

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ACADEMIC HONESTY

DEFINITION

Academic Honesty means the use of one's own thoughts and materials in the writing of papers, taking of tests, and other classroom related activities. Any student intentionally aiding another student in any infraction of the academic honest policy is considered equally guilty.

Students are expected to give full credit for the borrowing of other's words or ideas. Intentional or unintentional use of another's words or ideas without acknowledging this use constitutes plagiarism:

There are four common forms of plagiarism:

- The duplication of an author's words without quotation marks and accurate references or footnotes.
- The duplication of author's words or phrases with footnotes or accurate references, but without quotation marks.
- The use of an author's ideas in paraphrase without accurate references or footnotes.
- Submitting a paper in which exact words are merely rearranged even though footnoted.

Misrepresentation is the submission of materials for evaluation that are not the student's own.

Unauthorized use of notes or another individual's materials, copying, using another individual's materials, or unauthorized prior knowledge of the contents of tests, quizzes or other assessment instruments shall be considered a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy.

PENALTIES

The college expects academic honesty from its students. Procedures for dealing with intentional infraction of the Academic Honesty Policy are:

First Infraction

For the first infraction of the Academic Honesty Policy the faculty member shall give the student a "0" or its equivalent on the paper, examination, or presentation in question. The faculty member will notify the student and explain the reason for the grade. This action could result in a lower final grade. The appropriate division chairperson will be informed of the infraction in writing and the Vice President of Student Services or designee will notify the student in writing of the consequences and implications of this infraction.

Second Infraction

The faculty member shall give the student a "0" on the paper, examination, or presentation in question. A second infraction of the Academic Honesty Policy, either in the same course or in another course, will also result in an automatic "F" in the course in which the second infraction occurred. Upon written notification from the appropriate division chair that an academic honesty infraction occurred, and a determination is made that a second infraction has occurred, the Vice President of Student Services or designee will notify the student of the "F" for the course and make the faculty member aware that a second infraction has occurred. The student will be dropped from the course and barred from further class participation. In cases where the second infraction occurs in the same

course, the faculty member will notify the student and explain the reason for the “F” in the course. Otherwise, the Vice President of Student Services or designee will notify the student of the “F” in the course. The Vice President of Student Services or designee will notify the Director of Records and Registration that the student is to receive an “F” for the course. The Vice President of Student Services or designee will meet with the student involved and apprise the student of the implication of this second infraction.

Third Infraction

The faculty member shall give the student a “0” on the paper, examination, or presentation in question. The faculty member will notify the student and explain the reason for the grade. A third infraction of the Academic Honesty Policy will also result in an automatic “F” in the course in which the third infraction occurred. Upon notification from the appropriate division chair that an academic honesty infraction occurred and a determination is made that a third infraction has occurred, the Vice President of Student Services or designee will notify the student of the “F” for the course and make the faculty member aware that a third infraction has occurred. The student will be dropped from the course and barred from further class participation. The Vice President of Student Services or designee will notify the Director of Records and Registration that the student is to receive an “F” for the course. A third instance of plagiarism or any behavior involving an infraction of the Academic Honesty Policy will result in disciplinary action as determined by the Student Judicial Process.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

It is expected that students will make satisfactory progress each semester they are enrolled. At the end of the Fall and Spring semesters, the progress of each student will be reviewed against the standard of satisfactory progress as stated below. Financial aid recipients are subject to additional standards of academic progress as required by financial aid regulations; see the 2005/2006 HCC catalogue for further information.

Satisfactory performance at Howard Community College means:

- a. achieving a minimum semester grade point average (GPA) of 2.0; and
- b. successfully completing at least 50% of the credits attempted each semester.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

After attempting 12 cumulative credits and having enrolled for a minimum of 6 credits in a given semester, a student will be placed on academic probation if his or her academic performance falls into either category at the completion of that semester:

- a. The student grade point average (GPA) falls below 2.0; or
- b. The student does not successfully complete at least 50% of the credits attempted. Grades of “F” and “W” are considered non-successful completion of credits. Grades of I, N and L are not considered as attempted credits for Probation.

When placed on academic probation, the student must meet the requirements for minimum satisfactory performance in the next major semester or the student will be suspended. If the student meets those standards, the student will be off probation.

Participants in the selective admissions Rouse Scholars Program will be put on probation if their cumulative GPA falls below 2.5. The student has a semester to recover his or her GPA. During this probation period there will be no diminishing of support or standing. A student failing to re-establish his or her GPA within the next semester will no longer be a Rouse Scholar. This situation does not affect his or her standing, enrollment or non-program scholarships and aid at Howard Community College.

ACADEMIC SUSPENSION

The student on probation who does not meet the minimum standard of satisfactory performance the next major semester in which he or she is enrolled will be placed on academic suspension. When placed on suspension, the student may not attend HCC during the next major semester until he or she meets with the Re-admission Committee for appeal.

Suspension Appeal:

There may be mitigating circumstances contributing to a student being suspended; therefore, the student may appeal his or her suspension. Details of the appeal process, which includes a meeting with the Readmission Committee are outlined in a letter notifying the student of his or her suspension. If the student's appeal is granted, the student will be placed on academic probation and the course schedule may be restricted. Additionally, if the student does not meet the satisfactory performance standard at the end of the probation semester, then suspension will be automatic without the privilege to appeal.

Reinstatement After Suspension

Students who were suspended and have not attended HCC for one or more major semesters must contact the Coordinator of Retention for reinstatement to the college. The student's course schedule may be restricted based on prior academic history and the student will be placed on academic probation. If satisfactory academic progress is not met at the end of the probation semester, then the student will be placed on academic suspension without the privilege to appeal. The Coordinator of Retention can be contacted at mgale@howardcc.edu or 410- 772-4687.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- Sources of the Code of Conduct:
1. Gary Pavela, Esq., University of Maryland, College Park
 2. Occidental College, California

PURPOSE OF THE DISCIPLINARY SYSTEM

Human beings grow and mature in communities. Living in a community requires depending upon the knowledge, integrity, and decency of others. In turn, the best communities help individuals mold habits and values that will enable them to achieve the highest personal satisfaction, including the satisfaction associated with helping to make a better world.

