

# Mercer University Student Handbook

Last revision: **August 10, 2006**

The Mercer University Student Handbook sets forth the major policies and procedures affecting students. Because the University is a dynamic institution, it is inevitable that changes will occur, new policies and procedures will be adopted, and existing descriptions will be superseded. This handbook will be revised periodically, but changes between handbook revisions will take effect as they are duly adopted. Policies and Procedures in this edition supersede all former editions unless there is a statement in the text of this edition noting otherwise.

In addition to the Mercer University Student Handbook, the individual colleges and schools and/or campuses may develop supplemental operating guidelines and procedures. Links to the supplemental student handbooks are included in the Student Handbooks link located on the Provost's web page. The provisions of the University Student Handbook supersede collegiate and campus policies and procedures.

Wherever the University has chosen to adopt policies and principles similar to or incorporating portions of statements of American Association of University Professors or other external bodies, the University reserves the right to interpret such policies or principles for itself and is not bound by external interpretations.

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# Mercer University: A Brief History

Mercer University traces its origins back to Penfield, Georgia, where in 1833, following a bequest by Josiah Penfield's estate, Mercer Institute opened its doors as a manual labor school for boys. The school's assets consisted of a red clay farm and two hewn log cabins, valued at approximately \$1,935. Enrollment totaled 39 students and tuition was \$25 that first year. Board was provided at \$8 per month, and each student was required to supply his own bedding, candles, and furniture. In 1871, Mercer moved from Penfield to Macon, and two years later, the School of Law was established.

In 1959, Atlanta's Southern School of Pharmacy merged with Mercer. Atlanta Baptist College merged with the University in 1972, and today that campus, known as the Cecil B. Day Campus, is home to the Mercer Graduate and Professional Center, which encompasses the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, the Eugene W. Stetson School of Business and Economics, the Tift College of Education, the James and Carolyn McAfee School of Theology, the Georgia Baptist College of Nursing, and the College of Continuing and Professional Studies.

The Mercer School of Medicine, established to train primary care physicians for rural and underserved areas of Georgia, admitted its first students in 1982. Two professional schools, the Stetson School of Business and Economics and the School of Engineering, were formed in 1984 and 1985, respectively. The Tift College of Education and the McAfee School of Theology were formed in 1995 and 1996. The Georgia Baptist College of Nursing merged with Mercer in 2001. The College of Continuing and Professional Studies was formed in 2003. The Mercer Health Sciences Center, comprised of the schools of medicine, nursing, and pharmacy, was formed in 2003. During their Spring 2006 meeting, Mercer's Board of Trustees meeting unanimously approved the establishment of the eleventh school of the University. The new academic unit will be named the Townsend School of Music, in honor of Raymond Clay Townsend and Sophia Malin Townsend, the parents of Mercer Trustee Carolyn Townsend McAfee. The faculty of the Department of Music in the College of Liberal Arts will become the founding faculty of the new school on July 1, 2006.

Today, Mercer is the only University in the Southeast to feature such varied components as liberal arts, business and economics, engineering, medicine, pharmacy, law, education, nursing, theology, and continuing and professional studies.

# Mercer University: The Man Behind the Name

Jesse Mercer, the University's namesake, was born in Halifax County, North Carolina, in 1769. Jesse's father, Silas Mercer, had grown up as a devout member of the Church of England. When Silas was baptized into the membership of the historic Kiokee Baptist Church, near Augusta—the first Baptist Church in Georgia—the Mercer family's long association with Baptists began. Jesse was baptized by his father at the age of 17, and he was ordained a minister at 20. Jesse Mercer held a number of pastorates, did volunteer missionary work, preached to many congregations in remote areas, and was an advocate of education long before the founding of Mercer.

The founding of Mercer was due largely to Jesse Mercer's leadership and financial support, totaling approximately \$1,750. His contributions, along with the estate of Josiah Penfield, paved the way for Mercer to open its doors. Jesse Mercer was appointed to Mercer's first board of trustees in 1838.

Jesse Mercer married Mrs. Nancy Simons, the widow of Captain Abraham Simons, a successful Jewish businessman. She shared Jesse Mercer's liberality in spirit and letter. Upon her death, she bequeathed the wealth she had inherited from Simons to Jesse Mercer. Jesse Mercer died on September 6, 1841, and left the bulk of his estate, which amounted to \$40,000, a large sum for that day, to Mercer Institute. Jesse Mercer was buried at Penfield in Greene County, Georgia.

## Accreditation

Mercer University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award bachelor, master, and doctoral degrees. Inquires may be referred to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools:

1866 Southern Lane  
Decatur, GA 30033-4091  
(404) 679-4500  
(404) 679-4558 (fax)  
[www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org)

## Community of Respect

Mercer University strives to be a *Community of Respect* where everyone is held in mutual high regard. Because every human being is created in the image of God, all of us deserve to be treated with respect and civility. Our standards of conduct are based on values of mutual respect:

### ***Respect for Academic Integrity***

We value a community that encourages an academic atmosphere. We believe that honesty is important to learning.

### ***Respect for Other Persons***

We value the worth of every individual in the community, and we respect the dignity of each member in the community. We take responsibility for the consideration of the rights of others.

### ***Respect for the University Community***

We value showing respect for the rights and property of others. We take responsibility to act to maintain University property.

### ***Respect for Community Authority***

We acknowledge and value our privileges and rights as members of the University community. We take responsibility for acting to uphold community standards.

# University Regulations and Judicial Programs

## ***Student Rights***

A *Community of Respect* ensures certain rights of its members. The University values the following student's rights:

- A. Free inquiry, expression, and assembly as long as conducted in a manner that does not infringe upon the rights of others.
- B. Freedom from unreasonable invasion of the privacy of the individual's person, residence, papers, personal effects, and University records.
- C. Right to due process and equal protection under the University's judicial programs.
- D. Freedom to pursue educational goals; the right to free exchange of ideas, thoughts, and viewpoints.
- E. Freedom of association for students who meet the University's standards for participation in co-curricular and extracurricular activities.

## ***Judicial Programs***

Mercer University encourages its students to demonstrate respect for others as mature men and women. The University invites students to participate in the formulation of behavioral policies and to share in the responsibility for judicial decisions. The University retains the ultimate authority for setting behavioral standards and judicial procedures. These standards and procedures have been established to protect the University's educational purpose, to foster a sense of responsibility to the community, to provide for orderly conduct of its activities, to protect the members of the University from disrespect, and to safeguard the interest of the University community.

The judicial procedures used by the University are considered part of its educational process and are based on a philosophy of peer education and evaluation. Hearings and appeal proceedings conducted as part of this process are not courts of law and they are not subject to many of the rules of civil or criminal hearings.

Students are expected to abide by all federal, state, and local laws. Behavior that violates external laws may also adversely affect our University community and may lead to disciplinary actions by the University regardless of the outcome of external legal proceedings. Disciplinary action at the University will normally proceed without regard to the status of any civil or criminal proceeding. The information that follows is intended to communicate the rights, responsibilities, and values of students who voluntarily join the Mercer community.

## ***Alcohol and Other Drug Policies at Mercer University***

Mercer University shares the widespread national concern with the serious threat to health, safety, and welfare posed by the unlawful use of drugs and the abuse of alcohol, especially on college and university campuses. Excessive use of alcohol and illegal drugs can cause serious health problems, and it can negatively affect the success of students in the educational and social areas of university life. For this reason, the University is adamantly opposed to alcohol and drug abuse, and the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of drugs by members of the University community. Mercer University strictly prohibits such activities. The University conducts educational programs designed to lead its students into an understanding of the problems associated with drug and alcohol abuse and to enable them to make responsible choices on personal and social levels.

The University's policies concerning drug and alcohol use are found later in this section under the heading, "Respect for Community Authority." In addition to abiding by the regulations prescribed by *The Student Handbook*, students are also expected to abide by all local, state, and Federal laws pertaining to drug and alcohol use. Violations of such laws, whether they occur on or off campus, are subject to internal University

investigation, review, and action. For more information about Mercer University's policy concerning drugs and alcohol, refer to the section entitled "Drug-Free Workplace and Campus Program."

### ***Off-Campus Behavior***

The University and its members are subject to all local, state, and federal laws and statutes. Alleged violations of local laws and statutes, which occur on or off campus, are subject to internal University investigation, review, and action, in addition to any action by proper civil authorities. Each student is individually responsible for being informed of the law. Ignorance of federal, state, or local laws will not be accepted as an excuse for prohibited behaviors.

All students residing on or off campus are expected to comply with university regulations set forth in *The Student Handbook*. Alleged violations of university regulations that occur on or off campus may be investigated and appropriate action taken without regard to the status of any civil or criminal proceeding.

### ***Formulation of Regulations and Code of Conduct***

Any student, faculty member, or administrator may initiate any revision of or addition to the University standards of conduct. Recommendations should be submitted to the senior student affairs officer who in consultation with appropriate parties shall ensure discussion of the proposed change. When all parties have had an opportunity to comment on the proposal, it will be presented to the Executive Vice President and General Counsel.

### ***Violations of Values of a Community of Respect***

The following are examples of inappropriate behaviors that violate the values of a *Community of Respect*:

#### **A. Respect for Academic Integrity**

1. **Academic Dishonesty:** Mercer recognizes honesty and integrity as being necessary to the academic function of the University.

