



Parent Handbook 2025-2026

Letter from the Director of Admissions

Dear Future and Current GCU Parent(s),

We welcome you and your family to Grand Canyon University! College is an exciting time filled with new opportunities. These opportunities often coincide with substantial changes your loved one is likely to experience in their social, emotional, and academic development as they transition into adulthood. During this transitional time, it is vital that your loved one develops the ability to think independently, proactively seek out healthy relationships and involvement, and learn how to effectively navigate life's obstacles largely on their own.

The University's mission statement has two primary components. The first part is the expression of the University's purpose as a higher education institution in the community (all communities for which it's a part) and the world. The second part is its expression about the University's purpose regarding what graduated students will be able to do in the community and the world. It is the University's position that academic quality and integrity for the institution and students are foundational:

"GCU is a missional, Christ-centered university with an innovative and adaptive spirit that addresses the world's deep needs by cultivating compassionate Christian community, empowering free and virtuous action, and serving others in ways that promote human flourishing.

Through academic excellence, the university equips students with knowledge of the Christian worldview, instilling in them a sense of purpose and vocational calling that enables them to be innovative thinkers, effective communicators, global contributors, and transformative leaders who change their communities by placing the interests of others before their own."

Our mission reinforces GCU's student-centric institutional priorities by emphasizing the relationship between academics, co-curriculum, and community, and our focus on meeting the needs of students, the community, and the larger world. This mission strengthens and elaborates on what sets GCU apart – our Christian identity and purpose. This aligns with our endeavor to help your student achieve what sets them apart as individuals. Here your student can learn to become self-sufficient and independent, but in a safe, structured environment built around support and care through a Christian worldview.

In higher education students own their academic experience, and you should expect to hear about your student's experience directly from them. We encourage you to promote your student's maturity and independence while in college to prepare for the workforce. Just as your student's future boss will not call you to discuss their performance, nor will University faculty and staff. While we understand your immediate inclination is likely to get involved, such as in high school, this responsibility transitions to them in college. Please know we will work directly with your student to troubleshoot and resolve any areas of concern. If your student expresses concern, you should discuss with your student the ways they have engaged in appropriate communication to resolve the matter. If your student does not know where to initiate the dialogue, their Student Services Counselor (SSC) is the best starting point.

We look forward to working with your student as they develop their own academic, personal, and spiritual growth, as they are important life skills. We believe that the more familiar parents are with college, with the emphasis on student empowerment, the more you will be prepared to help your student effectively navigate their time at GCU, and then successfully transition to the workforce. This handbook provides you with helpful information that will assist you in supporting your student's success.

Welcome to LOPE Country. Go Lopes!

Dr. Jennifer Lech
Vice Provost
Director of Admissions

Version Record

Edition	Version	Updated	Changes Made
2025-2026	V1.3	8/22/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Letter from the Director of Admissions • Updated Ways to Support your Student information • Updated FERPA information • Updated Community Standards Incident Review information • New Appropriate Use of AI section • Updated Weapons and Firearms section • Updated Canyon Health and Wellness Clinic information • Updated Safety Resources information • Updated Title IX and Non-Discrimination information • Updated Academic and Career Resources information • Updated Student Disability Services information • Updated Reference Guide • Updated University Appeals information • Updated Resources and Contacts
2022-2025	V1.2	8/1/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Letter from the Director of Admissions • Updated Parent Code of Conduct • Updated Ways to Support Your Student information • Updated Spiritual Life information • Updated Academic Resources information • Updated Student Disability Services information • Updated Reference Guide • Updated Appeals information • Updated Resources and Contacts

Table of Contents

Letter from the Director of Admissions	2
Version Record	3
Table of Contents	4
Parent Code of Conduct	5
Encouraging Student Success	6
Things to Discuss with Your Student Before College	6
Ways to Support Your Student	7
FERPA.....	9
Student Behavior Expectations	11
Community Standards	11
Roommate Conflicts	11
Community Standards Incident Review Process	12
University Code of Conduct Process	12
Appropriate Use of Artificial Intelligence:	13
Weapons and Firearms	14
Mental Health and Wellness	15
Office of Student Care	15
Canyon Health and Wellness Clinic	15
What can I do as a parent if I have concerns?.....	16
Student Safety	17
Public Safety.....	17
Safety Resources	17
Commitment to Title IX and Non-Discrimination	17
Consent.....	19
Important Conversations to Have	19
Spiritual Life	20
Academic & Career Resources	21
Student Disability Services	23
Reference Guide.....	25
Quick Reference Guide to Common Student Issues	25
University Appeals.....	30
Adjusting to College Life.....	32
Be Prepared that Your Student May Want to Leave.....	32
Conversation Tips.....	32
Resources	34
Important Resources and Contacts.....	34

Parent Code of Conduct

While we anticipate that your student will be the primary point of contact while conducting business within the University, we do recognize that there may be situations in which you participate in meetings with your student and University staff. To that end, any person, including a parent or guardian, or other third-party representative, is expected to act in an appropriate, courteous and professional manner toward University staff, faculty, and other students. To promote a positive and productive educational environment, the following is a non-exhaustive list of behavior which will not be tolerated:

- Disruptive behavior which interferes with normal operation of the University, including but not limited to, multiple and repeated phone calls to University staff without allowing for a reasonable response time of 48 business hours to return a call to the student
- Using hostile or offensive language, such as swearing, or displaying an excessive amount of anger and aggression in person, on the phone, or through any electronic means.
- Failure to comply with a reasonable directive from a faculty member or University representative.
- Threatening a member of the GCU community including physical violence, job status, or any other way meant to intimidate to achieve a desired outcome.
- Accessing a student's portal, online classroom, physical classroom or any other system designed for student information and engagement.
- Completing document for a student.
- Impersonating a student on a phone call or any other interaction with University staff.

