy.
- b. Is not a full-time student, enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours, or has not received permission from the Dean of Student Success to be enrolled in fewer hours.
- c. Is not enrolled as a student.
- d. Fails to pay housing, board, tuition, or other College fees.
- e. Fails to maintain room in proper condition or causes damage to housing property or space.
- f. Demonstrates an inability to maintain a respectful relationship with a roommate or other residents.
- g. Demonstrates an inability to maintain one's own safety and/or facilitate one's own personal care and/or is a threat to self or others due to a psychological, emotional, or medical condition. If staff members are unable to properly manage the resident's needs, the resident may be asked to vacate his/her housing unit.

Students who vacate or are dismissed from the residence halls for any reason during the semester will not receive a refund for room or board. Students who withdraw from the College prior to the first day of classes are eligible for a 100% refund of their residence hall and board fees. In order to receive a refund of \$200 (full residence hall deposit), a student must submit a request in writing to the Housing Office at least fifteen (15) days prior to the start of classes, a cancellation of residence hall reservation.

2. End-of-Semester – At the end of the semester, students must check-out of their room within 24 hours of the conclusion of their last exam. Students participating in graduation can make arrangements to remain in the residence hall until after the commencement ceremony with the Residence Life Supervisor.
3. It is the responsibility of the resident to properly checkout of campus housing at the end of the contract period or whenever moving out of campus housing. The resident must complete the appropriate paperwork and surrender keys, proximity card, and student ID in order to finalize checkout. Failure to checkout properly, completely, and on time will result in fines assessed to the resident.
4. Check out procedures:
  - Make an appointment with the Residence Life Supervisor to check-out.
  - Remove all belongings, clean the space (including the restroom), and pick up and dispose of all trash. Any items left behind or failure to clean room or remove trash will result in a fee assessed to the student's account.
  - Ensure all furniture is in room, including desk chair.
  - Complete Room Inventory Form.
  - Return the room key, proximity card, and student ID.
  - Accompany the Residence Life Supervisor during the room inspection.

Failure to check out properly will result in a fine applied to the student's account.

For non-returning residents, the \$200 deposit is refundable at the end of the semester upon written request of the student, when all monies owed by the student to all provisions of the housing contract have been satisfied. Any assessments left unpaid at the time the student leaves Wharton County Junior College will be deducted from the \$200 deposit. A student who vacates the residence hall at the end of term will have up to 30 days from the end of the

semester to request the return of the deposit. If not requested within this time period, the deposit will be forfeited to the college.

5. **Abandoned Property** – College staff is not responsible for any student property left in the building. Belongings owned by a resident and left in a residence hall room after the room has been vacated are considered abandoned property. Belongings will be considered abandoned if left for three (3) days after the resident has moved out of the room. Residence Life staff will make no attempt to contact the resident when belongings are found in a vacant room. If items are not claimed in three days, they will be disposed of.
6. **Room Damages and Cleaning** – Damages to rooms and/or room furnishings beyond the limits of reasonable wear and tear will be charged to the assigned resident(s). A Room Inventory Form will be provided at move-in for the resident's protection against improper damage charges upon move out. Failure to submit a completed and signed Room Inventory Form upon check in may result in the resident being charged for all existing room damages upon check out. Cleaning charges will be assessed on a case by case basis, dependent on the state of the room upon move out (cleaning charges range from \$25-\$100 per student). Damage and cleaning charges in excess of the student's deposit will result in a hold being placed on the student's record. Charges can include the cost for the removal of items left in the room, damages, failure to clean the room or remove trash, failure to return key/proximity card/student id, and/or missing furniture. All charges will be assessed to both room occupants (in the case of the bathroom, all students sharing a bathroom) unless otherwise noted in writing to the Residence Life Supervisor that one occupant is at fault for the damages and/or left items in room. Charges will be posted to the student's College account.

## DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Wharton County Junior College is committed to equal opportunity for all students, employees, and applicants without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, veteran status, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, political affiliation or belief, and for all beneficiaries of programs funded under Title I, WIOA on the basis of citizenship status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States, or his or her participation in WIOA Title I financially assisted work or program.

No person, including students, faculty, staff, part-time staff, and temporary workers, will be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination or harassment under any program or activity sponsored or conducted by Wharton County Junior College on the basis of the categories listed above.

All student inquiries concerning WCJC policies, compliance with applicable laws, statutes, and policies (such as Title VI, Title IX), and complaints should be directed to:

**Lindsey McPherson, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs**

[McPhersonL@wcjc.edu](mailto:McPhersonL@wcjc.edu), 979-532-6905

Physical: Pioneer Student Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

Mailing: 911 Boling Highway, Wharton, TX 77488