#### **B. Respect for Other Persons**

1. **Disorderly Conduct:** Any action of a student, groups of students, or organization that can reasonably be expected to disturb the academic pursuits or infringe upon the privacy, rights, privileges, health or safety of students, or organizations is prohibited.
2. **Harassment or Verbal Assault:** The attempt of a student, group of students, or organization to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive situation, or to subject a person to unwanted attention is prohibited.
3. **Sexual Assault:** Any sexual act directed against another person by a student, group of students, or organization using force or threat of force or where the victim is incapable of giving consent.
4. **Hazing:** The University upholds the position of hazing adopted by the Association of Fraternity Advisors (AFA). Mercer defines hazing as any activity or situation intentionally or unintentionally created, with or without consent, whether on or off campus, that endangers the mental or physical health of the participants; that produces physical discomfort; that subjects the individual to embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule; that creates excessive fatigue, physical, or psychological shocks to the individual, which involves quests, treasure/scavenger hunts, stunts, morally degrading or humiliating games and activities; that involves late or early work sessions; or any activity which is not consistent with the laws, rituals, and/or other policies of the organization or the regulation and policies of the University. Any individual member or members of the organization participating in hazing activities will forfeit the organization's campus privileges, including its rights to exist as an

organization. Hazing activities may include one or more of the following, but are not limited to:

- a. Actions that recklessly or intentionally endanger the physical and mental health or safety of students;
  - b. Encouraged consumption of any food, drink, drug, or any other substance;
  - c. Participation in physical activities, such as calisthenics, exercises, or so-called games;
  - d. Exposure to the weather;
  - e. Fatigue resulting from sleep deprivation, physical activities through late night or early morning programs, physical activities, or exercises;
  - f. Assignment of activities that would be illegal or unlawful, or might be morally offensive to the individual;
  - g. Physical brutality, including paddling, striking with fists, open hands or objects, and branding;
  - h. Kidnapping, transportation, or stranding of individuals (e.g., "road trips");
  - i. Verbal abuse, including: "Line-ups" and berating of individuals;
  - j. Conduct that could adversely affect the dignity of the individual, including wearing of apparel that conspicuous; or extraordinary, carrying items such as paddles, canes, etc. and the performance of public stunts and activities;
  - k. Tasks of servitude, including errands and clean-up activities for active members, alumni, or any other Mercer student;
  - l. Denial of sufficient time to study;
  - m. Nudity or lewd behavior;
  - n. Late or early activities that interfere with academic activities or requirements;
  - o. Any activity not consistent with the policies of the University.
5. **Conduct Unbecoming:** Any conduct by a student, group of students, or student organization that is determined to be potentially detrimental to the University's reputation, violates Mercer's *Community of Respect*, or otherwise violates the rights of other individuals, groups, or organizations, both on or off campus, shall be prohibited. (This provision includes the display of offensive materials, engaging in obscene or lewd conduct, and participation in prank-like activities that may potentially create health/safety hazards for others and/or result in the damage or defacement of University property.)
6. **Physical Assault/Endangerment:** Intentionally or recklessly endangering or causing physical harm (including any form of fighting) to any person within the Mercer and/or the surrounding community or at University-sponsored activity is prohibited.
7. **Cruelty to Animals:** Intentionally or recklessly causing physical abuse or any form of suffering to animals within the Mercer and/or the surrounding community or at University-sponsored activities is prohibited.

### C. Respect for the University Community

1. **Damage to Property:** Malicious or unwarranted destruction of property by a student, group of students, or organization that is owned or operated by the University, its student organizations, faculty, staff, or the surrounding community and its individual residents is prohibited. Defacing of property (whether temporary or permanent) such as buildings, streets, sidewalks, roofs, and grass is prohibited.
2. **Disorderly Assembly:** Assembly for the purpose of creating a riot or engaging in riotous, destructive, or disorderly behavior interfering with the normal operation of the University or community is prohibited.
3. **Refusal to Vacate:** The refusal to vacate a building, sidewalk, driveway, or private facility being used by the University for student or department-sponsored activity when directed to do so by an authorized officer of the University.
4. **Theft or Possession of Stolen Property:** Unauthorized taking, attempted taking, or possession of items by a student, group of students, or organization of items belonging to an individual, the University, student organization, or the surrounding community is prohibited (includes the removal of books from the library without proper checkout procedures).

5. **Fireworks:** The possession or use of fireworks on University property is forbidden. Fireworks are defined as any substance prepared for producing a visible or audible effect by combustion, explosion, or detonation.
6. **Firearms or Weapons:** Dangerous weapons of any type are prohibited everywhere on campus (exceptions may be made for the Department of Military Science and Law Enforcement officers). Examples include (but are not limited to): BB guns, stun guns, air rifles, air pistols, paintball guns, bowie knives, dirks, daggers, slingshots, leaded canes, metal knife sharpeners, switchblade knives, blackjacks, metallic knuckles, razors and razor blades (except solely for personal shaving), and any sharp, pointed, or edged instruments, except instructional supplies, unaltered nail files and clips, and tools used solely for preparation of food, instruction, and maintenance. All weapons used for hunting must be stored at Mercer Police.
7. **Unauthorized Visitation—Residential Facilities:** No unauthorized student, student groups, or organization shall enter, attempt to enter, or remain in restricted areas of residence halls after visitation hours.
8. **Unauthorized Visitation—Fraternity/Sorority Houses:** No unauthorized student, group of students, or organization shall enter or attempt to enter or remain in restricted areas of Greek houses after open house hours.
9. **Solicitation/Fundraising:** The solicitation of sales, services, memberships, or gifts on campus without the permission of the Office of Student Life/Affairs is prohibited.
10. **Advertising:** Origination, circulation, or display of any media that contain matter that violates or is contrary to University policies or community values is prohibited.
11. **False Alarms and Fire Safety:** The campus alarm system is critical to the protection of the lives and property of students. No student, group of students, or organization shall make, or cause to be made, a false public alarm. Creating a false fire alarm is a serious offense and may result in suspension from the University. No one shall set or cause to be set any authorized fire in or on University property. All occupants of a campus building must leave the building whenever the public-alarm sounds.
12. **Unauthorized Entry or Use of Facilities:** No student, group of students, or organization shall make or attempt to make unauthorized use of any University building, office, property, or other facility. Upon appropriate notice by University officials, authorization for the use of University facilities and property may be withdrawn or otherwise restricted. Examples include, but are not limited to use of electric carts, being on top of buildings, including residential facilities, having lobby/lounge furniture in personal residence rooms.
13. **Campus Elections and Referendums:** No student shall cast, or attempt to cast, more than one ballot in any campus election or referendum.

#### D. Respect for Community Authority

1. **Possession and/or Consumption of Alcohol:** The possession or consumption of alcohol or the possession of alcoholic beverage containers (either full or empty) is prohibited on campus and at University-sponsored events. Public intoxication, consumption, display, or promotion of alcoholic liquors, wines, or beer on campus is prohibited. No student, group of students, or organization shall furnish or cause to be furnished any alcoholic beverage to any person on campus. Driving under the influence of alcohol is prohibited. Alcohol abuse shall be defined as the use of alcohol that results in medical consequences, such as passing out, vomiting, and/or physical abuse, harassment, failure to comply with University officials, property damage, activities that pose a risk to a student's health or wellbeing, and other serious violations of the Student Code of Conduct. Repeated alcohol violations by the same individual may also be considered by the judicial process as a sign of alcohol abuse.
2. **Possession and/or Use of Illegal Drugs and Paraphernalia:** The University prohibits the use or possession of illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia. Students found to be involved in possession, use, distribution, or transportation of illegal drugs and/or paraphernalia, on or off campus, will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from the University. A student's parents may also be notified. Disorderly conduct resulting from drug use will be grounds for such sanctions as the University judicial process may determine. University physicians, counselors, and ministers are available to students who wish to

discuss in confidence matters concerning drug use. In all such cases not contained herein, the laws of the State of Georgia and the United States should be followed.

3. **Gambling:** Games of chance are not allowed. Accordingly, gambling is not permitted on campus.
4. **Tampering with or Damaging Fire Safety Equipment:** Tampering with or damage to fire safety equipment belonging to a student, student organization, the University, or the surrounding community is prohibited and is a serious offense that may result in dismissal from the University.
5. **Unsanitary or Unsafe Facilities:** Failure to maintain a student organization's facilities or property or surrounding property so as to prevent a potential danger to the health and safety of members of the University community is prohibited.
6. **Failure to Comply:** Students, groups of students, and organizations are expected to comply with the direction of University officials acting in the performance of their duties.
7. **Failure to Possess/Present Student Identification:** Students are required to carry their Mercer identification cards and upon request of authorized University personnel, including residence hall, library staff members, and Mercer Police, students must present their Bear Cards (I.D.). The University prohibits students from allowing anyone else to use their identification card as a key card to gain entry into the University facilities.
8. **Assisting and/or Condoning Violations:** Presence when and where a violation of the Code of Conduct is occurring and failing to notify campus authorities of the violation shall subject a student to judicial action. Students who knowingly act in concert to violate University regulations may be held jointly responsible for such violations. Students are responsible for the conduct of their guests on or in University property and at functions sponsored by the University or any student organization.
9. **Organization's Shared Responsibility:** Student organizations will be held responsible for the behavior of their members, be they current students, alumni, or guests when their actions evolve from or are in any way related to their association with or activities of the organization. Student organization members who act in concert to violate University or state regulations may be given joint responsibility for such violations. Student organizations that condone or encourage behavior that violates University or state regulations, may be given joint responsibility for such violations.
10. **Shared Responsibility at Social Functions:** A social function is any gathering of members or persons affiliated with an organization that an observer would associate with the organization for any purpose other than regular business meetings. The organization is expected to maintain and secure appropriate standards on the part of its members and guests. As elected leaders the organization's officers are responsible for ensuring the appropriate conduct of all present at the function and are responsible for any incidents or events that occur directly or indirectly as the result of the event.
11. **Contempt and/or Disregard for Judicial Procedures:** Students, groups of students, and organizations shall fully comply with instructions of all components of the University judicial process formed to hear violations of standards of conduct. No one shall cause, attempt to cause, or coerce a student or organization member to give false information. No one shall engage in conduct that disrupts the proceedings of these bodies or lessens their authority or dignity or otherwise obstructs justice on campus.
12. **Forgery or Furnishing False Information:** Students and organizations shall complete University records honestly. Neither shall alter nor cause to be altered any records, forms, or documents used by the University, nor shall knowingly use such document. Neither shall hinder nor mislead, or attempt to hinder or mislead, a University official in the performance of his/her duty by providing false or misleading information.
13. **Violation of Published University Regulations:** Any violation of University regulations or policies is prohibited and may be adjudicated through Mercer University's judicial program.