The University reserves the right to discontinue communicating with any person, including a parent, guardian or other third-party person, that engages in inappropriate, threatening or other unprofessional conduct toward a University representative. This includes ceasing all written, voice-to-voice, and in-person interactions, regardless of whether a Student Information Release Form (SIRF) is on file. The University will continue to release education records to a person authorized on the SIRF form, recognizing that a release of records generally comes in the form of a paper document and does not provide permission for staff to discuss the document or any other part of the student's education record.

Encouraging Student Success

Things to Discuss with Your Student Before College

Having conversations with your student about the various academic and social challenges they may face is one of the most important ways you can prepare them for life as an independent college student. Help your student understand that the choices they make can result in various academic, disciplinary, or legal outcomes. Your student's college journey is one of individual growth and is different from their educational experience up until this point.

High School	College
High school is mandatory.	College is voluntary and has standards for entry and progression.
A student's time is structured by others.	Students are responsible for managing their own time.
Students need permission to participate in certain activities.	Students choose how to spend their time and what activities/co-curriculars to participate in.
Parents and teachers hold students accountable and guide their educational journey.	Students must manage their priorities and are ultimately responsible for their own success.
Students spend around 30 hours a week in class.	Students spend about 1 hour per credit hour for each course each week in class, and the workload outside of class will be greater.
A student's schedule is mostly arranged for them.	Students build their own schedule, with the assistance of their Student Services Counselor.
A student's schedule is designed to lead to graduation, and students are not solely responsible for knowing the requirements.	Graduation requirements are complex and differ depending on your program of study. Students are responsible for understanding graduation requirements and ensuring they make satisfactory academic progress.
Requirements for graduation are standardized.	Some programs may have additional requirements for acceptance, secondary acceptance, or graduation. Students are responsible for understanding and meeting the requirements.
Teachers will give reminders about upcoming homework, quizzes, and tests.	Professors may not provide reminders. Assignments, quizzes, and tests will be outlined in the syllabus/HALO classroom.
Teachers may approach a student who they feel needs additional assistance.	Professors expect students to seek out assistance if needed.
Teachers provide students with information and allow make up work from when students are absent.	Students are responsible for whatever material was covered during an absence.
Teachers will outline what they expect students to learn from certain materials and what they will be responsible for knowing.	Students are expected to read all materials and draw their own conclusions about what is important and make connections to what is covered in class.

High School	College
Extra credit points are often available to help raise grades.	No extra credit assignments are available. All gradable items are listed in the syllabus and will be graded accordingly.
Grades may be rounded within certain parameters.	GCU does not condone the rounding of grades. Furthermore, a student's GPA is calculated in accordance with the University grading scale.
Students generally graduate so long as required courses are completed with a D or higher.	Students must satisfy all academic and financial elements to be eligible for graduation.
Students will generally be told what to do and will be warned/corrected if their behavior is unacceptable.	Students are responsible for their actions and will be held accountable for their choices. It is their responsibility to understand the University's expectations regarding academics as well as conduct. Lack of knowledge of University policy will not be accepted as a defense for failure to meet University standards.

Parents in High School	Parents in College
You remind your student of their responsibilities and actively participate in their education.	Your student is responsible for setting their own priorities and making independent decisions.
You may have direct contact with your student's teachers and are provided feedback on their academic progress.	Professors work directly with students. Information pertaining to your student's performance and participation in class will not be communicated to you.
You will be notified if your student is not attending their classes.	Your student is accountable for their own attendance decisions.
You may play a role in disciplinary proceedings.	Disciplinary procedures will be conducted directly with your student.

Independence and self-assertion are critical life and employment skills your student will learn during their time at GCU, creating a solid foundation for transition into the workplace and position them for long-term success

Ways to Support Your Student

Grand Canyon University is committed to excellence – striving to help students become global citizens, critical thinkers, effective communicators, and responsible leaders. Although your student is learning to become an independent thinker and self-advocate, you can support their development in this process by engaging in active dialogue in the following areas:

Encourage your student's independence:

It is inevitable that your student will encounter challenges as they are learning to navigate college life. As a parent, allowing your child the opportunity to overcome their problems and thinking through solutions helps them to recognize their strengths and build upon the areas in which are not as strong.

Remind your student to stay connected:

Grand Canyon University recognizes the need for multiple channels of communication in order to provide essential information to students in the most appropriate and effective format. To that end, students may receive official communication from the University in a variety of ways, including but not limited to, electronic documents via the Student Portal, postal mail, preferred e-mail, and Grand Canyon University e-mail. Upon enrollment, all students receive a Grand Canyon University e-mail address, and students are expected to frequently check their Grand Canyon University e-mail, as well as any other preferred e-mail address provided, to ensure University communications are reviewed in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to ensure their communication preferences are updated in the Student Portal.

- The students.gcu.edu website provides detailed information regarding colleges and programs, academic policies, student affairs, and other important resources. For anything from accessing the student and parent portal, to the housing selection process, through upholding academic integrity, the website is a one-stop-shop for a wealth of information.
- AlertGCU is GCU's official emergency alert system used to quickly share critical safety information through text, email, and on-campus message boards. All students are automatically enrolled. Choosing to opt out of text messages will delay your student's access to urgent safety instructions, and GCU cannot re-enroll them during an emergency. To ensure your student receives emergency alerts, please make sure they verify their contact information in their student portal at <https://gcuportal.gcu.edu/> or contact their Student Services Counselor (SSC) for help.
- Keeping Lopes in the loop, the GCU Life and GCU Student apps are loaded with information for student and parents. Use these apps to get involved, stay organized, access resources, and communicate with others across campus.