This code protects the unique, multi-ethnic community of Howard Community College. It fosters commitment to excellence and equity and affirms the shared values that make respect for diversity possible.

Procedural Protections

Students accused of disciplinary violations are entitled to the following procedural protections:

- To be informed of the specific charges against them.
- To be allowed to request an informal resolution of the case.
- To be allowed reasonable time to prepare a defense.
- To hear and respond to all evidence upon which a charge is based.
- To call and question relevant witnesses.
- To be assured of confidentiality, in accordance with the terms of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.
- To be allowed to request that any person conducting a disciplinary conference, or serving as a discipline committee member or chair, be disqualified on the grounds of personal bias.
- To be provided with a copy of these rights prior to any conference or discipline hearing.
- To be considered innocent of the charges until proven guilty by a preponderance of the evidence.

AUTHORITY FOR STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Ultimate authority for student discipline is vested in the Board of Trustees of Howard Community College. Discipline authority has been delegated to college administrators, faculty members, and committees, as set forth in this code, or other appropriate policies, rules or regulations adopted by the board.

INHERENT AUTHORITY

The college reserves the right to take necessary and appropriate action to

protect the safety and well being of the campus community. Such action may include taking disciplinary action against those students whose behavior off college premises indicates that they pose a substantial danger to others.

Commentary:

The college will not routinely invoke the disciplinary process for student misbehavior occurring off college premises. Nonetheless, it will be necessary to endeavor to protect the campus community when there are reasonable grounds to believe that a student may pose a substantial danger to others. Normally, such "substantial danger" will be manifested by a pending criminal charge, usually relating to a crime of violence, burglary, substantial theft or fraud, the distribution of illegal drugs, or the possession of substantial quantities of illegal drugs.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Students are asked to assume positions of responsibility in the college judicial system in order that they might contribute their skills and insights to the resolution of disciplinary cases. Final authority in disciplinary matters, however, is vested in the Board of Trustees, and in the college administration.

DEFINITIONS

When used in this code:

- The term "classroom or lab disruption" means behavior a reasonable person would view as substantially or repeatedly interfering with the conduct of class or lab. Examples range from persisting in speaking without being recognized to resorting to physical threats or insults.
- The term "person of his or her choosing" includes students, faculty,

staff, or others who provide advice to complainants or respondents. This person may not address hearing bodies, speak in disciplinary conferences, or question witnesses. Furthermore, third parties who are representatives of external organizations or who provide legal representation are not permitted in college disciplinary proceedings, whether informal or formal. However, legal representation is permitted when the student faces concurrent criminal charges.

- The term “college” means Howard Community College and all of its departments and programs.
- The term “reckless” means conduct which one should reasonably be expected to know would create a substantial risk of harm to persons or property or which would otherwise be likely to result in interference with normal college or college-sponsored activities.
- The term “student” includes all persons taking courses at the institution, both full-time and part-time, pursuing credit and noncredit programs sponsored by the institution.
- The term “college premises” means buildings or grounds owned, leased, operated, controlled, or supervised by the college.
- The terms “college-sponsored activity” means any activity on or off college premises that is specifically initiated or supervised by the college.
- The term “complainant” usually means a person who filed the complaint against the student/respondent. In matters of serious misconduct requiring a hearing by the discipline committee, the complainant may be the Vice

President of Student Services or designee recommending suspension or expulsion.

- The term “respondent” is defined as the student accused of violating the Code of Conduct.
- The terms “will” or “shall” are used in the imperative sense.

VIOLATIONS OF THE LAW AND COLLEGE REGULATIONS

Students may be accountable to both civil authorities and to the college for acts that constitute violations of law and this code. Disciplinary action at the college will be independent and proceed during the pendency of criminal proceedings, and will not be subject to challenge on the ground that criminal charges involving the same incident have been dismissed or reduced.

STUDENT GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Student groups and organizations may be charged with violations of this code. A student group or organization and its officers may be held collectively and individually responsible when violations of this code, by those associated with the group or organization, have received the consent or encouragement of the group or organization or of the group’s or organization’s leaders or officers.

CODE VIOLATIONS

Howard Community College expects its students to adhere to high standards of honor and good citizenship. Students must conduct themselves in a responsible manner, which reflects credit upon themselves and the college. Acts of misconduct subject to disciplinary action include but are not limited to the following:

- Academic dishonesty (see section on academic honesty).
- Forgery or alteration of college records or college identification cards.
- Intentionally furnishing false information to the college.
- Deliberate destruction of, damage to, malicious misuse of, or abuse of property. (Students are financially liable for the repair or replacement of property when the damage is a result of their willful destruction, reckless and intentional behavior, or malicious misuse.)
- Sexual assault and sex offenses as defined by Maryland state law (see section on sexual harassment).
- Physical abuse, threat, or harassment of any member of the college community or visitor to the college, or conduct which threatens or endangers the health or safety of such person. Students are not permitted to contact faculty or staff members off campus, unless prior permission is given and communication is necessary and related to academic issues.
- Theft of college or private property which is physically located on college-owned or controlled property.
- Misuse of HCC's computer network and Internet access for other than educational purposes. This includes, but is not limited to the following: (1) copying or duplicating proprietary software or files stored on college-owned computers that are protected by copyright laws; (2) transmission of communication in any form (e.g., text, images, sound) where the content, meaning, and/or distribution of the message would violate applicable law or regulation, or be deemed obscene or threatening; or (3) any violation of HCC's Acceptable Use of Technology Policy.
- Disorderly, obscene or indecent conduct on college-owned or controlled property.
- Illegal manufacture, sale, or use of alcoholic beverages, narcotics, marijuana, hypnotics, sedatives, tranquilizers, stimulants, hallucinogens, and other similar known harmful or habit-forming drugs or chemicals on college-owned or controlled property.
- Drunkenness or being under the influence of illegal drugs on college-owned or controlled property or during an off-campus college sponsored activity.
- Intentional violation of the college policy on controlled substances and alcohol.
- Obstruction or disruption of teaching, research, administration, disciplinary procedures, or other college activities, including the college's public service functions or other authorized activities on college-owned or controlled property.
- Participation in, or organization of, any unauthorized activity to interrupt the functions of the college.
- Intentionally and substantially interfering with the freedom of expression of others.
- Illegal or unauthorized possession or use of firearms, fireworks, explosives, dangerous chemicals, or arms classified as weapons on college-owned or controlled property. An instrument designed to look like a weapon, which is used by a student to cause reasonable apprehension or harm, is expressly included within the definition of weapon. Note: Students who are employees of law enforcement organizations and are required to carry a weapon on campus must notify the director of

security in writing of their intent to carry a licensed weapon at the beginning of each semester. Failure to disclose this information is a violation of this code.

