

I. Student Handbook Introduction

Florida Southern College (the “College”) wants its students to be successful both inside and outside the classroom; the opportunity for success is enhanced when students live in a community that establishes high expectations for its members. All students are expected:

- To be honest in all situations, academic and nonacademic, and to respect the rights and the property of others;
- To live in a manner that brings credit to themselves and to the College;
- To take advantage of every opportunity to expand one’s mind and to contribute positively to the College’s academic environment;
- To follow all College policies as outlined in this College Student Handbook, the Academic Catalog, and other College publications (“College Policies”).

Upon enrollment, students agree to follow all College Policies. A student’s period of enrollment begins at the time of admission to the College and ends upon graduation from the College. Students are responsible for knowing College Policies and updates.

The College reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to withdraw any offer of admission, even after accepted by the applicant, if the College learns of information regarding the applicant’s academic achievement, aptitude, personal character or performance in general citizenship, which would adversely reflect on the applicant’s ability to comply with the high expectations of the College.

College Policies are binding upon Student Organizations at the College regardless of whether they are officially recognized by the College or receive funding, directly or indirectly, from the College.

The College expects its students to conduct themselves as responsible citizens and to comply with all College Policies. Conduct that is unbecoming to a College student; that adversely affects the College community, mission, or reputation; or that violates College Policies may subject a student to Student Accountability Proceedings by the College, regardless of whether or not such conduct occurs on College premises.

Changes in College Policies may be enacted, amended, or changed at any time by the College Administration. College Policies will be reviewed annually under the direction of the Vice President and Dean of Student Development (“Dean”).

Any new College Policies or changes to existing College Policies shall be announced through the Office of Student Development. The Office of Student Development shall publish newly enacted College Policies or changes to existing College Policies by posting them on the College website, **www.flsouthern.edu**. A newly enacted College Policy or change to existing College Policies shall become effective immediately upon publication by the Office of Student Development or earlier, in the sole and absolute discretion of the Dean.

The Dean has the day-to-day responsibility of administering, interpreting, and enforcing College Policies as they apply to students. The Dean may delegate responsibility of administering, interpreting, and enforcing College Policies to another designated College official. Any and all

questions regarding the interpretation of College Policies as they apply to students may be submitted to the Dean for an advisory opinion concerning the proper interpretation of the College Policy in question. College Student Accountability bodies shall give serious consideration to advisory opinions issued by the Dean.

College Policies are based upon the assumption that individual and organization responsibility is part of the educational process. The Cornerstone Code of Conduct fosters good citizenship, healthy life choices, respect for self and others, personal responsibility and accountability, and protects the rights, freedom, and safety of members of the College community.

Student Accountability meetings are an educational process designed to resolve matters concerning student conduct within the framework of students' rights and responsibilities pursuant to College Policies. The College strives to provide a fair, just, and educational process for all students. However, Student Accountability Proceedings are not a legal process. Accordingly, it is not appropriate for legal counsel to represent a student in a Student Accountability Proceeding and, therefore, legal counsel is not permitted.

A. The Board of Trustees Statement of Policy on College Student Relations

The College does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, marital status, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or national origin in its admission and employment policies, its educational, financial aid, athletic, and other College programs, and admits all of its students to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or available to students at the College.

The College was founded on Christian principles by the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church ("Church") and proudly continues its Church relationship as an agency dedicated to seeking and imparting truth. The College Catalog gives a full statement of the purpose of the College, which was developed by a joint student, Trustee, and faculty committee.

Admission to the College is open to applicants who meet its admission standards, regardless of race, creed, color, or place of origin; persons are not admitted by any quota or any formula based on race, creed, color, or place of origin.

Attendance at the College is a privilege and not a right. Students applying for admission do so voluntarily and are free to withdraw, subject only to fulfilling their financial obligations to the College.

By applying for and accepting admission to the College, each student agrees to be bound by the rules, policies, procedures, and administrative regulations of the College as they exist at the time of admission, and as they may be revised during the student's enrollment.

Students are provided the opportunity to participate in the development of rules and procedures pertaining to student issues to the extent that such participation and the results thereof, as determined by the Board of Trustees or its designated agent, are consistent with orderly processes and with the policies and administrative responsibilities of the Board of Trustees and the College Administration.

The College expects students to conduct themselves with dignity and respect the rights of others, realizing that sobriety and morality are not only characteristics of a mature and responsible person, but are essential to the maintenance of a free and orderly society.

Trustees, administrators, Faculty Members, students, alumni, and members of the Florida United Methodist Conference have a right to give the benefit of their insights, suggestions, and criticism in a rational and constructive manner, as well as have the duty to support the College in the context and spirit of both support and reasoned criticism.