# Student Academic Responsibilities

## *Protocol for Electronic Submission of Coursework*

Students bear sole responsibility for ensuring that papers or assignments submitted electronically to a **professor** are received in a timely manner and **in the electronic format(s) specified by the professor**. Students are therefore obliged to have their e-mail client issue a receipt verifying that the document has been received. Students are also strongly advised to retain a copy of the dated submission on a separate disk. Faculty members are encouraged, but not required, to acknowledge receipt of the assignment.

## *Protocol for Use of Cell Phones and Pagers*

Out of courtesy for all those participating in the learning experience, **all** cell phones and pagers must **be turned off** before entering any classroom, lab, or formal academic or performance event.

# Student Academic Grievance Policy

Students have the right to bring grievances against a faculty member or an administrator concerning academic matters. Such matters may include, but are not limited to failure to abide by requirements described in the course syllabus, arbitrary awarding of grades, discrimination based on age, gender, religion, race, marital status, national origin or disability.

FOR GRIEVANCES OF ANY KIND, students are required to initiate appeals with the appropriate faculty member **NO LATER THAN 30 DAYS FROM THE COMPLETION OF THE TERM IN WHICH THE COURSE WAS OFFERED**. Appeals received after THIS period will not be honored.

If a student has a complaint against a faculty member, the student should first attempt to resolve the complaint by an informal meeting with the faculty member involved.

If this is not satisfactory, or if the student believes that he or she cannot discuss the complaint with the instructor, the following protocol should be followed:

1. The student should meet with the appropriate Department Chair or Program Director **AFTER SUBMITTING TO THIS PERSON A FORMAL WRITTEN ACCOUNT OF THE GRIEVANCE. THIS NARRATIVE MUST BE SUBMITTED NO LATER THAN 30 DAYS FROM THE DATE ON WHICH THE STUDENT WAS FORMALLY NOTIFIED OF THE INSTRUCTOR'S DECISION.**
2. If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved by the Department Chair or Program Director, the student should meet with the Associate Dean **AFTER SUBMITTING TO THE ASSOCIATE DEAN A FORMAL WRITTEN ACCOUNT OF THE GRIEVANCE. THIS NARRATIVE MUST BE SUBMITTED NO LATER THAN 30 DAYS FROM THE DATE ON WHICH THE STUDENT WAS FORMALLY NOTIFIED OF THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR'S OR PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S DECISION.**
3. If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved by the Associate Dean, the student should meet with the Provost **AFTER SUBMITTING TO THE PROVOST A FORMAL WRITTEN ACCOUNT OF THE GRIEVANCE. THIS NARRATIVE MUST BE SUBMITTED NO LATER THAN 30 DAYS FROM THE DATE ON WHICH THE STUDENT WAS FORMALLY NOTIFIED OF THE ASSOCIATE DEAN'S DECISION.**

If the student has a complaint against a Dean, s/he should schedule an appointment with THAT Dean in an attempt to resolve the matter. If the matter is not resolved OR IF THE STUDENT BELIEVES THAT S/HE CANNOT DISCUSS THE COMPLAINT WITH THAT DEAN, the student may appeal to the Provost. In all grievance procedures, the decision of the Provost is final.

# Student Nonacademic Grievance Process

## ***Policy Statement***

Mercer University recognizes the importance of providing an efficient procedure for a timely and fair resolution of a nonacademic grievance. Students are encouraged to use the process to resolve allegations concerning (1) an employee of the University, (2) administrative policies or procedures, (3) a University program, service, or activity.

## ***Procedure***

When a student wishes to file a formal complaint that is nonacademic in nature, s/he should follow these procedures:

1. The student should submit the complaint in writing to the university employee responsible for the action or event that forms the basis of the grievance. This statement should contain a brief statement of the grievance, the remedies sought, and a request for a meeting with the employee. The complaint should be submitted to the employee within 10 days of the action or event.
2. The employee respondent will meet with the student to discuss the complaint within 10 days of receipt of the written grievance. The employee respondent will reply in writing to the student with the results of the discussion at the meeting and plans for further action, if any, within 10 days of the meeting.
3. If a student is not satisfied with the results of the discussion and/or with the reply and wants the grievance to be considered further, the student may appeal in writing to the employee respondent's supervisor and request a meeting with the supervisor to discuss the situation and to seek a resolution. This appeal to the supervisor must begin within 10 days after the student receives the written reply from the employee responsible for the action or event that forms the basis of the grievance. A written reply indicating the results of the appeal and the discussion including further action, if any, to be taken will be sent to the student by the employee's supervisor within 10 days of the meeting between the student and the employee's supervisor.
4. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the appeal to the supervisor and wants the grievance to be considered further, the student will have an opportunity for further appeal as follows:
  - a. In the case of complaints concerning employees, policies, procedures, or programs of a nonacademic nature *within a specific college or school*, the student may appeal to the Dean with responsibility for the employee's unit and request a meeting in order to seek a resolution. This appeal must begin within 10 days after the employee's supervisor has completed consideration of the grievance and responded in writing to the student. A written reply from the Dean indicating the results of the meeting and including further action, if any, to be taken will be sent to the student within 10 days after consideration of the grievance.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Dean, the student may appeal in writing to the Provost with responsibility for the school or college and request a meeting. The appeal must begin within 10 days of the date the Dean has completed consideration of the grievance and responded in writing to the student. A written reply by the Provost indicating the results of the meeting and including further action, if any, to be taken will be sent to the student within 10 days after consideration of the grievance. The decision of the Provost with responsibility for the employee's unit will be the final University decision on the grievance.

- b. In the case of complaints concerning employees, policies, procedures, or programs of a nonacademic nature *outside of the administrative organization of a specific college or school*, the student may appeal to the Vice President with responsibility for the employee's unit and request a meeting in order to seek a resolution. This appeal must begin within 10 days after the employee's supervisor has completed consideration of the grievance and responded in writing to the student. A written reply from the Vice President indicating the

results of the meeting and including further action, if any, to be taken will be sent to the student within 10 days after consideration of the grievance. The decision of the Vice President with responsibility for the employee's unit will be the final University decision on the grievance.

The senior student affairs officer serves as a resource for students seeking assistance with grievance procedures.

## **Mental and Physical Health and Welfare of Students**

### ***Policy Statement on Health and Welfare of Students, Including Administrative Medical Withdrawal***

The mental and physical health of students can strongly affect their academic and social success at the University, as well as influencing the other members of the University community. Mercer University staffs counselors and medical personnel with qualified medical and mental health professionals who provide short-term health services to students seeking assistance. For some students, pre-existing conditions or severe stress during college may create a situation where the student must be referred out to community resources, which can give long-term, or in-patient care.

At times students may not be able to receive benefits from educational and/or health care services provided or may become a threat to themselves or to others in the University community. For the safety and protection of students and the total college community, a student may be administratively withdrawn from the University if it is determined that he or she is exhibiting behavior which could indicate a physical, mental, emotional, or psychological health condition that poses a significant danger or harm to the student, other persons or their property, or causes the student to interfere with the rights of other University community members or with the exercise of the functions of the University or its personnel. The senior student affairs officer and/or the Offices of the Deans is the University official designated to make a judgment about the need for an administrative medical withdrawal and to implement the procedures for the withdrawal of the student.

Once a student has been administratively withdrawn from the University, he or she must present clear evidence of the remediation of the difficulties before he or she is granted readmission to the University. This may include documentation from an appropriate physical or mental health professional about the treatment the student has received.

### ***Policy Statement on Assistance to Students Who Have Attempted Suicide or Who Exhibit Other Life-Threatening Behavior***

Mercer University attempts to assist students in resolving personal issues, as well as stresses brought on by the college experience. Among other offices, Mercer University maintains offices to provide counseling and psychotherapy for students who may manifest themselves in an attempt by a student to take his/her own life. It is the policy of the University to regard all attempted suicides as serious regardless of the specific degree of lethality involved in the attempt.

If a student attempts suicide or exhibits life-threatening behavior, the University's first priority is to attempt to ensure the student's safety and well-being. If it is known that a student is attempting suicide, Mercer Police should be notified and they will contact a mental health professional who will know the location of a hospital and attempt to render service as needed. In many cases, the student will need to be removed to a more appropriate setting. The professional may also contact the parents, if appropriate, and will interact with family members and/or significant others.

When a student attempts suicide, other people in the University community feel the effect and the University has an interest in protecting them from the emotional stress and crisis atmosphere that accompanies

attempted suicide. This could apply to fellow residents in the residence hall, instructors and fellow students in class, teammates and others who have significant contact with the student or who may feel threatened or extremely anxious as a result of a suicide or suicide attempt.

The University regards a suicide attempt as an indicator that the student may be so taxed beyond his or her psychological means that he or she is not stable enough to continue at the University at that time. The University will administratively withdraw a student who has attempted suicide or exhibits life-threatening behavior unless there is compelling evidence that the student is no longer at risk to himself or herself or to others, and that continuation at the University is in the student's best interest. Once a student has been administratively withdrawn, he or she will not be remitted until evidence is shown that indicates the student is ready to benefit from the experiences of an educational environment.

## Tobacco Use Policy

Mercer University is committed to the health and well-being of the members of its student body, faculty, and staff. The University not only has a vested interest in the vitality of its students and those who administer and operate the university's programs of education, research, and service, but also wishes to promote the advancement of health in general and the maintenance of a healthful environment. The University and its Medical, Nursing, and Pharmacy schools, moreover, have substantial commitments to health-related research and teaching.