- Unauthorized entry to or use of college-owned or controlled facilities, including all buildings and grounds.
- Demonstrations that interfere with the rights of other members of the college community or with the normal function of the college.
- Deliberate disobedience or resistance of properly identified college authorities acting in the line of duty.
- Initiation of, or causing to be initiated, any false report, warning, or threat of fire, bomb explosion, or other emergency.
- Unauthorized or fraudulent use of the college's facilities and equipment, including but not limited to the phone system, mail system, computer system, and transportation system.
- Hazing. This includes any act or causing any situation which recklessly or intentionally subjects a student to the risk of bodily injury or endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or admission in a student organization.
- Unattended Children. Students must not bring children under the age of 16 on campus and leave them unattended while attending classes or campus activities. Students who violate this policy may be subject to the penalties of the Family Law Article, Section 5-801, et seq. This restriction does not apply to younger students enrolled under special admission procedures.
- Bringing children to class.

Commentary

The college recognizes students may have difficulty with day care for their children; however, HCC views the classroom as adult-learning environment, and one that should be free from potential distractions.

- Classroom or lab disruption.
- Knowingly violating the terms of any disciplinary sanction imposed in accordance with this code.
- Failure to identify oneself when requested by a college official, security officer, or faculty member. College officials may question students or campus visitors when there is a reasonable basis for believing that the person being stopped has committed an offense against the rules of the college or the State of Maryland.
- Gambling on college-owned or controlled property.
- Excessive parking violations (see section on parking in the student handbook).
- Smoking in any classroom, building, or areas other than those designated as smoking areas.
- Use of cellular phones or pagers during class. Students who must bring such devices to class must disengage or place devices on inaudible signal so as not to disturb or interfere with classroom activities. These devices may not be used in the classroom.
- Any act or behavior which violates the rules of the college or laws of the state of Maryland or of the United States.

STANDARDS OF CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Primary responsibility for managing the classroom environment rests with the faculty. Students who engage in any prohibited or unlawful acts that result

in disruption of a class may be directed by the faculty member to leave the class for the remainder of the class period. Longer suspensions from a class or dismissal on disciplinary grounds must be preceded by a hearing or disciplinary conference, as set forth in the student judicial process.

Commentary

The term “prohibited acts” would include behavior prohibited by the teacher (e.g., eating in the classroom, persistently speaking without being called upon, refusing to be seated, disrupting the class by leaving and entering the room without authorization, etc.). It must be emphasized that this provision is not designed to be used as a means to punish classroom dissent. The lawful expression of a disagreement with the teacher’s viewpoint is not itself “disruptive” behavior.

STUDENT JUDICIAL PROCESS

POLICY

Howard Community College will not tolerate violations of accepted standards of student behavior.

When such violations occur, the college will take appropriate disciplinary action. The college has adopted procedures to allow due process, as required by law.

CASE REFERRALS

Any member of the college community may refer a student, student group, or organization suspected of violating this code to the Vice President of Student Services or designee. All case referrals must be submitted in writing.

Those referring cases are normally expected to serve as the complainant, and to present relevant evidence in hearings or conferences.

DISCIPLINE HEARING REFERRALS

The Vice President of Student Services or designee will conduct a preliminary review to determine whether the alleged misconduct might result in expulsion or suspension from the college. Students subject to suspension or expulsion will be entitled to a hearing before the discipline committee. Cases not so referred will be resolved after an informal disciplinary conference with the Vice President of Student Services or designee.

DISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE

Students accused of offenses that may result in penalties less than suspension or expulsion, are subject to a disciplinary conference with the Vice President of Student Services or designee. The following procedural protections are provided to respondents in disciplinary conferences:

- Written notice of the specific charge at least two business days prior to the scheduled conference.
- Reasonable access to the case file prior to and during the conference. The case file consists of materials which would be considered “educational records,” pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Personal notes of college staff members or complainants are not included.
- An opportunity to respond to the evidence and to call appropriate and relevant witnesses.
- A right to be accompanied by a person of his or her choosing, as defined in this code.

Commentary

The conference procedure is designed to reduce unnecessary proceduralism and contentiousness in disciplinary proceedings. A disciplinary conference will normally

consist of an informal, non-adversarial meeting between the respondent and the Vice President of Student Services or designee. Complainants would not be required to participate, unless cross-examination was necessary to resolve a dispositive factual issue. Documentary evidence and written statements could be relied upon, so long as the respondent was given access to them in advance, and allowed to respond to them at the conference. Respondents would also be allowed to call relevant witnesses.

The Vice President of Student Services or designee may automatically impose judicial sanctions based on presented evidence when the accused fails to respond to written notice requesting an appointment for disciplinary conference. This type of disciplinary action will be imposed for offenses that may result in penalties less than suspension or expulsion.

INTERIM SUSPENSION

The Vice President of Student Services or designee may suspend a student from the college for an interim period pending disciplinary or criminal proceedings, or medical evaluation. The interim suspension shall become immediately effective without prior notice whenever there is evidence that the continued presence of the student at the college poses a substantial and immediate threat to him/herself or to others, or to the stability and continuance of normal college functions. A student placed on interim suspension who is unable to complete course work for the semester in which the interim suspension was issued will be given a “W” grade(s).