Due to the nature and heritage of the College and its close relationship with the United Methodist Church, the continuation of certain College Policies is necessary to maintain the mission of the College. These College Policies are consistent with a belief that a college education is more than the accumulation of credit hours needed for graduation; it must also involve the preparation of students to make positive and important contributions to society.

Examples of such College Policies are that the College:

- Prohibits the use and possession of alcoholic beverages by all students on campus;
- Prohibits the use or possession of illegal drugs and the misuse of drugs;
- Provides a regularly scheduled convocation for all students;
- Allows only limited opposite gender visitation in rooms of the residence halls;

B. Joint Statement of Rights and Responsibilities of Our College Community Adopted by the Student Body and Board of Trustees:

The College was founded on Christian principles by the Church and proudly continues its Church relationship as an agency dedicated to seeking and imparting truth. The College is composed of many constituencies, such as students, faculty, administrative officers, alumni, Trustees, and Church, as well as the residents of Lakeland and the citizens of Florida. Realizing the complexity of the constituencies, a committee of students, officially appointed by the President of the Student Government Association, working in consultation with various Faculty Members and administrative officers, developed the following “Joint Statement of Rights and Responsibilities of our College Community”:

1. Expression

The members of the College community are free to examine, discuss, and formalize resolutions on all matters of interest to them and to promote their opinions publicly or privately. At the same time, it shall be clear that they speak only for themselves and not for the entire College community. Individuals and Student Organizations shall attempt to be well informed on all issues on which they speak.

2. Press

The College is recognized as the publisher of all campus news media (newspapers, literary publications, magazines, annual, radio, television, and any related media

including the College-sponsored website); the President is therefore responsible for and has authority over all such media, even though the President may delegate certain responsibilities and duties to individuals or committees.

All materials in campus publications or released through any of the above media, must be accurate and reflect taste and judgment appropriate to a College Publication. All of these College media must follow canons of good journalism. The President shall exercise or delegate whatever supervision over these media is necessary in order to ensure this.

3. Association and Assembly

Students are free to organize and join associations as long as there is open affiliation and there is not a conflict with any state or federal law or the stated aims of the Charter of the College.

4. Speakers and Topics

Members of the College community may assemble, select speakers for meetings of Student Organizations, and discuss issues of their choice. No speaker shall be invited or topic discussed that is detrimental to College operations or endangers property.

5. Status of a Private Citizen

In their nonacademic (off-campus) life, private or public, student members of the College community shall be free from College control except when, during an academic term in progress, a student's activities result in violation of published regulations and directly involve the College.

6. Regulation of Student Conduct

Regulations governing the conduct of students in their campus life may be proposed by appropriate student governmental organizations and are subject to review by a committee composed of members of the College community, not less than one-third (1/3) of whom are full-time students. Final decision rests with the College Administration.

7. Academic Freedom

Students are responsible for learning thoroughly the content of any course of study, but they shall be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered, and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion. Refer to College Catalog for academic policies.

8. Discrimination

The College is in compliance with Title IX of the Education Act of 1972 and is committed to non-discrimination based on race, creed, color, gender, marital status,

religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, and national origin. The College ascribes to equal opportunity practices and admits all of its students to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or available to students at the College.

9. Persons with Disabilities

The College is in compliance with Title IX of the Education Act of 1972 and is committed to non-discrimination based on race, creed, color, gender, marital status, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, and national origin. The College ascribes to equal opportunity practices and admits all of its students to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or available to students at the College.

C. Grievance Process

The College is committed to a policy of treating all members of the College community fairly in regard to their personal and professional concerns. The primary objective of a student grievance procedure is to ensure that concerns are promptly dealt with and resolutions are reached in a fair and just manner. It is essential that each student be given adequate opportunity to bring complaints and problems to the attention of the College Administration with the assurance that each will be given fair treatment. As such, any currently enrolled student at the College may file a grievance in writing to the appropriate Vice President or Dean.

A grievance is defined as dissatisfaction occurring when a student believes that any decision, act or condition affecting him or her is illegal, unjust, or creates unnecessary hardship. Such grievances may concern, but are not limited to, the following: academic problems; mistreatment by any College employee or fellow student; wrongful assessment of fees; records and registration errors; student employment; and discrimination because of race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, age, or disability. Complaints covered by policies already in place (i.e., harassment, grade issues, financial aid, etc.) are excluded from this policy.

Each Vice President or Dean will reply in writing within three (3) business days to the student who submitted the grievance. Each Vice President or Dean will be responsible for maintaining a database of all grievances that are filed within his or her area. These records will be maintained for a minimum of five years.