Help your student connect to the campus community:

Even though this is an exciting time for your student, moving away from home and adjusting to college life can take a toll, resulting in a feeling of homesickness. If you feel your student is disconnected or homesick, ask what steps they are taking to be involved in the campus community.

- **Department of Welcome Programs-** The Department of Welcome Programs serves GCU families and incoming students through orientation, transition, and connectedness. Our team of Orientation Leaders connect with new students during Welcome Week, and beyond. Welcome Programs also oversees Lope Family programming which includes Family Weekend, Fuel for Finals, and Lope Family Serve day.
- **Residence Life** – If your student lives on campus, your student's resident assistant (RA) and/or resident director (RD) are individuals who can guide your student to a variety of campus resources. They can also assist with coaching your student on how to connect with other students on the floor and on campus.
- **Student Engagement** - The Office of Student Engagement is home to several important groups and departments on campus, including GCU Clubs, Canyon Activity Board (CAB), Commuter Life, the Associated Students of Grand Canyon University (ASGCU), Multicultural Life and more. By connecting students through events, clubs, and organizations, their goal is to help your student make the most of their time on campus by becoming immersed in the full college experience. Your student is encouraged to utilize the GCU Life App as a resource to help them connect with events and activities on campus which can be found in the App Store for both Apple and Google.
- **GCU Clubs** – GCU features a variety of clubs and organizations spanning multiple areas of interest, such as Community and Volunteer, Ministry, and Social, just to name a few. All clubs and organizations, except for honors societies, are open to all students, regardless of major or college. Your student can contact the Office of Student Engagement or clubs@gcu.edu for more information.

- **The Department of Campus Recreation** – Offers plenty of recreational opportunities to help you stay active and have fun during your time on campus. Get involved in one of our many intramural sports teams or head to a class at our student fitness centers. Take a weekend and explore the great outdoors with the GCU Outdoor Recreation program. There is plenty to help you stay in shape while also getting to know other Lopes! Your student can visit www.myrec.gcu.edu for up-to-date information for all Campus Rec programs, facilities and events.
- **Club Sports** - GCU offers a wide range of intercollegiate men's and women's club sports. Our club sports teams compete in established and regulated national organizations and are led by expert coaches who are passionate about helping their players grow athletically and personally. With top-quality, on-campus facilities, dynamic practices and highly competitive levels, the GCU club sports program offers opportunities to pursue a passion while also focusing on the academic journey.
- **Spiritual Life** - The Department of Spiritual Life helps the Grand Canyon University (GCU) community grow in a personal relationship with God through an active faith in Jesus Christ. GCU offers weekly programs for students to engage their faith through worship services, small groups, outreach opportunities, and more.
- **Career Resources** - Career Services at Grand Canyon University provides students with resources, professional knowledge and support to help them transition from academics into a career they may find rewarding. Several career-building tools are available to help your student discover potential career paths, build a resume, search for employment (including student worker jobs), and more. Students can visit the on-campus Career Center to learn more about available career support.
- **The Student Employment Team** – Posts numerous student worker positions across a diverse range of campus departments. Students may work up to 20 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters, and up to 40 hours per week during full-week academic breaks (e.g., Winter, Spring and Summer). Please note that working hours are not permitted during scheduled class times. Student worker positions are competitive and not guaranteed; interested students must submit an online application. Applicants for positions with GCU or GCE must be enrolled at GCU as a full-time student in a Bachelor's or Master's program. Students must reside locally, as all jobs are located on or near GCU's main campus. Additionally, students must meet and maintain a minimum of 2.0 for undergraduate students or 3.0 for graduate students.

Help your student navigate difficult conversations:

Talk with them about their concerns; guide them in thinking through their concerns and the resolution they are trying to obtain. Coach them on how to express themselves in a professional and appropriate manner. By creating an atmosphere of open communication and guidance, you can empower your student to solve their own problems.

- Encourage your student to learn about the different campus resources designed to help them succeed.
- Even though your student is developing autonomy and self-sufficiency, they still need your support and positive influence. By being knowledgeable about the resources and tools outlined in this guide, you can still take an active interest in your student's success while guiding them to become responsible for their own academic and social decisions.

FERPA

Grand Canyon University is committed to protecting the privacy of your student's records. Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), students who reach the age of 18, or who attend a postsecondary institution, are afforded the right to privacy as it pertains to their education record and have some control of the disclosure of information from these records. Although your student may opt to share certain information with you by completing the Student Information Release Form (SIRF), parents are not automatically granted access to a student's records.

A SIRF or FERPA release means that we can release a copy of an education record to an authorized third party, such as a parent. However, it does not authorize a GCU staff member to have discussions about it, or any portion of the student's education record, or for the authorized person to take action on the account. A record is generally released as a paper document, or through the Parent Portal if applicable, and with appropriate permissions.

Additionally, a SIRF does not grant the authority for GCU staff to communicate with you in lieu of your student, or for you to be included in or copied on University communications. Outside of an authorized release of information, it is your student's responsibility to share information with you.

Here are answers to common questions parents ask when it comes to FERPA:

- **Do I have the right to my student's records if I am paying their tuition?**

At the postsecondary level, parents have no inherent rights to their student's education records, regardless of whether they are paying for the student's education. This means you may not obtain your student's education records, including grades, unless your student provides their consent through a signed SIRF form.

- **Will I be notified if my student is sick or hurt?**

Parents are generally not notified if their student becomes sick or injured. However, in some emergency circumstances, such as a determination that a student is a danger to themselves or others, GCU will contact the student's listed emergency contact.

- **Will I be contacted if my student is facing academic or disciplinary action?**

In most cases, GCU will not contact you to provide any information related to academic or disciplinary actions. FERPA regulations allow, but do not require, parent notification if an underage student violates alcohol or drug policies. As part of the Student Conduct sanctioning process, parents are generally notified if their underage student is in violation of alcohol or drug policies.