A student suspended on an interim basis shall be given a prompt opportunity to appear personally before

the Vice President of Student Services or designee in order to discuss the following issues:

- The reliability of the information concerning the student’s conduct, including the matter of his or her identity.
- Whether the conduct and surrounding circumstances reasonably indicate that the continued presence of the student on college premises poses a substantial and immediate threat to himself or herself, to others, or the stability and continuance of normal college functions.

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

In the event that a discipline hearing is necessary, the Vice President of Student Services or designee will contact the chairperson of the discipline committee within seven business days to initiate the discipline process. The chairperson of the discipline committee will confer with committee members, set a hearing date, and notify the accused and committee members in writing. The notification will include the specific violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Membership

The discipline committee shall be formed at the beginning of each fall semester at the request of the Vice President of Student Services or designee. The committee consists of, but is not limited to, a faculty chair, two faculty members and two students. The chair will vote only in the case of a tie. A quorum consists of the chair and two members of the committee, at least one of whom shall be a faculty member and at least one of whom shall be a student.

Faculty members shall be selected by the appropriate division chairperson, as needed, upon request by the Vice President of Student Services or designee. Student members shall be selected by the student government association and the director of student life, as needed.

Members of this committee who do not feel that they can render an impartial judgment in regard to a specific case may be excused if they give notice to the chairperson of the committee prior to the notification of the scheduled hearing of the accused. The chairperson will contact the constituency for the selection of an alternate. The respondent or complainant may request the replacement of any member of the committee if evidence of personal prejudice is provided. Objections to a committee member must be stated in writing and submitted to the committee five business days after notification. A decision will be rendered by the chairperson of the committee.

Meeting Structure

Discipline committee meetings will be closed, but may be open at the discretion of the chair upon request of the respondent. The assistant to the Vice President of Student Services or designee serves as a recorder during discipline hearings. Hearings shall be taped or transcribed. A copy of the tape will be made available to the respondent upon written request.

The chairperson of the committee shall notify the respondent of all charges, membership, and hearing date in writing at least 10 business days in advance of the scheduled hearing.

Failure of the respondent to appear at the hearing, after proper notice,

will result in the committee making a decision in the respondent's absence.

Prior to the hearing, the respondent may obtain copies of photographs, documents, or other tangible objective evidence to be introduced by the complainant. If new evidence comes to light during the hearing, a recess may be granted upon request.

The respondent has the right to be accompanied and advised by a person of his or her choosing. Only the respondent can participate in the proceedings. Furthermore, legal representation is not permitted in college disciplinary proceedings, whether informal or formal. However, legal representation is permitted when the student faces concurrent criminal charges.

The committee may request the appearance of any person that each party wishes to have appear and testify. The committee has no authority to compel the appearance of any person who is neither respondent nor complainant. Witnesses will be required to testify under oath or affirmation. Oaths will be administered by a notary of public.

The chairperson of the committee shall have the duty of maintaining order at the hearing and shall have the right to exclude any party or witness from the hearing, temporarily or permanently.

Order of Presentation:

1. Chairperson's opening remarks
2. Opening statements of complainant and respondent, if desired by each.
3. Presentation of evidence by complainant, then respondent
4. Questions by members of the hearing panel.
5. Closing statement by each side.
6. Private deliberation by the committee
7. Committee decision.

Evidence shall include all facts based on oral testimony of witnesses who are present before the committee and all tangible objective evidence including photographs, charts, papers, electronic or other recorded statements. Written statements by witnesses not present at the hearing may be admitted into evidence, but the committee shall decide how much weight, if any, shall be given to such statements.

Evidence of a student's past record may be introduced if a pattern of similar behavior has been demonstrated.

The penalty phase of the hearing will consider evidence of pattern behavior.

- Any party may present witnesses subject to the right of cross-examination by other parties.
- Witnesses are excluded from the hearing room, but brought in individually before the committee to provide testimony. (This provision does not apply to the complainant and respondent.)
- At the close of all testimony and after the admission of all evidence, each side shall be allowed a closing statement. Closing statements may include a summation of all evidence (as admitted) and arguments or theories behind the stated position of each side.
- The complainant must establish the responsibility of the respondent by a preponderance of the evidence.

The committee will, after hearing all evidence and summations, retire to a room or area for deliberation. The chairperson of the committee will announce the decision promptly. The committee will issue and make available a written report which is shared with all parties, including the complainant. The chairperson of the committee will notify

the accused of the verdict in writing within two business days.

INSTITUTIONAL SANCTIONS

Significant mitigating or aggravating factors shall be considered when sanctions are imposed, including present demeanor and past disciplinary record of the offender, as well as the nature of the offense, and the severity of any damage, injury or harm resulting from it. The following are possible institutional sanctions in order of greater severity:

1. Letter of warning.
2. Restitution of property or personal relationships with others, denial of certain privileges, or restriction of activities.
3. Disciplinary probation: Prohibits the student from representing the college or participating in student activities. Probation also subjects the student to immediate suspension if found in violation of another offense during the period of probation.
4. Suspension: Exclusion from college premises, and other privileges or activities, as set forth in the suspension notice.
5. Expulsion: Permanent termination of student status, and exclusion from college premises, privileges and activities.

Commentary:

Students who are members of the Silas Craft Collegians program, Rouse Scholars program, athletic teams or other learning communities at the college may be subject to additional disciplinary action as set forth by the rules of those organizations. These organizations will be informed of any infractions.

APPEALS

Any disciplinary determination resulting in suspension or expulsion from the college may be appealed to the president or designee. The appeal must be in writing, sent to the office of the president by certified mail, return receipt requested. The appeal must be received by the office of the president within 10 business days after the notice of suspension or expulsion was delivered to the address on record for the student in the office of records and registration.

The president or designee will act on appeals based upon the report filed by the hearing committee chairperson, the student's written brief, and any written response or memorandum prepared by college officials. All written materials considered by the president or a designee shall be subject to inspection, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. New evidentiary hearings shall not be conducted in appeal.