The Surgeon General of the United States has determined that cigarette smoking is the largest preventable cause of illness and premature death in the United States; it is associated annually with the unnecessary deaths of thousands of Americans. Research findings now indicate that users of smokeless tobacco and non-smokers who are regularly exposed to tobacco smoke are also at increased risk.

In response to these considerations, the University has adopted as its goal that of achieving an environment as close to smoke-free as possible. The following guidelines are designed to achieve a relatively smoke-free environment on the Mercer campuses:

- Smoking is prohibited in all indoor locations. All buildings on all campuses are smoke-free.
- Smoking is prohibited within 15 feet of all building entrances, air intakes, and windows.
- Residence hall public spaces (lobbies, hallways, lounges, recreation areas, restrooms) and rooms are smoke-free.
- ***Use of smokeless tobacco products is prohibited in all university facilities, except residence halls.***

Violation of policies should be reported to Student Life for students and Human Resources for employees.

## Drug-Free Workplace and Campus

### ***Introduction and Purpose***

Mercer University shares the widespread national concern with the serious threat to health, safety, and welfare posed by the unlawful use of drugs and the abuse of alcohol, especially in the workplace and on college campuses. As a matter of University policy, growing out of the University's historic mission and character, and in keeping with applicable Federal and State laws, the University has adopted and is implementing the following program to provide a drug-free workplace and campus for all its students and employees and to prevent the illicit use of drugs and abuse of alcohol.

## ***Relationship to Other Policies***

This program sets forth the minimum standards of conduct and requirements with respect to drug and alcohol abuse for all students and employees of the University. Other policies and standards of conduct concerning drugs and alcohol are included in other student handbooks, the Personnel Manual, and other University documents. These remain in full force and effect. Additional policies in this area may also be developed, subject to University approval, provided they are either consistent with this Program or impose higher standards of additional requirements in furtherance of the purposes of this Program. In the case of faculty members, violation of the standards of conduct in this Program shall be considered "adequate cause" for termination of a faculty appointment. All actions taken and sanctions imposed under this program and related drug and alcohol policies shall be reviewed periodically to ensure consistent enforcement. Nothing in this program shall be interpreted to require the University to violate its obligations under other laws, including laws prohibiting discrimination against qualified handicapped individuals.

## ***University Sanctions and Procedures***

As a condition of employment or enrollment at Mercer, all employees and students must abide by these standards of conduct, and disciplinary sanctions will be imposed for violations. The sanctions that may be imposed are reprimand, probation, suspension, expulsion or termination of employment, and referral for prosecution. Ordinarily, the sanctions for drug-related violations will be suspension or termination of employment or enrollment. However, at the University's sole discretion, an employee or student may be permitted to continue in employment or enrollment if he or she satisfactorily participated in an approved rehabilitation program.

Nothing in this policy is intended to affect the procedural rights of students or employees (including faculty members) under existing judicial board, grievance, or review procedures. However, once the University has determined, after reasonable inquiry, that a violation of this policy has occurred, the employee or student may be subject to immediate suspension (without pay, in the case of an employee) pending the conclusion of such procedures. If no existing procedures are in place for an alleged violation by a particular student or employee, the University will adapt other review procedures to ensure the individual the opportunity for a fair review, including the right to be heard.

## ***State and Federal Legal Sanctions***

Under Georgia criminal statutes, the penalties for drug offenses depend on the nature of the offense, the drug involved, whether the offense is a first or subsequent offense, and in some cases, the amount of the drug involved. For example:

- Unlawful purchase or possession of any drug in Schedule I or Schedule II (includes cocaine, heroin, morphine, hallucinogens, etc.) carries a sentence of 2 to 15 years imprisonment for a first offense and 5 to 30 years for a subsequent offense.
- Unlawful manufacture, sale, or possession with intent to sell of those drugs carries a sentence of 5 to 30 years for a first offense. Subsequent offenses can result in life imprisonment.
- Unlawful purchase, possession, manufacture, or sale of marijuana carries a prison sentence of 1 to 10 years.

Drug trafficking (selling, manufacturing, or possessing large quantities of illegal drugs) carries minimum mandatory prison terms and fines under Georgia law. For example:

- Cocaine (28–200 grams): 10 years and \$200,000
- Morphine, opium, heroin (4–14 grams): 5 years and \$50,000
- Marijuana (50–2000 lbs.): 5 years and \$100,000

The mandatory sentences increase as the quantity increases.

Driving under the influence (DUI) of alcohol or drugs carries the following penalties:

- First conviction: Fine of no less than \$300 nor more than \$1000 and imprisonment for not less than 10 days nor more than 12 months
- Second conviction: Fine of \$600 to \$1000, prison for not less than 90 days
- Third or subsequent conviction: Fine of \$1000 to \$5000, prison for not less than 120 days

If DUI causes the death of another person, the prison sentence is from 2 to 15 years.

Georgia law prohibits furnishing alcoholic beverages to, and purchase and possession of alcoholic beverages by, any person under age 21. The sentence for a first conviction is 30 days imprisonment or \$300 fine or both. In addition to criminal penalties, anyone who furnishes alcohol to an underage person, knowing that such person will soon be driving, may become liable for injuries or damages caused by the underage drinking driver.

Numerous other sanctions exist for drug and alcohol-related offenses under Georgia law, including denial of student loans and grants, ineligibility to participate in home loan and other assistance programs, and denial or revocation of professional licenses.

Federal penalties and sanctions for illegal possession of a controlled substance include the following:

- First conviction: up to 1 year in prison, fine of \$1000 to \$100,000, or both
- Second conviction: at least 15 days and up to 2 years imprisonment, \$5000 to \$250,000 fine, or both
- After two drug convictions: at least 90 days and up to 3 years in prison, \$5000 to \$250,000 fine, or both

Special Federal sentencing provisions for possession of crack cocaine include a mandatory prison term of at least 5 years and up to 20 years, fine of up to \$250,000, or both, for a first conviction if amount of crack exceeds 5 grams, for a second conviction if the amount exceeds 3 grams, and for a third or subsequent conviction if the amount exceeds 1 gram.

Other Federal sanctions include forfeiture of property used to facilitate illegal possession if offense is punishable by more than one year in prison, forfeiture of vehicles and other conveyances used to transport or conceal controlled substances, civil fines, denial of Federal benefits including student loans, grants and contracts, ineligibility to receive or purchase firearms, and denial or revocation of certain Federal licenses and benefits (e.g. pilot licenses, public housing, etc.).

### ***Convictions for Drug-Related Offenses***

Any student or employee convicted of any drug-related criminal statute must notify the appropriate official, the senior student affairs officer (for students) or the Director of Human Resources (for employees), in writing, no later than 5 days after such conviction regardless of where the offense occurred. This is because under Federal and State laws, any student convicted of a drug-related felony offense must be denied all Federal and State assistance, including Pell grants and Georgia Tuition Equalization Grants; and because the University must notify Federal agencies of drug-related convictions of employees involved in work under a grant or contract. However, a criminal conviction shall not be necessary to find that a student or employee has violated these standards of conduct, and the University need not, and ordinarily will not, defer its own actions and sanctions pending the outcome of any criminal proceeding.

### ***Counseling, Treatment, and Rehabilitation***

Employees and students who wish information about counseling and treatment programs, either for personal substance abuse or for family members or other, may contact the Human Resources office (for employees) or the appropriate senior student affairs officer (for students).

## ***Review of Program***

In keeping with Federal Law, this Program shall be reviewed at least biannually to determine its effectiveness, to make changes where necessary, and to ensure that sanctions are consistently enforced.

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\* Including the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989, the Drug-Free Postsecondary Education Act of 1990 (Georgia), and related laws and regulations.

# Services for Students with Disabilities

Mercer University makes every effort to assist students with disabilities. All campuses and colleges/schools maintain facilities and make other accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about a specific college, school, or campus, please refer to its supplemental student handbook.

## Equal Opportunity Policy

Mercer University is committed to providing equal opportunity for all student applicants and enrolled students, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, as a matter of University policy and as required by applicable State and Federal laws such as Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Inquiries concerning this policy may be directed to the Equal Opportunity/ Affirmative Action Officer, located in the Human Resources office; to the senior student affairs officer; to the dean of the student's college or school; or to any member of the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Board (names, addresses and phone numbers of Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Board members are available in the Human Resources office and the Office of Student Life/Affairs).

Students who believe they have been subjected to discrimination in violation of this policy may use the University's Student Grievance Procedures for Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Complaints, a copy of which is available from any of the offices above.

## Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment

The University is committed to maintaining an environment in which the dignity and worth of all members of the institutional community are respected. Sexual harassment harms the environment the University seeks to maintain and is unequivocally prohibited. Moreover, sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and violates Federal laws, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Sexual harassment may involve the behavior of a person of either sex against a person of the opposite sex or same sex, when the behavior falls within the following definition.

### ***Definition***

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advance, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when:

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or status in a course, program, or activity; or
- submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for an academic, employment, or placement decision affecting the individual; or
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or educational experience or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for working or learning.

### ***Examples***

Examples of conduct prohibited by this policy include, but are not limited to:

- persistent, unwelcome flirtation, advances, or propositions of a sexual nature;

- repeated insults, jokes, anecdotes, or gestures that are commonly considered by people of a specific sex to be demeaning to that sex;
- repeated, unwelcome comments of a sexual nature about an individual's body or clothing or about sexual activity or speculations about previous sexual experience;
- unnecessary or unwelcome touching, such as patting, pinching, hugging, or repeated brushing against an individual's body;
- direct or implied threats that submission to or rejection of requests for sexual favors will affect decisions regarding such matters as an individual's employment, work assignments or status, salary, academic standing, grades, receipt of financial aid, or letters of recommendation; and
- unwarranted use of sexually suggestive materials.

A faculty member's choice of teaching techniques, selection of instructional materials, or other conduct through which the faculty member seeks to communicate with students in an instructional setting shall not be prohibited under this policy if the faculty member claims the conduct is legitimately related to the subject matter of the course unless the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Board finds that the faculty member's claim is clearly unreasonable.