- **Can I log into my student's classroom or otherwise use their login and password?**

A SIRF release does not grant permission to log in or otherwise access University systems on behalf of the student. This is considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, regardless of whether SIRF authorization is on file. If the University is notified that anyone other than the authorized student accesses their online classroom or any other system, the student will be charged with a Code of Conduct violation.

- **Are parents automatically copied on emails if my student has signed a SIRF?**

No, parents are not automatically copied on communication with your student. Regardless of record release authorization via a SIRF, GCU is required to communicate directly with the student. Although your student may opt to share certain information with you by completing SIRF, parents are not granted access to the entirety of their student's records. A SIRF provides GCU with the authorization to release a specific education record, but it does not allow GCU staff the authority to communicate with you in lieu of your student, or for you to be included in or copied on all communication between GCU and your student. Outside of an authorized release of records, the student chooses what information they want to share, and to whom.

Student Behavior Expectations

Understanding Grand Canyon University's Behavior Expectations and Community Standards

Community Standards

Grand Canyon University is first and foremost a Christian University and as such upholds a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere on campus that honors God. While students do not have to sign a Statement of Faith or be a Christian to attend GCU, they are expected to abide by the Community Standards. The Community Standards uphold certain University values that are believed to enhance the overall moral fabric of the community. Full information about GCU's community standards can be found in the University Policy Handbook. The following are some of the Community Standards that students may be referred to the student conduct process for violating:

- **Civility and Respect-** It is expected that all students demonstrate mutual respect and courtesy to one another, faculty, and staff. Physical abuse, verbal abuse, bullying, threats, intimidation, harassment, coercion, retaliation, including social media, and/or other conduct which threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person will not be tolerated.
- **Alcohol and Drugs-** GCU is a dry campus, which means alcohol, bottles, cans, containers (filled/empty) and paraphernalia are prohibited. Consumption or storage of drugs (including marijuana) or alcohol is a violation.
- **Smoking and Electronic Smoking Devices-** e-cigarettes, vapes and accessories and/or other legal smoking devices are allowed in designated areas on campus, but not in residential living areas.
- **Failure to Comply-** it is expected for students to promptly comply with a reasonable University directive.
- **Visitation-** GCU has a strict visitation policy that helps ensure living areas are safe and comfortable for all residents living in a dorm or apartment. See the University Policy Handbook- Guest Privileges for full guidelines regarding visitation and guest policies.
- **Quiet Hours-** in all living areas, quiet hours are from 10 PM to 10 AM, seven days a week.

Roommate Conflicts

Open and ongoing communication is the key to your student establishing and maintaining a positive and successful roommate relationship. Dialoguing with your student ahead of time regarding roommate expectations, flexibility and approaching conflict proactively will help your student be prepared to navigate their roommate relationships. For most students, this is their first time sharing a room and learning to live with someone who is not a member of their family. When a roommate conflict arises, the conflict will be resolved through the structure of the roommate conflict resolution process. The University has a very specific, educational conflict resolution process. This process is used in campus housing University-wide.

Roommate conflicts are normal and healthy for students and are a very common part of your student learning to live autonomously. As their parent/family member, you will often be their first call when faced with the challenges of roommate conflict. Remain calm. Listen and ask questions to understand what they are experiencing. Filter out your own emotions about the situation. Encourage your student to talk it out with their roommate(s).

Most conflicts result from a lack of communication between roommates. Remind your student that as a member of the residential community, they are guaranteed a safe, but not always comfortable, living environment. Encourage them to talk with their RA for more assistance as GCU practices a three-step conflict resolution process. Remind your student that if the RA/RD is unaware of the conflict, they are not able to step in and help give your student the tools to help resolve their conflict. Lastly, remind your student that conflict resolution does not happen overnight!

Community Standards Incident Review Process

As a Christian University, GCU strives to offer loving accountability and to be redemptive in its approach to students who have violated the Community Standards. The Incident Review Process addresses such concerns. Decisions made by the Department of Community Standards will be final, pending the normal appeal process. With any Student conduct procedure, students are not permitted to be accompanied by third parties or attorneys and may not document the hearing by the use of a recording device. The student will be referred to one of the following processes:

- Meet with a RD
- Meet with a Student-Led Community Conference. The student will be notified of the date, time, and place of their meeting
- Visitation Violation process
- Informal resolution with a Community Standards Coordinator
- Meet with the Community Standards Board
- Meet with the Code of Conduct Committee

The determination of a Community Standards violation is made based on a preponderance of the evidence, whether it is more likely than not that the student violated the Community Standards. Sanctions for violations range from mediation with both parties, up to removal from housing and referral to the Code of Conduct Committee for possible suspension or expulsion from the University. The determined sanction will depend on the severity of the offense, as well as the student's conduct history.

Appeals of Community Standards sanctions are only accepted within 72 hours of when they are informed of the decision. Appeals will only be accepted for the following reasons:

- There was a procedural error in the Community Standards Process that unfairly and materially affected the outcome of the decision.
- Evidence has been discovered that was not reasonably available at the time of the hearing.
- The sanctions that were assigned were substantially disproportionate to similar violations.
- Appeals must be submitted by completing the appeals form online at the URL listed in the sanction letter.

University Code of Conduct Process

Academic integrity is at the heart of GCU's values and is integral to our University community. All students are expected to possess and abide by a high standard of conduct and personal integrity in the classroom and beyond. It is the responsibility of all GCU students to be familiar with the specific policies pertaining to student conduct and academic integrity that are outlined in the University Policy Handbook. Below is a list, although non-exhaustive, of common policy violations for which students are referred to the Code of Conduct process.