The following standards will apply when appeals are considered:

- Sanctions may only be reduced if found to be substantially disproportionate to the offense.
- Cases may be remanded for rehearing only if specified procedural errors or errors in interpretation of college regulations were so substantial as to effectively deny the student a fair hearing, or if new and significant evidence became available that could not have been discovered by a properly diligent student before or during the original hearing.
- Cases may be dismissed if the finding is held to be unsupported by any evidence.

DISCIPLINARY FILES AND RECORDS

Case referrals may result in the development of a disciplinary file in the name of the accused student, which shall be voided if the student is found innocent of the charges. Voided files will be so marked, shall not be kept with active disciplinary records, and shall not leave any student with a disciplinary record. Voided files will normally be destroyed after three years.

The files of students found guilty of any charge will normally be retained as a disciplinary record for five years from the date of the letter providing notice of final disciplinary action.

Disciplinary records may be voided by the Vice President of Student Services or designee, for good cause, upon written petition of the respondent. Factors to be considered in review of such petitions include:

- The present demeanor of the student.
- The conduct of the student subsequent to the violation.
- The nature of the violation and the severity of any damage, injury, or harm resulting from it.

ACADEMIC IMPACT

A student suspended as a result of the student judicial process may be entitled to complete his/her academic work, including examinations during the regular term without extension of time. Since the student is prohibited from entering the campus without permission, coordination shall be through the office of the Vice President of Student Services. An expelled student has no right to complete academic work.

CAMPUS CRIME REPORTS AND REGISTERED SEX OFFENDER INFORMATION

In accordance with the Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act, the Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offender Registration Act and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, colleges and universities are required to disclose certain timely and annual information about campus crime, security policies and procedures, and registered sex offenders. Schools must publish an annual report every year by October 1st that contains 3 years of campus crime statistics and certain security policy statements. This report is made available to all students and employees at www.howardcc.edu/securitynew.cfm.

The Act amends the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 to clarify that nothing in that Act may be construed to prohibit an educational institution from disclosing information provided to the institution concerning registered sex offenders; and requires the secretary of education to take appropriate steps to notify educational institutions that disclosure of this information is permitted.

To find the sex offender registry for Maryland, go to www.dpscs.state.md.us/sorSearch or access the web link through HCC's website security page listed above. This site provides information on registered sex offenders enrolled and/or employed at all Maryland institutions of higher education.

Supervisors are responsible for reviewing the aforementioned website prior to approving the hire of any employee since convicted sex offenders

are not permitted to work for Howard Community College. The college will not hire any convicted sex offender; therefore, sex offenders should not apply for vacant positions. Every applicant is required to complete an "application for employment," which requires reporting criminal convictions. A sex offense conviction will make the applicant not eligible for employment or an employment interview. Failure of an employee to report a sex offense conviction during the application process or during his or her term of employment will result in immediate job termination. Disclosure of information provided to the security office will be reported to the Vice President of Administration and Finance and the Vice President of Student Services accordingly. Additional campus notifications will be initiated as deemed necessary.

Sex offenders are required to register at the college's security office prior to registering for any course or program at HCC. Disclosure of information provided to the security office will be provided to the Vice President of Administration and Finance and the Vice President of Student Services accordingly. Additional campus notifications will be initiated as deemed necessary. Failure to register with the college's security office will result in disciplinary action including expulsion, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

STALKING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

Stalking, cyber stalking, and harassment are criminal offenses under Maryland state law (MD Criminal Law Code 3-802; 3-803; HB 593;

Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 27, 121B). Incidents of stalking that occur outside the state of Maryland may be admissible in court. Stalking, cyber stalking, and harassment are prohibited at Howard Community College (HCC). In its mission to create an environment that inspires learning and the lifelong pursuit of personal and professional goals, HCC is committed to providing a safe and secure learning and working environment that is free from stalking, harassment, and other threats. According to Maryland state law, an individual who is found guilty of stalking is guilty of a misdemeanor and, if convicted, is subject to up to 5 years imprisonment or a fine of up to \$5,000.

Howard Community College and the State of Maryland define stalking as "a malicious course of conduct that includes approaching or pursuing another where the person intends to place or knows, or reasonably should have known, the conduct would place another in reasonable fear of serious bodily injury, an assault in any degree, rape or sexual offense, false imprisonment, and/or death."

Harassment is defined as following another person in or about a public place or maliciously engaging in a course of conduct that alarms or seriously annoys them with the intent to do so after receiving a reasonable warning or request to stop.

DEFINITIONS

Stalking, cyber stalking, and harassment behaviors may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Repeated, unwanted/unsolicited contact that includes face-to-face contact, telephone calls, voice messages, text messages, electronic

mail, instant messages, written letters, or unwanted gifts;

- Repeated, unwanted/unsolicited communication on public and college community internet sites;
- Disturbing messages online;
- Persistent physical approaches and/or requests for dates, meetings, etc.;
- Threats that create fear for one's life or safety, or fear for the safety of one's family, friends, roommates, or others;
- Unwanted touching;
- Pursuing or following another person; repeatedly showing up or waiting outside a person's home, classroom, place of employment, or car;
- Using surveillance or other types of observation, either in person or through the use of electronic devices or software to track or obtain private information;
- Harassing another person, either in person or through a third party;
- Use of threatening gestures;
- Trespassing or breaking into a person's car or residence; or
- Vandalism and/or destruction of a person's personal property.

The scope of the HCC stalking policy applies to all students, faculty, staff, contract employees, visitors, and administrators equally. Engaging in stalking (including cyber stalking) and harassment is a violation of HCC standards of conduct. The college reserves the right to administer additional sanctions to an offender if the incident affects the academic and/or work environment of the college. College disciplinary procedures are independent of any and all criminal procedures. A substantiated charge against an employee of the college will subject that employee to disciplinary

action, which may include dismissal. A substantiated charge against a student of the college will subject that student to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The board of trustees of Howard Community College concurs in the action of the Maryland Higher Education Commission in recognizing that sexual harassment seriously damages the integrity of the educational institution, destroys the institution's positive work and educational atmosphere, and causes psychological and physiological damage to the victim. The board condemns such illegal activity and is strongly committed to promoting an educational and work environment free from sexual harassment of any form. For the purpose of these guidelines, the board adopts the sexual harassment definition promulgated by the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the college staff to harass a student or employee through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined below. It shall also be a violation of this policy for students to harass other students through conductor communications of a sexual nature as defined below or for students to harass staff.