### ***Counseling, Advice, and Informal Resolution***

In many instances, informal discussion and mediation can be useful in resolving perceived instances of sexual harassment. Problems are sometimes easier to resolve when an informal atmosphere encourages people to identify the difficulty, talk it out, and agree on how to deal with it.

Problems, questions, and grievances may be discussed with any member of the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Board identified in the Equal Opportunity Policy. The Associate Vice President of Human Resources should be advised of any concern brought to a member of the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Board. The Board Members and the Associate Vice President of Human Resources may be especially useful in advising and aiding a student's own efforts to resolve a problem. Such help may involve coaching the individual in preparation for a conversation with the person causing the problem or assisting the student in writing a letter to that person describing the offending behavior and requesting that it stop. In other cases, it may be necessary to arrange for a change in section assignment or for a re-evaluation of work submitted for a grade.

### ***Formal Grievance Procedures***

Any student who believes he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment may also file a formal complaint with any member of the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Board or the Associate Vice President of Human Resources, either initially or after having sought informal resolution as described above. The formal report will be taken by the Associate Vice President of Human Resources, signed by the complainant, and must describe the specific action(s) complained of. A complainant who wishes to pursue a formal complaint must be willing to be identified to the accused. The complaint will be investigated and resolved in accordance with the University's Grievance Procedures for Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Complaints.

## **International Student Policy**

For current legal information regarding status as an international student, please go to the following web site:

<http://www.mercer.edu/OIP/Handbook/legalinfo.htm>

The following information is available on the Web site.

## ***International Programs: Legal Information***

The following summary of U.S. immigration provides basic information about non-immigrant visa status. Please remember that it is the student's responsibility to know and follow the regulations that apply to his/her study, work, or stay in the U.S. Direct questions to either the ELI main office on the Atlanta campus at 678–547–6151, or the Office of International Programs on the Macon campus at 478–301–5964. Friends, faculty advisors, and others may be well intentioned in their advising on visa information, but they are not always dependable sources of information on crucial matters.

### ***Passport***

The passport is an international travel document issued to by each country's government. The U.S. government expects international students to keep a passport valid at all times. If the international student has less than six months remaining on the passport, he or she should request an extension. An international student advisor will provide, by request, a letter to affirm the international student's status. If the U.S. visa is still valid and a new passport is being issued, the international student should request the return of his/her expired passport. By keeping the passports together, the valid visa can be used for reentry to the United States. Otherwise the international student will need to apply for a new visa the next time he or she leaves the country.

### ***Visa***

This is a stamp or seal placed in the passport by a U.S. Consular officer abroad. The visa notes the purpose of the visit, the last date the international student can enter the United States, and how many entries he or she will be allowed. The visa is a permit to enter the United States. The visa does not indicate how long the international student will be permitted to stay, and a visa does not have to be valid in order to remain in the United States. A visa can be obtained ONLY at U.S. Consulates outside the United States. The exception to this is for individuals who have adjusted their status to H-1 while in the United States.

There are many different categories of visas. The type of visa is determined by the purpose of the visitor's entry into the U.S. Most of Mercer's international students are on F-1 student or J-1 exchange visitor visas.

### ***I-94 (Arrival/Departure Card)***

This small white card was issued by the immigration officer at the port-of-entry and stapled to the passport. It confirms that the international student was lawfully admitted to the U.S.

The I-94 shows how long he or she is permitted to stay in the United States. For F and J visa holders, "D/S" is noted instead of a specific date in the right corner. "D/S" stands for "duration of status" and operates in conjunction with the I-20 or IAP-66 (now form DS-2019). This means the international student is permitted to stay as long as he or she is maintaining a student status. (See section on 'maintaining a student status'.)

Other visa holders will have a specific date in the right corner. To remain past this time, the international student must file for an extension before the expiration date. The I-94 should not be confused with the visa.

### ***Definition of F Status***

An F-1 visa and F-1 student status may be granted to an individual "who is a foreign student qualified to pursue a full course of study" at an academic or language institution authorized to admit foreign students. When applying for an F-1 visa, the individual must prove to a U.S. consular official that he or she wishes to enter the U.S. temporarily and solely for the purpose of study. The applicant must have a permanent residence in a foreign country and have no intention of abandoning his or her home country. F-2 visa holders are dependents of F-1 students.

### ***Maintaining a Student Status***

After entering the U.S. in F-1 or J-1 status, the student must satisfy certain requirements to remain in status. He or she must:

1. keep his/her passport and I-20 (or IAP-66 - DS-2019) valid all at times; (Refer to the immigration counselor if an extension is needed for completion of studies)
2. attend the school to which he or she was authorized by United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS);
3. register for and complete a full-time course of study in the fall and spring semesters;
4. limit employment, both on campus and off, to a total of 20 hours per week while school is in session;
5. never work off-campus without written authorization from the International Student Advisor and/or the USCIS.

### ***A Full Course of Study***

A full-time course of study is defined at Mercer as 12 credit hours per semester for undergraduate and 9 credit hours for graduate students. Students enrolled in English Language studies are required to enroll in courses that include at least 20 clock hours in class or lab each week. Mercer Law School and Medical School students should contact the school directly for these requirements.

**Note:** Failing to maintain a student status can result in serious penalties! International students should see his/her international student advisor before dropping a class that would leave him/her with less than a full course of study.

### **Exceptions to the Full Course of Study Requirement:**

There are some situations in which F-1 students are considered to be maintaining status even if they are not registered full-time; for example: summer vacation, medical problems, teaching or research assistantships, etc. International students should direct all questions and concerns to his/her international student advisor.

### **When Dropping a Class:**

If an international student registers for a class but does not attend, or if s/he stops attending class without officially dropping, he or she is likely to receive an "F" in the class and lower his/her GPA. Legally, whether or not the student attends, the international student is financially responsible for classes not dropped. From the perspective of the University, a seat is reserved for each student within each class. There may be other students on a waiting list who are denied the opportunity to register, even though a registered student has no plans of attending or paying.

In other cases, a student may register and attend classes, but make no payment arrangements. This results in the student's account becoming delinquent and his/her records being placed on hold so that s/he is not eligible to register for more classes, receive transcripts, or graduate.

In order to prevent this from happening, Mercer University enforces the policy that the class schedules of students who do not make acceptable payment arrangements by the last day of drop/add, are subject to cancellation. Should a student seek and be granted reinstatement, s/he will be assessed a \$25 reinstatement fee and a \$25 late payment fee. Either full payment, an official third-party billing voucher, enrollment in a Mercer Payment Plan, or proof of sufficient approved financial aid will be required at the time of reinstatement.

### ***Employment Opportunities***

Students holding F-1 status have a number of opportunities for employment to supplement their classroom experience and personal funds. Although there are several options, it is critical that students have the appropriate form of work authorization and do not exceed the number of hours per week authorized. Students holding an F-1 visa are only permitted to work up to 20 hours per week during the academic year. For accurate information, call:

Ann Stewart at 678-547-6109 / [stewart\\_al@mercer.edu](mailto:stewart_al@mercer.edu) (Atlanta campus), or

Jim Kenaston at 478-301-5964 / [kenaston\\_jb@mercer.edu](mailto:kenaston_jb@mercer.edu) (Macon campus).

## ***Types of F-1 Student Employment Authorizations***

### **On-Campus Employment:**

Students maintaining F-1 status are permitted to work on the Mercer campus for a maximum of 20 hours per week during the academic year. During the summer and when school is not in session, students can work full time (not limited to 40 hours per week by the USCIS). To find out more about on-campus opportunities, visit Career Services, and Financial Aid.

### **Off-Campus Employment (Not Available to ELI Students):**

For an F-1 student to be eligible for off-campus employment, the student must have been continuously and lawfully enrolled in a USCIS approved institution for one academic year or nine months. The information below is a brief description of all the types of off-campus job descriptions. For more detailed information, international students should contact their international student advisor.

#### **Type 1: Curricular Practical Training (CPT):**

Participation in a cooperative education program, training for which students receive academic credit, or training which is required for their degree may be authorized as curricular practical training. Any student who works for one year or more in full-time curricular practical training is not eligible for optional practical training.

Working without work authorization or working too many hours results in loss of F-1 student status.

#### **Type 2: Optional Practical Training (OPT):**

Students holding F-1 status may apply for a total of 12 months of OPT. Even though a student may complete more than one degree, he or she is allowed only 12 months of optional practical training. Although most students will take 12 consecutive months of practical training, it is permitted to apply for a period or periods of less than 12 months. The training can only be authorized for the major field of study indicated on the current I-20.

#### **Type 3: Severe Economic Hardship:**

F-1 students are eligible to apply for off-campus employment based on severe economic hardship provided that:

1. they are in good standing and carrying a full course of study;
2. they can demonstrate unforeseen severe economic hardship;
3. employment opportunities on campus are unavailable or insufficient;
4. they have been in F-1 status for one academic year; and
5. acceptance of employment will not interfere with the student's carrying a full course of study.

To apply for Economic Hardship work authorization, international students should contact their international student advisor.

**Note:** J-1 students interested in off-campus work authorization should contact:

Ann Stewart at 678-547-6109 / [stewart\\_al@mercer.edu](mailto:stewart_al@mercer.edu) (Atlanta campus), or

Jim Kenaston at 478-301-5964 / [kenaston\\_jb@mercer.edu](mailto:kenaston_jb@mercer.edu) (Macon campus).

For information on H-1 visas or permanent residence, contact an immigration attorney.

# Immunization Policies

The “Mercer University Student Health Form” is required and must be signed by a physician or other health care provider, and stamped with the provider’s name and address. No other immunization forms or physician records will be accepted. Students are encouraged to keep a photocopy of this completed form for their personal records. The Student Health Form is a Mercer document and will not be forwarded to other institutions.