- Plagiarism
- Self-Plagiarism
- Cheating
- Selling or providing assignments to other students, online term paper or study guide sites, or any other website
- Fabricating, falsifying, forging or otherwise altering information related to an academic activity
- Inappropriate communication
- Disruptive behavior
- Failure to comply with a reasonable directive from a faculty member or University official
- Sharing one's password or using someone else's password to access any University system or network

- Permitting anyone access to one's classroom or attending class for another.

GCU's Code of Conduct process utilizes a progressive discipline model using a graduated sanctioning method to apply the lowest level sanction possible, based on the severity of the infraction, with the goal to increase student understanding of the policy and expectations and decrease the chances of repeat offenses. Sanctions are determined by evaluating the severity of the offense in conjunction with the student's history, and may range from a non-disciplinary warning, up through and including expulsion or revocation of a degree.

It is common for parents to have questions about what they and their student can expect if they are charged with a violation of the Code of Conduct. Students who receive such notification are provided with multiple ways in which they can participate in the process. Students should follow the instructions provided in the communication received from the University and can contact their Student Services Counselor with any additional questions.

Here are answers to common questions parents ask when it comes to the Code of Conduct process:

- **Will I be notified if my student is charged with a violation of the Code of Conduct?**
Parents do not receive notice from the University when conduct violations have been alleged against their students, although your student may choose to disclose this information to you. The proceedings and related documentation are confidential and are considered part of the student's education record, which is protected under FERPA.
- **Can I call or meet with someone on my student's behalf or otherwise receive information about the process?**
Even if appropriate authorization has been designated to you through the SIRC process, FERPA is for release of records only and does not allow the authorized person to have discussions with GCU staff or take action on the account. Students are expected to act on their own behalf for all facets of their academic business, including conduct-related proceedings. Detailed information about the process is located in the University Policy Handbook, as well as on the Student Success Center section of the GCU Website.
- **Can I be present in the Code of Conduct conference?**
Students are not entitled to representation by any third party, personal representative, or attorney in the University disciplinary process.
- **Should I hire an attorney?**
The Code of Conduct process is based on violations of University policy and are not legal proceedings. Additionally, students are not entitled to any outside representation during the process.
- **Can my student appeal the decision?**
A student can submit an appeal utilizing the University Appeal procedures as outlined in the University Policy Handbook. However, there must be sufficient documentation to warrant submitting the appeal, as simply not liking the decision does not justify submission of an appeal.

The Procedure for Processing alleged violations of the Code of Conduct are outlined in detail in the University Policy Handbook. It is critical that students and parents alike are aware of the Code of Conduct and the expectations it sets forth.

Appropriate Use of Artificial Intelligence:

Artificial intelligence (AI) provides new opportunities to enhance learning and creativity. While exciting, these technologies require responsible use. At Grand Canyon University, your student is responsible for using AI in ways that support their learning, reflect personal effort, and align with ethical standards of academic integrity and Christian character. While AI tools can offer support to your student in studying, organizing, or clarifying ideas, they are not a substitute for their engagement, reasoning and original work.

- **Appropriate AI Use:** AI is permitted when it aligns with course expectations and enhances academic work without replacing understanding. Uses include idea generation, study support, and writing assistance, with transparency and attribution required.
- **Prohibited AI Use:** Misuse includes unauthorized use, non-disclosure of AI involvement, or reliance on AI instead of personal effort, violating GCU's integrity standards.
- **Verification and Response:** Instructors may verify AI use to ensure authentic learning, prioritizing student growth and fairness through constructive dialogues and remediation.
- **Academic Integrity:** AI misuse is subject to review, with consequences ranging from assignment revisions to disciplinary actions based on severity and context.
- **Support and Guidance:** GCU offers resources to navigate AI use, promoting transparency and innovation within a trusted academic environment. Students are encouraged to seek support to maximize AI's educational potential.

Examples of prohibited AI use include:

- Submitting an AI-written essay on a topic without conducting your own research or analysis.
- Using AI to generate discussion responses and posting them without personal engagement.
- Having AI complete a personal reflection or journal entry based on fabricated experience.
- Editing an AI-generated answer to appear original without understanding the content.
- Using AI during a take-home exam or timed assessment where no external tools are allowed.

Your student's instructor will decide how to handle any concerns about AI use based on the course and situation. However, if AI is used inappropriately, it may be addressed through the university's Code of Conduct process. It is your student's responsibility to understand and follow AI-related expectations in each course. Ignorance, lack of intent, or misunderstanding of the policy will not exempt students from consequences but may influence the type of action taken.

Weapons and Firearms

Weapons: Weapons and hazardous materials are not allowed on campus. Students possessing weapons are in violation of University policy and may face sanctions up to and including referral to the Code of Conduct Committee and/or the Threat Assessment Team for possible suspension or expulsion from the University.

Firearms: Students possessing a firearm on campus are subject to immediate expulsion from the University, and the expulsion is not subject to appeal. If your student is hosting a guest on campus who is found to be in violation of the University's policy on firearms, your student will still face immediate expulsion. Guests are the responsibility of the student who is hosting them, whether the guest is a GCU commuter student or an off-campus guest. The actions of the guests are the actions of the student hosting them. Guests are required to abide by all the policies and rules of the University.

Expulsions resulting from possession of firearms are immediate and not subject to the Procedure for Processing Alleged Violations of the Student Code of Conduct, as outlined in the University Policy Handbook. Law Enforcement Officers, on or off duty, are exempt from this provision.

Mental Health and Wellness

Office of Student Care

College presents a host of new responsibilities and challenges for students. As a result, your student may experience a mix of emotional reactions and may need some support to navigate some of the new stressors in their life. GCU is committed to supporting its students emotionally and mentally, as well as academically. If your student is struggling, refer them to the Office of Student Care where they can be connected to counseling and support groups.