Definitions—Unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other inappropriate oral, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by a member of the college staff to a student or another employee or when made by a student to another student constitute sexual harassment when:

- a) submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's education or employment;
- b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic or employment decisions affecting that individual; or
- c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic, professional or employment performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive academic or employment environment.

Sexual harassment, as defined above, may include but is not limited to the following: verbal harassment or abuse; pressure for sexual activity; repeated remarks to a person, with sexual or demeaning implications; unwelcome touching; and suggesting or demeaning sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, etc.

The college, upon receiving a sexual harassment complaint will ensure: 1) that the right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected consistent with the college's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and take corrective action when this conduct has occurred; 2) that persons filing complaints of sexual harassment will be protected against reprisals, but that the deliberate filing of false accusations of sexual harassment shall be condemned and may lead to possible disciplinary action.

A substantiated charge against an employee of the college shall subject that employee to disciplinary action, including discharge.

A substantiated charge against a student of the college shall subject that student to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion.

Students alleging that sexual harassment has occurred should refer complaints to the Vice President of Student Services.

DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

The following procedures are adopted to process complaints alleging violations of the college's policies on Non-discrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity, Equal Educational Opportunity, Affirmative Action or Sexual Harassment, and will be in addition to any complaint or charges an employee, applicant or student files with state or federal agencies. These procedures apply to all complaints of discrimination or harassment made against either an employee or a student. Howard Community College will conduct its own investigation and will respond to the complaint, regardless of the reporting party. Complaints or concerns of discrimination made by or against a college employee should be reported to the director of human resources. Complaints or concerns of discrimination made by or against a student should be reported to the Vice President of Student Services. Complaints of discrimination made against a student will be processed under the student judicial process.

Any student who alleges a violation of the college policy on Non-discrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity, Equal Educational Opportunity, Affirmative Action or Sexual Harassment should file a complaint with the Vice President of

Student Services. The Vice President of Student Services will initiate the fact-finding process, which will be in accordance with the student judicial process, as defined in the student code of conduct. All parties and staff will keep the complaint, fact-finding process and conferences or hearings confidential, except to the extent that it is necessary to investigate and process the complaint. Furthermore, all student records and access to student records shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

Persons filing complaints of harassment will be protected against reprisals by actions that are appropriate to the circumstances. Those persons filing deliberate false complaints will be subject to disciplinary action.

Substantiated complaints of violation of the above referred to policies may subject the offending party to disciplinary action.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/ EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Howard Community College is committed to provide equal opportunity through its employment practices, educational programs, admissions and the many services to the community. It is the policy of the college to abide by all applicable requirements of federal and state law so that no person shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, sex, age, religion, ethnic background, marital status, sexual orientation, political persuasion or disability. The college will adhere to applicable laws and regulations affecting affirmative action and equal employment opportunity.

The Board of Trustees has committed the college to undertake an

affirmative action program to expand equality of opportunity and to initiate the recruitment of minorities. The program has been designed to ensure equality of opportunity in employment as well as to develop and maintain educational programs and services for our many diverse populations.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS

The student record at the college is confidential and includes only that information relevant to the educational process. The policy and procedures concerning the release and confidentiality of student records are in compliance with the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare guidelines for the “Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974,” known as the Buckley Amendment. Please see page 107, under Records and Registration, for additional information.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL-FREE CAMPUS

It is the intent and obligation of the college to provide a drug-free, healthy, safe and secure educational environment. Students are expected to contribute to the desired environment by conducting themselves within the guidelines of the student conduct code.

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of illicit drugs or alcohol as a part of any Howard Community College activity whether on or off college premises is absolutely prohibited. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, consistent with normal college policy

and procedures. In addition, any violations may have legal consequences consistent with local, state, and federal law. The college will cooperate with appropriate health and law enforcement agencies.

The college recognizes drug or alcohol abuse as an illness and a major health problem. The college also recognizes drug or alcohol abuse as a potential safety and security problem. Students needing help in dealing with such problems are encouraged to use their health insurance plans, the college Academic Support, Counseling and Career Services Office and other appropriate community agencies. A list of other county agencies, and descriptions of various health risks associated with the use of illicit drug or alcohol abuse, is available in the offices of Academic Support, Counseling and Career Services, Student Life, Human Resources, the Athletic & Fitness Center, and the Wellness Center.

Voluntary participation in an assistance program will not jeopardize enrollment at the college and will not be noted in any student record provided that behavior is consistent with established standards. However, voluntary participation in an assistance program will not prevent disciplinary action for violation of the policy described here.

For further information, pick up one of our Drug-Free Campus brochures in the Office of Student Life or Security office. The brochure includes the effects and corresponding names of a variety of drugs and lists local service agencies which provide assistance and support to those seeking help.

EMERGENCY CLOSING POLICY

HCC's weather emergency closings will be aired on Baltimore and Washington television stations affiliated with the major networks and on area radio stations between 6 and 9 a.m.

If HCC classes are canceled anytime after the college opens, announcements will be aired in the same manner. A recorded message will also be placed on the college's main telephone number, 410-772-4800. If the college has a late opening and there is more than 30 minutes of time left in a scheduled class at the late opening time, that particular class will meet for the remainder of the class time.

When Howard County public schools are closed because of weather emergencies, the HCC classes held at these schools are automatically canceled. Special attention should be paid to confirm whether closing decisions apply to HCC or to the county school system.