**All students** must provide a statement of immunization against Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR), giving the month and year of immunization. A statement of “up to date” is not sufficient. Two doses of Measles (Rubeola) vaccine are required. You must have been at least 12 months old when the first Measles dose was received. Previous diagnosis of disease is proof of immunity against Measles and Mumps (a physician’s statement is required) but not proof of Rubella. Students born before 1957 need proof of immunity to Rubella but not immunity to Rubeola or Mumps.

If a student is unable to provide dates of immunization to Measles, Mumps and Rubella, he or she may document immunity by blood test at the student’s expense. If this testing shows no immunity to Measles, Mumps, or Rubella, the student may register following documentation of the first dose of MMR, with the second to follow in 30 days, if required.

Tuberculosis screening (within the past year) is required of **all new students**. Students at risk for TB will be required to have a PPD skin test (Mantoux). The tine tuberculosis test is not acceptable. Students should be tested regardless of prior BCG vaccination. Any student with a positive skin test will be required to provide a report of a normal chest x-ray (done after the positive PPD) to be eligible to register. A physician should evaluate individuals with a positive tuberculosis skin test.

Do not assume that childhood immunizations are adequate; requirements have changed during the past several years. Medical facilities in the U.S. and in other countries are required to keep records of vaccinations. Additional sources of immunization information include doctors’ offices, health departments, and schools. Students should make copies of the completed health form for their own files, and then mail the original forms. Do not rely on health care providers, family members, or other colleges to mail the forms.

Exemptions from compliance with the immunization policy include:

- Religious exemption, written on letterhead stationery, signed by a religious official and notarized.
- Medical exemption, written on office stationery, and signed by a health care provider. The letter should state the reason for the exemption, and whether the exemption is permanent or temporary.

Immunizations for the following diseases are recommended, but not mandatory: chickenpox (varicella), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, polio, and tetanus. The most recent tetanus booster should have been within the past 10 years. Immunization against meningococcal meningitis is recommended for college students.

Students should be aware of the following information concerning meningococcal disease:

1. Meningococcal disease is a serious illness that can lead to death within only a few hours of onset; one in 10 cases is fatal; and one in 7 survivors of the disease is left with a severe disability, such as the loss of a limb, mental retardation, paralysis, deafness, or seizures;
2. Meningococcal disease is a contagious, but largely preventable, infection of the spinal cord fluid and the fluid that surrounds the brain;
3. Scientific evidence suggests that college students living in dormitory facilities are at a moderately increased risk of contracting meningococcal disease; and
4. Immunization against meningococcal disease will decrease the risk of the disease.

Students may wish to consult their physicians for more information concerning meningococcal disease and the vaccination against meningococcal disease.

## **Student Records and Right of Privacy (FERPA) (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974)**

In accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, Mercer University (1) permits students to inspect their education records, (2) limits disclosure to others of personally identifiable information from education records without the student's prior written consent to such disclosure, and (3) provides students the opportunity to seek correction of their education records where appropriate.

### **I. Definitions**

- A. **Student** means an individual who is or who has been in attendance at Mercer University. It does not include individuals who were applicants for admission to the University but did not matriculate.
- B. **Education records** include those records which contain information directly related to a student and which are maintained as official working files by the University. The following are not education records:
  - 1. Records about students made by professors and administrators for their own use and not shown to others;
  - 2. Campus police records maintained solely for law enforcement purposes and kept separated from the education records described above;
  - 3. Employment records, except where currently enrolled students are employed as a result of their status as students;
  - 4. Records of physicians, psychologists, or other recognized professionals or paraprofessionals made or used only for treatment purposes and available only to persons providing treatment (however, these records may be reviewed by an appropriate professional of the student's choice); and
  - 5. Records that contain only information relating to a person's activities after graduation or withdrawal from the University

### **II. Mercer University permits students to inspect their education records.**

- A. **Right of Access.** Students have the right to access to their education records, except financial records of parents and confidential letters of recommendation received prior to January 1, 1975.
- B. **Waiver.** Students may waive their right of access to confidential recommendations in three areas: admission to an educational institution, job placement, and receipt of honors and awards. The University does not require such waivers as a condition for admission or receipt of any service or benefit normally provided to students. If students choose to waive their right of access, they will be notified, upon request, of the names of all persons making confidential recommendations. Such recommendations are used only for the purpose for which they were specifically intended. A waiver may be revoked in writing at any time, and the revocation will apply to all subsequent recommendations.
- C. **Types and Locations of Education Records**
  - 1. **Registrar's Office.** Undergraduate and Graduate Academic records, Computer files (biographical data, course information).
  - 2. **Financial Planning Office.** Application for financial assistance, needs analysis statements, awards made. Note: Students do not have access to parents' confidential statements.

3. **Bursar's Office.** Records of financial payments. Promissory notes and copies of correspondence.
4. **Colleges, schools, and academic departments.** Records kept vary with departments but may include results of certain examinations and other advisory information.

D. **Procedure to be followed.** Requests for access specifying the records to be inspected should be made in writing to the Registrar. The University will comply with requests within a reasonable time, at most within 45 days. Arrangements normally are made for students to read their records in the presence of a staff member. Students may also obtain copies of their records by paying reproduction costs of \$0.25 per page. However, the University may refuse to release copies of records of students who have not settled their accounts with the University. The University does not provide copies of official transcripts from other schools.

III. **Mercer University limits disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records without the student's prior written consent to such disclosure.**

A. **Directory Information.**

1. The following categories of information have been designated as directory information:
  - name
  - addresses
  - telephone listing
  - date and place of birth
  - photograph
  - major field of study
  - participation in officially recognized activities and sports
  - weight and height of members of athletic teams
  - dates of attendance
  - degrees and awards received
  - the most recent previous education institution attended
2. The University gives annual public notice to students of the categories of information designated as directory information, and allows a reasonable period of time after such notice for the student to inform the University that the information should not be considered directory information.
3. Directory information may appear in public documents and may otherwise be disclosed without the student's consent unless the student objects as provided above. However, it is the policy of Mercer University to refuse to disclose directory information over the telephone except for purposes of financial aid verification.

B. **Prior Consent Not Required.** Prior consent is not required for disclosure of education records to the following parties.

1. School officials of Mercer University who have been determined to have legitimate educational interests
  - a. **School Officials** include instructional personnel, administrative personnel, and members of duty constituted University committees and boards, who are or may be in a position to use the information in furtherance of a legitimate objective.
  - b. **Legitimate educational interests** include those interests reasonably related to the academic environment

2. Officials of other schools in which students seek to or intend to enroll or are enrolled. Upon request, and at the student's expense, students will be provided with a copy of the records that have been transferred.
3. Authorized representatives of federal and state educational authorities, but only in connection with the audit or evaluation of federally or state supported educational programs, or in connection with the enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements relating to these programs. These officials will protect information received so as not to permit personal identification of students to outsiders, and the data shall be destroyed when no longer needed for the purposes above.
4. In connection with a student's application for or receipt of financial aid, but only to the extent necessary for such purposes as determining eligibility, amount, conditions, and enforcement of terms or conditions.
5. State and local officials to whom such information is specifically required to be reported by effective state law adopted prior to November 19, 1974.
6. Organizations conducting educational studies for the purpose of developing, validating, or administering predictive tests, administering student aid programs, and improving instruction. The studies shall be conducted so as not to permit personal identification of students to outsiders, and the information will be destroyed when no longer needed for these purposes.
7. Accrediting organizations for purposes necessary to carry out their functions.
8. Parents of students who are dependents for income tax purposes. Parents may see the academic records of their son or daughter when the student gives permission in writing or when the parents can demonstrate that the student is their dependent as defined by the Internal Revenue Service.
9. Appropriate parties in connection with an emergency, where knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of students or other individuals.
10. In response to a court order or subpoena. The University will make reasonable efforts to notify students before complying with the court order.
11. The results of a Disciplinary proceeding by the University in connection with an alleged crime of violence may be disclosed to the alleged victim of the crime.

C. **Prior Consent Required.** In no other cases will the University release personally identifiable information in education records or allow access to those records without the prior consent of the student. The consent must be written, signed, and dated, and must specify the records to be disclosed and the identity of the recipient. A copy of the record disclosed will be provided to the student upon request and at the student's expense.

D. **Record of Disclosures.** The University maintains with the student's records a record of each request and each disclosure, except disclosures

1. To the student;
2. Pursuant to the written consent of the student;
3. To instructional or administrative officials of Mercer University; or
4. Of directory information

The records of disclosures may be inspected by the student, the official custodian of the records, and other University and governmental officials.

#### IV. **Mercer University provides students with the opportunity to seek correction of their education records.**

A. **Request to Amend Records.** Students who believe that information contained in their education records is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of their privacy or other rights may submit a written request to the Office of the Registrar, specifying the document(s) being challenged and the basis for the complaint. The request will be sent to the responsible person at the origin of the record in question. Within a reasonable time of receipt of the

request, the University will decide whether to amend the records in accordance with the request. If the decision is to refuse to amend, the student will be so notified and may submit a request for a hearing.

- B. **Right to a Hearing.** Upon request by a student, the University will provide an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of the student's records. A request for a hearing should be submitted in writing to the Office of the Registrar. Within a reasonable time, the student will be notified in writing of the date, place, and time reasonably in advance of the hearing.
1. **Conduct of the Hearing.** The hearing will be conducted by a University official who does not have a direct interest in the outcome. The student will have a fair and full opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issues raised, and may be assisted or represented by individuals of the student's choice, including an attorney, at the student's own expense. The University official conducting the hearing will, after considering all relevant information, make a recommendation to the Registrar.
  2. **Decision.** Within reasonable period of time after the conclusion of the hearing, the University will notify the student in writing of its decision. The decision will be based solely upon evidence present at the hearing and will include a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision. If the University decides that the information in the student's record is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of students, the University will amend the records accordingly.
- C. **Right to Place an Explanation in the Records.** If, as a result of the hearing, the University decides that the information is not accurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's rights, it will inform the student of the right to place in the record a statement commenting on the information and/or explaining any reasons for disagreeing with the University's decision. Any such explanation will be kept as part of the student's record as long as the contested portion of the record is kept, and will be disclosed whenever the contested portion of the record is disclosed.