- Located on the second floor of the Student Life Building
- Student Care offers free counseling services for all traditional campus undergraduate students.
- Students commonly struggle with: life changes, feeling homesick, anxiety and stress, relationship concerns, struggles with self-esteem, depression, substance use, problems with eating and body image.
- Provides students with psychoeducation, group counseling, brief, solution-focused individual counseling, crisis counseling and outside referral consultation
- All clinical experiences are confidential and thus not releasable as an education record. So please communicate with your student directly for information related to their counseling experiences.
- Student Care groups are weekly offerings that vary from semester to semester, but most popular offerings include groups centered on relationships, anxiety/stress, resiliency, and coping skills.

Canyon Health and Wellness Clinic

Wellness is an important part of having a successful college experience, and the Canyon Health and Wellness Center is there to help. The experienced healthcare practitioners are the Canyon Health and Wellness Clinic provide quality medical services to all students, faculty, and staff.

- Located in Papago Apartments
- Monday – Friday 7:45 AM – 5:30 PM
- After-hours and weekend nurse advice line: 1-877-602-7217
- Walk-ins are welcome and appointments are available on a first-come, first served basis.
- The staff consists of an MD, Nurse Practitioners, Nurses, and Medical Assistants.
- Most major insurance plans are accepted. If Canyon Health and Wellness Clinic is a Participating Provider with your commercial plan, we will file claims with your insurance carrier, which processes the claim for payment according to your plan benefits. The patient will be charged their office visit copay at time of service. You will receive a billing statement via mail for any charges that your insurance carrier does not pay.
- If you do not have insurance or the student health center is not contracted with your insurance carrier, your student will be charged a \$50.00 visit fee. There could be additional charges for lab tests, x-rays, medical procedures, supplies or medication.
- The clinic will file all claims with the Student Health Insurance carrier, which processes the claim for payment according to plan benefits. Patient will be charged their office copay at time of service. For more information on this optional plan, please visit: <https://www.uhcsr.com/GCU>
- In addition to Sick and Well visits (including sports and school physicals), the clinic offers X-ray, Dietician services, physical rehabilitation and case management.
- Please note that the Health and Wellness Clinic can handle most medical emergencies, however, if your student experiences a medical emergency during off hours or requires immediate medical attention, they should call 911 and/or seek care from an emergency room.

What can I do as a parent if I have concerns?

- If you believe your student is in immediate psychological danger, call Public Safety at 602.639.8100 describing the nature of your concern and a Wellness Check will be conducted immediately.
- Licensed therapists in the Office of Student Care provide short-term, solution-focused counseling support, and as a result it is not recommended that Student Care be used as a part of post-hospitalization or post-inpatient facility aftercare plan.
- Student Care builds daily crisis availability into their scheduling, but in the event it is determined that a student requires more consistent and ongoing clinical support than can be provided under their scope of practice, the student will receive a listing of preferred community providers to pursue locally (including low cost options).

Student Safety

The safety of all students, faculty, staff, and guests at our campus is a top priority. GCU takes steps to protect your student, and all visitors to our properties – campus, residential halls, satellite locations, and arena – 24 hours a day.

Public Safety

Our 24-hour security staff includes certified Police Officers, uniformed security guards at each point of entry and a Dispatch center to coordinate security efforts. In addition, GCU has partnered with the Phoenix Police Department on a Neighborhood Safety Initiative to create a positive impact in the community surrounding GCU.

- In the event of an emergency, call 911.
- For assistance from Public Safety, call 602.639.8100.
- For non-emergency, general questions and more information, email security@gcu.edu.