Weather emergency closings may be heard on the following stations or posted on their websites: WBAL-TV, Channel 11; WJLA-TV, Channel 7; WJZ-TV, Channel 13, WMAR-TV, Channel 2; WRC-TV, Channel 4; WTTG-TV, Channel; WUSA-TV, Channel 9; WBAL-AM 1090; WCAO-AM, 600; WCBM-AM, 680; WJFK-AM, 1300; WOLB-AM, 1010; WTOP-AM, 820; WWRC-AM, 1260; WWDC-FM, 101.1; WWIN-AM, 95.9; WASH-FM, 97.1; WERQ-FM, 92.3; WIYY-FM, 97.9; WLIF-FM, 101.9; WMZQ-FM, 98.7; WPGC-FM, 95.5; WPOC-FM, 93.1; WQSR-FM, 102.7; WTOP-FM, 103.5; WWIN-FM, 95.9; WWMX-FM, 106.5; and WZBA-FM, 100.7.

LATE OPENING POLICY

If the college has a late opening and there is more than 30 minutes of time left in a scheduled class at the late opening time, that particular class will meet for the remainder of the class time. *For example*, if your class runs from 11:00-12:50 and the college opens at 12:00, then your class would still be held.

EARLY CLOSING POLICY

If the college will be closing early and there will be more than 30 minutes of time available for a scheduled class before the college closes, that particular class will meet during the available time. *For example*, if your class meets from 4:30-5:50 and the college closes at 5:30, your class would still be held.

LAUREL COLLEGE CENTER POLICY

The Laurel College Center follows the closings and delays of Prince George's Community College. In the case of inclement weather, please watch for announcements for Prince George's Community College, or, call: 1-866-228-6110, or 410-772-4162. These Laurel College Center phone numbers are continually updated with information about closings and delays.

ACADEMIC COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Students who have academic complaints (including a specific academic complaint involving a faculty member) should follow these procedures.

Definition of academic complaint: Grade disputes, and other issues related to classroom instruction (including late penalties, acceptance or non-acceptance

of late assignments and incomplete grades).

Please Note: The student and instructor are encouraged to seek resolution informally before filing an academic complaint.

Time Limit—A student must initiate the academic complaint by the end of the seventh week of the next full semester.

PROCEDURES FOR RESOLUTION OF STUDENT CONCERNS INVOLVING FACULTY

1. Students should make an appointment with the instructor of the course and discuss the problem. Prior to the scheduled appointment the student should complete a "Student Academic Complaint Form." (Forms are available in the division offices.) The student should forward the student academic complaint form to the faculty member involved prior to the scheduled appointment. The student should retain a copy.
2. If the student cannot resolve his/her problem by meeting with the faculty member, the student may schedule an appointment to see the appropriate division chair. At the time the appointment is scheduled, the student must submit the Student Academic Complaint Form with the instructor's signature. No appointments will be made without a signed academic complaint form. The signature indicates the meeting has taken place. It does not signify resolution or agreement.
3. If the concern is not resolved at the division chair level, the student may make an appointment to see the Vice President of Academic Affairs. At the time the appointment is scheduled,

the student must submit the Student Academic Complaint Form with the division chair's signature. No appointments will be made without a signed student academic complaint form.

4. The Vice President of Academic Affairs's decision is final. NOTE: SUPPORTING EVIDENCE MAY BE ATTACHED AT ANY LEVEL.

NON-ACADEMIC COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Procedures for resolution of student concerns involving student services are as follows:

1. Students should make an appointment with the appropriate administrator or staff member to discuss the problem. (Refer to the section titled "Who Do I See?")
2. If the student cannot resolve his/her problem by meeting with the administrator or staff person, the student may make an appointment with the staff member's immediate supervisor.
3. If the concern is not resolved at the administrator or supervisor level, the student may make an appointment to see the Vice President of Student Services or designee.
4. The Vice President of Student Services's decision is final.

The Vice President of Student Services is available for advocacy or advice should students feel the need for additional assistance relative to college policy and regulations.

INSURANCE

Howard Community College does not provide medical coverage for students who are accidentally injured during classes or who suffer injuries as

a result of incidents between students. All students are encouraged to obtain their own medical insurance, especially if they participate in classes and/or activities which require physical activity or exposure to other health risks (e.g. nursing classes, science labs, physical education activities, dance and theater classes, clubs and student government activities, etc.)

Nursing and allied health students are required to meet specified health requirements. Documentation is required for proof of freedom from TB and immunity to rubella, rubeola, mumps, and varicella through vaccination or titer. Hepatitis B vaccine (HBV) or declination is also required and immunization for tetanus.

The college does not administer a student medical insurance plan. Information on how students can obtain health insurance on their own is available in a brochure entitled "Student Health Insurance Plans." This brochure can be found in the following offices:

- Student Life
- Welcome Center
- Admissions
- Academic Support/Career Services
- Financial Aid
- Learning Assistance Center
- Health Sciences Division
- Continuing Education and Workforce Development

International students attending the college on F-1 student visas are required to have health insurance that provides coverage for health care in the United States. For further information about these requirements, contact the Office of Admissions and Advising.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found is located in the Security Services office. All items not claimed within 30 days may be claimed by the finder.

NON-STUDENTS ON CAMPUS

Action may be taken against any and all persons who have no legitimate reason for their presence on campus. Although such persons are not subject to college sanctions, they will be subject to the relevant sanctions of the penal code of Maryland which concerns loitering and trespassing.

PARKING

Parking is defined as stationing a vehicle, with or without a driver in attendance and irrespective of time of day or length of time the vehicle is stationed.

All students driving vehicles on campus are required to register their vehicles. Parking hang tags, decals and temporary permits are obtained from the Welcome Center. The responsibility of finding a legal parking space rests with the motor vehicle operator. It is impossible to mark with signs or paint curbs in all areas of the college where parking is prohibited; parking is therefore restricted to designated parking areas only. Lack of space is not considered a valid excuse for violation of these regulations. The fact that one disregards any regulation and does not receive a citation does not mean that the applicable regulation is no longer in effect.

- Parking regulations are in effect 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

- Vehicles may park only in areas in which assigned and must display the appropriate decal indicating authorization.
- Vehicles must park in such a manner as to utilize only one parking space.

CITATIONS AND TOWING

Parking citations are issued at the rate of one per violation.