## Information Technology Policy

**PURPOSE:** To establish policies and procedures for the use of University-owned and operated information technology resources.

Mercer University is dedicated to the missions of teaching, education, research, and public service. In support of these missions, Mercer University provides access to electronic information resources, including networks, software, and equipment, to its students, faculty, and staff.

The Mercer University Information Technology Policy contains Mercer's philosophy and requirements governing use of its information technology resources by students, faculty, staff, and others who have been given authorization, either explicitly or implicitly, to access those resources. Mercer University expects each member of the community to use Mercer's information technology resources, including connections to resources external to Mercer that are made possible by Mercer University's information technology resources as a privilege. If a member of the Mercer community fails to comply with this policy or relevant laws and contractual obligations, that member's privilege to access and use Mercer's information technology resources may be revoked. The use of Mercer University's information technology resources to send communications to Mercer or non-Mercer persons or entities, typically identifies the sender as belonging to the Mercer University community. Each member of the community should therefore recognize that any such communication might reflect on how Mercer University is perceived by not only the Mercer community, but also the public at large.

By adopting the policy, Mercer University recognizes that all members of the Mercer community are bound not only by the policy, but also by local, state, and federal laws relating to electronic media, copyrights, privacy, and security. Other Mercer University policies that relate to this Policy and apply to Mercer

University students, faculty, and staff (collectively, the "community") can be found in the Mercer University Student, Faculty, and Employee Handbooks. Each member of the Mercer University community is expected to be familiar with the relevant policies.

### ***Freedom of Expression and Misconduct***

Freedom of expression and an open environment within which to pursue scholarly inquiry and to share information are encouraged, supported, and protected at Mercer University. Censorship is not compatible with the goals of Mercer University. While Mercer may limit the use of some computers or resources to specific research or teaching missions, freedom of expression will generally be protected. While Mercer University rejects censorship, behavior that constitutes misconduct will not be protected. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to, the use of Mercer University's information technology resources in connection with child pornography, harassment of any kind, copyright infringement, theft, unauthorized access, and other violations of the law.

To comply with federal regulations governing tax-exempt organizations, Mercer University technology resources may not be used for mass and unsolicited communications used in connection with lobbying (except official Mercer University activities authorized by the Office of the President) or political campaigns. In addition, such resources should not be used for private business or commercial activities, except where such activities are otherwise permitted under applicable Mercer University policies. It must be understood that most software licenses purchased by the University stipulate that all use must be for educational or institutional administrative purposes only.

### ***Privacy***

Users should respect the rights of others to privacy and intellectual property rights, and refrain from unauthorized access or copying. State and federal law and Mercer University policy prohibits unauthorized access to computer and telephone systems. No one should use aliases, nicknames, pointers, or other electronic means to capture information intended for others without permission of the intended recipient. Attempts to gain unauthorized access to machines or computer records, to decrypt encrypted materials, to monitor other individuals' computer or network use, to attempt to obtain their passwords, or to obtain privileges or information to which the user is not entitled, are prohibited. Passwords are private, personal information, which should not be written down, posted or otherwise shared with others. Attempts to use another person's password or to hack another person's password are a violation of University Policy, and will be dealt with accordingly. Any attempt to make use of another person's password or to access another person's account or information may result in immediate termination of access to Mercer's computer and network resources as well as judicial or criminal prosecution as defined by the appropriate existing law or policy.

If an account holder allows public access to files via file sharing, it is presumed that the account does not intend to keep those files private from other users (see "Security" for warnings regarding file sharing).

Systems support staff, systems operators, supervisors, and designated University officials may access information resources to locate and protect business information, maintain systems and network resources, ensure systems and network security, provide technical support, comply with legal requirements, or administer Mercer University policies. No University personnel are authorized to access or make use of any user's password-protected data without specific authorization from the user or direction from the University General Counsel, Internal Audit, Human Resources, and/or Mercer Police. Attempts to do so will result in immediate termination of employment and could result in prosecution.

Local area networks and local resources, including personal computers, workstations, files servers, printers, and similar devices, shall be subject to the same rights to privacy and confidentiality afforded centralized computer systems, regardless of whether those local resources are connected to any of Mercer University's central information technology networks.

## ***Intellectual Property***

Mercer University expects all members of the community to be aware of how intellectual property laws, regulations, and policies apply to the electronic environment and to respect the property of others. For further information, please see the Mercer University Copyright Policy, the Mercer University Policy and Guidelines on Copyrighted Materials, the Mercer University Patent Policy, the Mercer University Academic Honor Principle, the Mercer University Faculty Handbook, and the Student Handbook.

No member of the community shall use another's content or property in a way that violates copyright law or infringes upon the rights held by others. The unauthorized duplication or use of any software that is licensed or protected by copyright may constitute violations of civil and criminal law and is prohibited by this policy.

Members of the University community should recognize that placing individual work in the electronic public domain may result in widespread distribution of that work and could jeopardize any rights to that work. Students should assume that works communicated through the networks are subject to copyright unless there is a specific disclaimer to the contrary.

## ***Internet Access***

Mercer University maintains computer facilities and Internet access for its primary missions of teaching, education, research, and public service. Excessive use of the Internet for other purpose places an unreasonable burden on the Mercer network and interferes with access for legitimate use. Use of the Internet for recreational purposes can quickly exceed the capability of any university system and must be managed appropriately to ensure system integrity. Using the University network for occasional access to the Internet for personal purposes is not specifically prohibited. However, the Department of Information Technology is charged with the responsibility of ensuring recreational use does not interfere with legitimate educational and administrative access. When necessary, Information Technology staff will restrict activities as required to ensure all authorized users have adequate access to the Internet.

Violations of Internet use include, but are not limited to, accessing, downloading, uploading, saving, receiving, or sending material that includes sexually explicit content or other material using vulgar, sexist, racist, threatening, violent, or defamatory language.

Users should make economical and wise use of computer and network resources. Users should report suspected unauthorized use of resources to the Department of Information Technology.

Theft, failure to observe copyright laws, and/or tampering with any computer system or network device will place violators in jeopardy of losing privileges as well as possible criminal prosecution. Each incident will be handled on a case-by-case basis and may be referred to University General Counsel or other appropriate authority.

## ***Rights and Privileges***

The names of students, faculty, and staff are entered into an electronic database of names along with associated items of information. An entry in the Mercer University Name Directory, administered by Information Technology, grants access to network services that originate at Mercer University and requires user authentication. Students have the right to request, through the Registrar's Offices, that their information not be published, their name and e-mail address will be published in Mercer's internal address books to facilitate communication; however, this information will not be accessible from off campus, except as required by law. Faculty and staff work contact information will be made available to Mercer and non-Mercer users. Faculty and staff may request that their personal contact information not be published or made available.

Having an account is a privilege, not a right or entitlement. An individual is assigned an account for use while conducting activities related to the mission of Mercer University. The holder of an account may not share access information that would enable use of an account with anyone including colleagues at Mercer University, family members, or any other individual. Any account may be revoked temporarily or permanently if a user of the University information technology resources violates public law or University policy.

## ***Security***

Personal computers and workstations are intended for use as "clients" that request computing services rather than "servers" that provide computing services. Providing services to other users, such as other Mercer network users or the Internet at large, potentially consumes excessive amounts of network bandwidth and compromises network security. Without explicit, written authorization from the Department of Information Technology, computers shall not be configured to operate as servers, including but not limited to: file, print, mail, Web, chat, media streaming, name, time, directory, quote, network management, or proxy servers. Any computer ostensibly configured as a client but running special software that provides services to other users is regarded as being a server and deemed to be in violation of this policy. University information technology support personnel may restrict, limit, or disable specific application traffic to ensure that other mission-critical network traffic is not affected or disrupted in any way.

No user shall attempt to access any service or resource to which they have not been explicitly authorized access by the appropriate University authority. All network access ports are provided for use with a single computer system. No router, hub, or other network device may be installed without prior review and written approval from the Department of Information Technology. User of the University network shall not run programs that disrupt network activity, attack specific systems on BearNet or the Internet, or capture private data of other users. Examples include, but are not limited to port scanning software, packet sniffers, mail bombing, ping flooding, SMURF attacks, and/or SYN flooding. User found to be in violation of this policy will be denied access without prior notice.

Any user of the University network who disrupts or obstructs, whether intentionally or inadvertently, teaching, research, administration, or other University activities will be subject to disciplinary sanctions as outlined in existing University policy.

## ***E-mail***

In general, use of University electronic mail services is governed by policies that apply to the use of all University facilities. In particular, the use of University electronic mail services is encouraged subject to the following conditions:

**Purpose**—Electronic mail services are to be provided by University organizational units in support of the teaching, research, and public service mission of the University, and the administrative functions that support this mission.

**Users**—Users of the University electronic mail services are to be limited primarily to University students, faculty, and staff for purposes that support the mission of the University.

**Non-Competition**—University electronic mail services shall not be provided in competition with commercial services to individuals or organizations outside the University.

**Restrictions**—University electronic mail services may not be used for: unlawful activities; commercial purposes not under the auspices of the University; personal financial gain (see applicable academic and personnel policies); or uses that violate other University policies or guidelines. The latter include, but are not limited to, policies and guidelines regarding intellectual property, or regarding sexual or other forms of harassment.

**Representation**—Electronic mail users shall not give the impression they are representing, giving

opinions, or otherwise making statements on behalf of the University or any unit of the University unless appropriately authorized to do so. Where appropriate, an explicit disclaimer shall be included unless it is clear from the context that the author is not representing the University. An appropriate disclaimer is "These statements are my own, not those of Mercer University."