Safety Resources

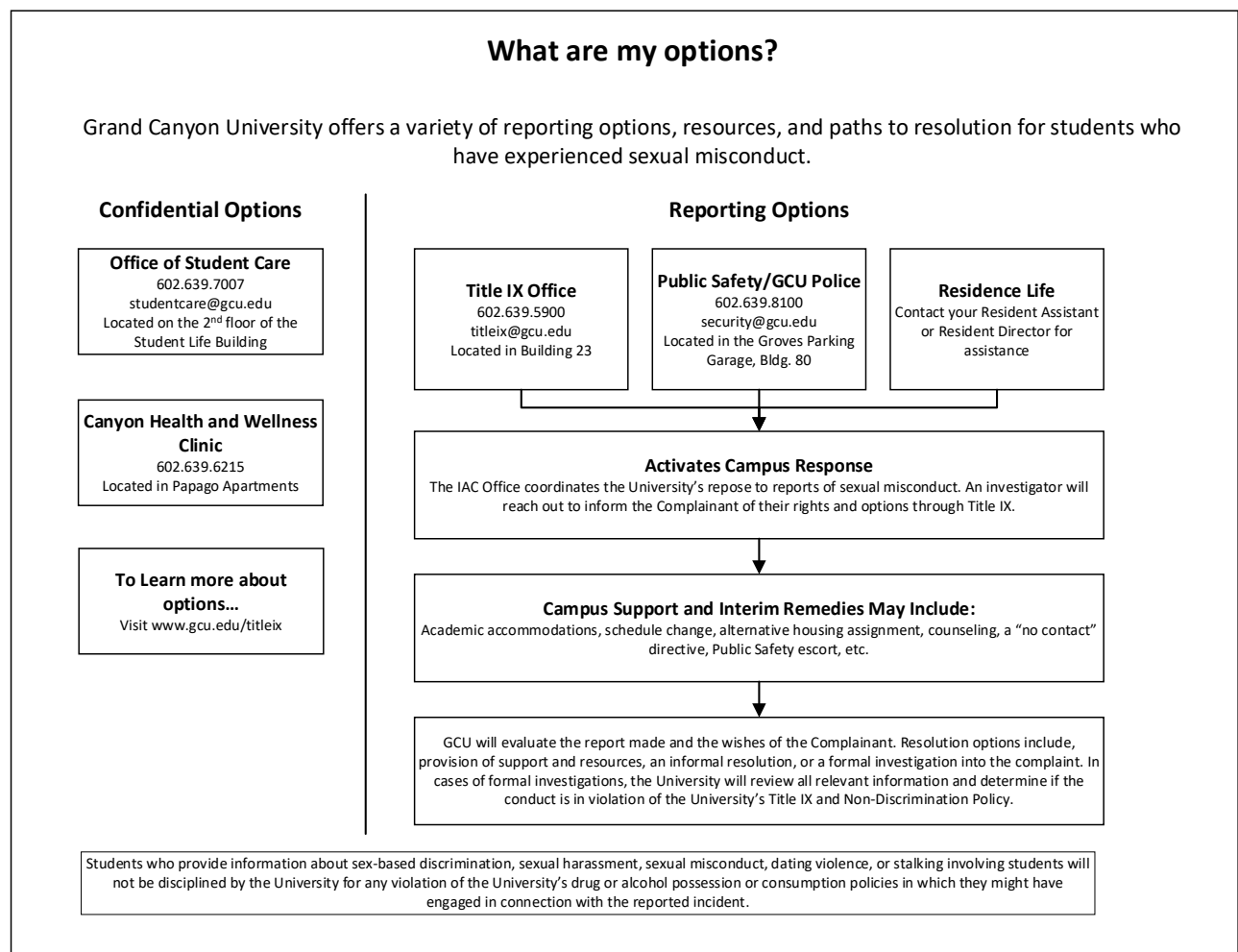
- Emergency Notification System - AlertGCU is GCU's official Emergency Notification System to communicate time-sensitive information via text, email and on-campus message boards during a campus emergency. Public Safety uses AlertGCU to share important safety and security tips and messages. Students can update their contact information to receive alerts through their Student Portal at <https://myportal.gcu.edu> or by contacting their Student Services Counselor.
- Online TIPS Reporting- If you witness, or are aware of, a potential risk to another student, faculty or staff member, you may file a report through our online "TIPS" reporting tool. Access to the TIPS incident reporting tool can be found at: <https://www.gcu.edu/about-gcu/offices-services/public-safety.php>
- Parents, students, faculty and staff may use this system to report a range of incidents such as: bullying, vandalism, suspicious activity, academic cheating, possession of an illegal substance, or sexual assault cases. The appropriate university department will investigate all reports. Your information will remain confidential, and you have the option to submit the form anonymously.
- Emergency Blue Light Phones- if there is a safety concern or suspicious activity, use the blue light phones that can be found around campus. The phones offer a direct line to Public Safety Dispatch. The phone pole flashes to signal distress. Safety officers always respond to campus emergencies.
- Stairwell Call Buttons- These are located in building stairwells and may be used for individuals needing additional assistance evacuating a building during an emergency. The call button connects to Public Safety Dispatch who will relay a caller's location to on scene first responders.

Commitment to Title IX and Non-Discrimination

GCU is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex. This includes pregnancy and its related conditions. The University's Title IX and Non-Discrimination Policy, which can be found at www.gcu.edu/titleix, provide for a prompt and equitable response to reports of sexual misconduct. Behaviors that fall under the University's Title IX Policy and Non-Discrimination Policy are as follows:

- Sexual harassment- Sexual harassment is a specific form of discriminatory harassment and an unlawful discriminatory practice. Acts of sexual harassment may be committed by any person upon any other person, regardless of the sex of those involved. Sexual Harassment, as an umbrella category, includes the offenses of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

- Sexual assault- Sexual assault encompasses forcible sex offenses, forcible rape, forcible sodomy, sexual assault with an object, forcible fondling, non-forcible sex offenses.
- Dating violence & domestic violence- Violence, on the basis of sex, committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner, or by a person who is in or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the Complainant.
- Stalking- Engaging in a course of conduct, on the basis of sex, directed at a specific person, that would cause a reasonable person to fear for the person's safety, or the safety of others; or suffer substantial emotional distress.
- In addition to the forms of sexual harassment described above, which fall within the coverage of Title IX, the University additionally prohibits the following offenses as forms of discrimination outside of Title IX when the act is based upon the Complainant's actual or perceived membership in a protected class. Conduct that does not otherwise constitute Title IX sexual harassment under this policy will be addressed using the Informal Resolution Process or the Discriminatory Harassment Administrative Resolution Process.
- Sexual exploitation, sexual voyeurism, invasion of sexual privacy, prostituting another person, engaging in sexual activity with another person while knowingly infected with HIV or a STD or STI without informing the other person of the infection, et cetera.



If your student has questions or concerns about sexual misconduct, they can contact the Institutional Access and Compliance Office at 602.639.5900, or titleix@gcu.edu. Reports of potential violations of the

Title IX and Non-Discrimination Policy can be submitted, by your student, at https://gcu-advocate.symplicity.com/collections/title_ix_and_nondiscrimination

Consent

Consent is an understandable exchange of affirmative words or actions, as long as those words or actions create mutually understandable clear permission regarding willingness to engage in (and the conditions of) sexual activity. Any sexual encounter that occurs without consent is in violation of GCU's Title IX and Non-Discrimination Policy. If force, coercion or intimidation are used to gain consent, there is no valid consent. If a person is incapacitated, they cannot give consent. Silence does not necessarily constitute consent.

Important Conversations to Have

- Ask your student about their understanding of consent. Make sure they understand how to give and interpret valid consent. Many incidents of sexual assault are between people who know each other, which suggests that there is a serious issue with miscommunications between people regarding their expectations for their relationship or sexual encounter.
- Alcohol frequently plays a role in sexual assault cases. Alcohol increases the risk of being assaulted or of assaulting someone. Your student should know that if a person is incapacitated, they are unable to give consent.