Vehicles improperly parked in handicapped spaces, reserved parking areas, fire lanes, and no-parking areas will be issued a parking citation and may be towed. Each citation carries a penalty of \$20. If payment is not received within 10 business days, the penalty will be assessed at the rate of \$25 per violation.

Vehicles without the appropriate parking decal displayed will be identified by license plate number. Any fees associated with identifying parking violators by license plate number through the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration will be charged to that violator. Any towing costs will be the responsibility of the violator.

All parking fines issued by the College are payable to Howard Community College at the Cashier's office and grades will be held if not paid in full. Students enrolled in the non-credit English as a Second Language (ESL) program are exempt. In addition to receiving a parking citation from the college, an individual parked in a handicapped space, fire, zone, or no-parking zone is subject to additional fines from the Howard County Police Department. Howard County fines are imposed at \$150 per violation in a handicapped space, \$25 per violation in a fire zone, and \$17 per violation in a no-parking area. All fines issued by Howard County are payable to Howard County Police Department.

APPEALS

Persons who feel they have received a traffic citation unjustly may appeal in writing to the HCC Security Office.

PAYMENT

Penalties may be paid to the college Cashier's office during the hours of 8:45 a.m.-8 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 8:45a.m.-5 p.m., Friday. Towed vehicles will not be released until all penalties owed to the college are paid.

BICYCLES

Bicycle racks are placed in various locations throughout the campus and are to be used by all non-licensed two-wheel vehicles.

Bicycles will not be brought into the buildings or secured to lampposts, sign posts or fences under any circumstances. Violators will be subject to confiscation of vehicles and/or fine of \$10.

SMOKING ON CAMPUS

HCC has designated smoking areas on campus as follows: exterior rear of Nursing building, exterior of Clark Library building near L100, portion of the ELB porch facing the RCF Hall. Smoking citations in the amount of \$20.00 will be issued by HCC Security to anyone who smokes in undesignated areas. If payment is not received within 10 business days, a penalty is assessed at the rate of \$25.00 per violation. All fines are made payable to Howard Community College at the Cashier's office. Grades will be held if not paid in full.

In addition to on-campus citations, Howard County imposes a \$50 fine for smoking within 15 feet of any doorway.

STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Howard Community College recognizes that students have the following rights and responsibilities:

1. Students have the right to freedom of expression, assembly, advocacy, and inquiry. Students are responsible for complying with all college rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.
2. Students have the right to offer opposing opinions and to reserve judgment about their views, beliefs, academic evaluations, political affiliations, and educational records. Students are responsible for respecting this right of others. They are also responsible for exercising their right of expression in a manner that is not disruptive as described in the Student Code of Conduct.
3. Students have the right to participate in any student group without discrimination and to form such groups according to the Student Government Association bylaws. Student groups are responsible for not discriminating against others.
4. Students have the right to form a student government, which shall be governed by a constitution approved by the HCC Administration. Students are responsible for abiding by that constitution. The actions of the student government may be implemented only through prescribed procedures.
5. Students have the right to participate in the formulation of institutional, academic, and student policies. Opportunities for such participation will be provided through representation on appropriate committees as set forth in the college's internal governance procedures. As participation in the institutional process, students are responsible for complying with all published and prescribed procedures, attending meetings, and participating in the decision-making process with the welfare of the entire student body in mind.
6. Students have the right to participate in the evaluation process of academic courses. Students are responsible for rendering fair and accurate evaluations.
7. Students have the right to fair evaluation by instructors, based upon clearly defined criteria presented at the beginning of the course. Students are responsible for meeting all established requirements of the course in which they enroll.
8. Students have the right to expect that the college's published procedures will be followed in any disciplinary action. Students are responsible for following all rules, regulations, policies, and procedures that apply to student conduct.
9. Students have the right to file academic or general grievances against any faculty or staff member who has, in a student's opinion, displayed inappropriate behavior. Students are responsible for following the college's procedures.
10. Students with documented disabilities have the right to reasonable accommodations. Students are responsible in advance to formally request accommodations and to provide documentation of their disability to the Disability Support Services Office. Grievances regarding accommodations should be first addressed with the Disability Support Services Office.

11. Students have the right to the confidentiality of their academic records. Specific information is considered directory information and is routinely released to outside agencies and individuals. Directory information includes: student name, dates of attendance, majors, degrees and awards, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and height and weight of members of athletic teams. Information not released includes address, telephone number, and e-mail address. Howard Community College follows the guidelines established by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Students can request this information be withheld. Questions or requests may be referred to the Office of Records and Registration.

12. Section 493.A of the Higher Education Act as amended in 1992 requires post-secondary educational institutions to disseminate relevant, candid information on student financial aid programs available at the college. These rights and responsibilities may be found in "The Student Guide," (U.S. Department of Education) and is available in the Student Financial Aid Office. All financial aid awards are for one academic year and it is the student's responsibility to reapply each year.

STUDENT RIGHT TO KNOW

Beginning July 1st, 1993, federal law requires the disclosure of graduation and transfer rates of undergraduate students entering Howard Community College. The percentage of students entering HCC in 2003 who graduated

or transferred within three years was 30 percent. A detailed report is available in the college's Financial Aid Services office and Planning, Research and Organizational Development office.

Note: The rate for transfer students includes those students enrolling in Maryland Public four-year institutions and some Maryland independent colleges.

VALUING DIVERSITY

Howard Community College is committed to valuing diversity. "We acknowledge that diversity is more than a concept or philosophy; it is a way of being. Diversity is recognizing, appreciating, respecting, listening to and learning from the unique talents and contributions of all people."

HCC's diversity programs will reflect and respect all differences in age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnic backgrounds, and ability/disability as well as the values of equal rights, equal access, and equal treatment. HCC recognizes the critical role of an educational institution in preparing all students, faculty and staff to become contributing members of the global community. In order to assure success, all members of the college community must vigorously accept their responsibility of supporting the college's strategic priority to incorporate diversity into the fabric of the institution. Diversity and affirmative action commitment originates with the board of trustees and filters throughout every facet of the institution.