Mercer University prohibits the use of the University's electronic communication resources for any purpose that could unnecessarily strain or compromise these resources. Mercer University also prohibits electronic communications that interfere with the use of these resources by other employees. Toward this end, University resources may not be used to:

**Perpetuate chain e-mail letters or their equivalents**—This includes letters that require the recipient to forward an e-mail to a specified number of addresses in order to achieve some monetary, philosophical, political, superstitious, or other goal. E-mails that are part of a multilevel marketing or pyramid-selling scheme, sometimes known as "Ponzi schemes," are generally illegal and are specifically forbidden under this policy.

**Create and/or send "spam"**—Spam is defined as any unsolicited electronic communication that is sent to any number of recipients who did not specifically request or express an interest in the material advertised in the communication.

**Send or encourage "letter bombs"**—Letter bombs are extremely large or numerous e-mail messages that are intended to annoy, interfere with, or deny e-mail use by one or more recipients.

**Practice any activity designed to deny the availability of electronic communications resources**—Also called "denial of service attacks," these activities deny or limit services through mail bombing, malicious executables such as viruses, threatening a virus, or opening a large number of mail connections to a mail host or SMTP relay without authorization or permission.

## ***Wireless Network Access and Usage***

Mercer University's wireless network infrastructure has been installed to support the mission of the University. The University must maintain administrative control of the radio frequency spectrum that wireless devices use as their base transport mechanism. Other devices exist that also use the same frequency band and can cause interference on the wireless network. These devices include, but are not limited to, other wireless networking devices, cordless telephones, cameras, keyboards, mice, audio speakers, ad-hoc (peer-to-peer) networks and computers, or other devices equipped with a wireless card and software to act as an access point. Information Technology staff will work with the campus community to determine if use of such devices can be accommodated without causing interference to the wireless network.

Wireless network usage is bound by the same policies governing the use of Mercer University's wired network. Access to Mercer's wireless network is restricted to currently enrolled students and current employees only. In order to ensure adequate security, all systems and devices intended for use on the University's wireless network must be registered with the Department of Information Technology. Wireless access points and wireless devices that are not registered will not be allowed access to the network.

# **Crime Awareness and Campus Security**

## ***Mercer Police Department***

The Mercer Police Department has primary responsibility for the security of all campuses. All Mercer Police officers are certified by the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council as having met the qualifications and training requirements for police officers in Georgia, and they are authorized to exercise law enforcement powers, including the power of arrest, on the campus.

## ***Law Enforcement***

Students, employees, and campus visitors are subject to all federal, state, and local criminal laws, in addition to campus regulations. The Mercer Police Department maintains a cooperative working relationship with the local and state police to ensure the enforcement of all laws. Mercer Police officers may make arrests of individuals suspected of campus crimes or may detain such individuals for arrest by the Macon Police. Local police agencies also provide back-up assistance to the University for any emergency that might require extensive police services.

## ***Campus Security Policies***

The Mercer Police Department is a service-oriented department. Officers are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In addition to routine patrols, the Department provides an escort service at night for those students or employees needing to go to other areas on campus and for those arriving late from evening jobs.

The Mercer Police Department also works closely with the Student Government Association (SGA) and with the Physical Plant Department with respect to building and parking security, including keeping a maintenance log each day of items that need repair or replacement and regularly reviewing campus lighting needs.

## ***Reporting Crimes and Emergencies***

Mercer police officers cannot possibly be on the scene at all times; therefore, it is important that all students and employees of the University report any incident or other unusual activity on or near the campus to the following Campus Security Authorities: Mercer Police Department, the Vice President and Dean of Students, or the Director of Residence Life. If there are any doubts as to whether to report an incident that has occurred, report it. The Mercer Police Department can then determine whether the event constitutes a crime that must be reported in the University's crime statistics. All crimes must be reported immediately. Crime alerts are published when incidents on or near the campus could present threats to the University community. Cooperation in making reports promptly assists the University in issuing timely warnings to the campus community.

The Mercer Police Department maintains statistical records of criminal activity on campus, in off-campus buildings owned or controlled by the University, and on public property immediately adjacent to or accessible from the Mercer campus. Statistical data reflected in the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Report is compiled from reports to the Mercer Police Department and from the records of the Student Judiciary. A formal police report or investigation is not needed in order for a crime report to be included in the statistics.

Mercer allows confidential reporting by victims or witnesses of crimes. Further, Mercer encourages pastoral and professional counselors, if and when they deem it appropriate, to inform the persons they are counseling of the procedures for confidential reporting of criminal activity.

When reporting a crime, suspicious activity, or other emergency on campus, be sure to provide the following information:

- The name of the person making the report
- Location of the incident being reporting
- A description of the scene and/or suspects
- A description of any vehicles involved in the incident, especially a license plate number if possible
- The telephone number and address of the person making the report, for report purposes

## ***Safety and Crime Prevention Programs***

Mercer Police and the Student Government Association (SGA) work together to provide approximately 4–10 campus safety workshops each year to promote campus safety awareness and to inform students of precautions to enhance their security and that of the University community. Along with these workshops, SGA and Mercer Police have produced several pamphlets and other informational items promoting campus safety awareness.

## ***Policies Concerning Alcohol and Drugs on Campus***

The possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited on campus and at University-sponsored events. Public intoxication, consumption or display of alcoholic liquors, wines, or beer on campus is prohibited. Use or possession of illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia is also prohibited.

The University has adopted a Drug-Free Workplace and Campus Program as a matter of University policy and in keeping with applicable State and Federal laws, including the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989. Copies of the Program are included in the Policies and Procedures Manual (for employees) and in other student handbooks or bulletins. Certain colleges, schools, and/or departments have adopted additional policies imposing higher standards of conduct with respect to drugs or alcohol. These are included in the student handbooks or other documents available to the students or employees affected.

## ***Policies Concerning Sex Offenses***

The University's campus security policies, safety, and crime prevention programs are designed to promote awareness of rape and other sex offenses and to prevent such offenses from occurring.

If a student is sexually assaulted on campus, it is particularly important, for the protection of both the victim and the University community, that the incident be reported to the Mercer Police Department or local police as soon as possible. Mercer Police can assist the student in getting medical attention and in notifying the proper local law enforcement authorities, if the student so chooses. The sooner an assault is reported, the easier it is to preserve and collect the evidence necessary for a criminal prosecution. Reporting the incident to the police does not mean the victim must press charges against the assailant, but it does help assure that the student receives assistance in deciding how to proceed.

Sexual assault by a student or group of students also violates University conduct regulations and may lead to expulsion, suspension, or other disciplinary sanctions, in accordance with established disciplinary procedures. In cases of alleged sexual assault, all University disciplinary procedures shall permit both the accuser and the accused the same opportunities to have others present during the proceeding, and both the accuser and the accused shall be informed of the outcome of the proceeding. The University will take action to enforce its standards of student behavior and to protect the University community, regardless of whether the alleged offense is prosecuted in the criminal courts.

Where appropriate and possible, the University will assist students in adjusting academic schedules or making other reasonable accommodations after an alleged sexual assault incident, if requested by the student. The student's faculty advisor or the dean responsible for Student Life in the student's School or College should be contacted to assist the student in considering and making any such adjustments.

## ***Campus Crime Statistics***

Statistics concerning certain criminal offenses reported to have occurred on Mercer's Macon or Atlanta campuses during the most recent calendar year and the two preceding calendar years are posted on the Mercer Police Department's Web site ([www.mercer.edu/police](http://www.mercer.edu/police)). A printed copy of the Report is available in the Human Resources Office, the Mercer Police Department, and the Student Center, and will be provided upon request.

## Traffic Regulations and Parking

Mercer Police is responsible for parking enforcement at Mercer University. All vehicles on the Macon and Atlanta campuses must be registered each year and each vehicle must display a parking decal. The decals are free. Vehicles should be registered no later than August 20. Vehicles can be registered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at Mercer Police or at Mercer One during regular business hours. The tag number is necessary to obtain a decal. If the vehicle or the tag number changes, notify Mercer Police the next business day.

Mercer does not issue handicap access parking decals. Permanently or temporarily disabled people who require handicap access must see their doctor about getting a permit issued by the State of Georgia. Application forms are available at the Mercer Police station. Only a law enforcement officer can authorize a handicap access space without a decal. Vehicles must be registered with Mercer Police even if the driver possesses a handicapped permit.

### **ALL DECALS MUST BE PLACED ON THE LOWER FRONT WINDSHIELD ON THE DRIVER'S SIDE.**

Possession of a decal does not guarantee a parking space. The responsibility for locating a proper space rests with the driver, not the University. The lack of a parking space, i.e., being late for class or work, parking illegally for a short time, leaving flashers on, are not valid excuses for parking illegally. The absence of a sign prohibiting parking does not mean drivers can park illegally.

More information on the parking system, tickets, and appeals is available from the departmental Web site at [www.mercer.edu/police](http://www.mercer.edu/police). Special parking brochures are available at Mercer Police or at Mercer One.

## The Mercer University Alma Mater

<b>Macon Campus, Macon Center, and Eastman Center</b>	<b>Atlanta Campus, Douglas Center, and Henry County Center</b>
<p>On the city's western border Reared against the sky Proudly stands our Alma Mater As the years roll by</p> <p>(Chorus)</p> <p>Forward ever be they watchword Conquer and prevail. Hail to thee, O Alma Mater! Mercer, Hail, all Hail!</p> <p>Cherished by thy sons and daughters Mem'ries sweet shall throng Round our hearts, O Alma Mater As we sing our song.</p>	<p>On the city's eastern border Reared against the sky Proudly stands our Alma Mater As the years roll by</p> <p>(Chorus)</p> <p>Forward ever be they watchword Conquer and prevail. Hail to thee, O Alma Mater! Mercer, Hail, all Hail!</p> <p>Cherished by thy sons and daughters Mem'ries sweet shall throng Round our hearts, O Alma Mater As we sing our song.</p>