Spiritual Life

The Department of Spiritual Life exists to support students by providing spiritual formation opportunities throughout their college experience. Spiritual Life organizes worship services, small group Bible studies, and weekly outreach ministries.

- **Culture of the University and campus community:** When students share why they choose GCU and what they most value about their experience, community is consistently at the top of the list. Through the influence of student leaders and the varied opportunities these leaders facilitate for the larger student body, GCU is an environment where each student can explore and engage in meaningful community.
- **Pastoral Office:** Students seeking direction from a biblical perspective or wanting to learn more about the Christian faith can visit our Pastoral Office to schedule a meeting with a campus pastor.
- **Worship Services:** Spiritual Life hosts weekly worship services where the GCU students, staff, and faculty gather to hear teaching from the Bible and worship together. Chapel meets Monday mornings, includes student-led worship, and speakers come from a variety of local churches and Christian organizations. As a parent, you can check out each Chapel via GCU's YouTube Channel to gain insight into your student's experience at GCU. The Gathering meets Tuesday nights and is a student-led worship service including teaching by Spiritual Life staff.
- **Life Groups:** GCU Life Groups are weekly Bible studies hosted by trained student leaders called Life Leaders. These groups are a place where students can connect and grow as they learn how to follow God together.
- **Local & Global Outreach:** Local and Global Outreach offer a variety of opportunities for students to explore their God-given giftedness and live out their faith by serving in the local community. Weekly ministries include outreach with children, inmates, the elderly, refugees, homeless, and more. Additionally, Global Outreach hosts an annual mission fair each fall to provide students with the opportunity to sign up for a spring break or summer mission trip experience.
- **Spiritual Formation:** The Spiritual Formation program provides opportunities for students to learn practical tools to grow in their faith. Through weekly workshops and semester retreats, students will learn and practice implementing spiritual practices into daily life.
- **Sports Chaplain:** Our sports chaplain provides pastoral support for student athletes and connects them with spiritual formation opportunities on campus, as well as with their teams. The sports chaplain's office is located within the athletics department on the third floor of Student Life Building 26.

Academic & Career Resources

Academic support services and resources aren't just for students who may be struggling. Seeking out academic support is a smart decision for your student regardless of their level of academic performance. GCU's various academic and career support services can help your student with time management, research help, resume building, career assistance, and subject specific academic assistance. Consider starting a conversation with your student about the great resources GCU has available to support your student's academic and career success.

- Encourage your student to reach out to their Faculty. In addition to class time, GCU Faculty are available to meet with your student through office hours, email, or phone. The GCU faculty are committed advisors who are dedicated to helping your student grow academically, professionally, spiritually and personally.
- GCU has developed an Early Alert process to proactively address common issues that affect students. This allows critical stakeholders, such as a student's faculty or SSC, to communicate when situations arise that may negatively impact academic success. The Early Alert process sends timely communication about concerns such as technical or personal issues, student behavior, or grades trending toward non-passing. If your student is contacted through an Early Alert, it is critical they communicate with their SSC or faculty to address the concerns and take corrective measures. The overarching goal of the Early Alert process is to improve student success!
- Ask your student if they have visited an ACE peer tutoring location. Our four Academic Centers for Excellence (ACE) locations across campus for peer tutoring support. Writing support and success coaching are available for all undergraduate courses, while subject support is offered for select courses only.
- Discuss career pathways with your student and urge them to visit the Career Center for assistance searching for on-campus employment, resume reviews, events, workshops, and so much more! Students are encouraged to strategically build relevant work experience through internships, volunteering, mentorship, and on/off campus part time employment. Today's job market is more competitive than ever before. Employers view prior experience as a key differentiator for recruitment; therefore, students should not wait until their final semesters to build experience. GCU's Career Ambassadors and Advisors are here to help! Through the Career Connections management system, helpful one-on-one appointments, workshops and more, Career Services can directly assist students in getting connected with a myriad of work opportunities.
- Ask your student where they like to study. There are many quiet study places on campus, including the Library where the friendly GCU Librarians are available for on-demand, personalized research assistance in-person, on the phone, and through email and chat. Librarians can help with creating effective search strategies for locating resources on research topics, database navigation, proper citation formatting, and more!
- What if my student receives a bad grade? You should not contact your student's faculty, instead encourage your student to discuss their grade and academic performance with their faculty directly. Students who discuss their academic performance with their faculty directly can often resolve any issues and receive excellent guidance for improving their performance. In addition, if your student needs to discuss their academic path or course selections, remind your student to reach out to their Student Services Counselor.

A student may appeal a final grade if there is ample evidence that the grade was miscalculated. Grade appeals may not be submitted because your student desires a better grade or disagrees with the evaluation of their work. Faculty are responsible for issuing earned grades and the University supports this assessment based on performance throughout the course. Therefore, overturning a grade is unlikely. When filing an appeal based on miscalculation, the student will be required to provide evidence they attempted in good faith to resolve the issue by communicating directly with the faculty regarding the alleged miscalculation.

As a parent, you can help promote, the GCU academic support services that are available to your student through the Academic Centers for Excellence (ACE), Career Center, Math Center, Writing & English Language Learner's Center, Anatomy Mentoring Center, Science Center, Theology Commons, Library, and Student Disability Services.

Student Disability Services

Grand Canyon University serves its students equally by providing equal access to our programs, systems and facilities. SDS works with students that self-identify for services related to permanent disability issues, as well as temporary disability issues that may arise. In transitioning from high school to college, many parents are surprised to learn that colleges have different requirements than high schools when it comes to providing services to individuals with disabilities. Learning the specific differences can help prepare you and your student for what to expect.

K-12 Modifications:

- Governed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Subpart D.
- K-12 schools are required to identify a disability issue.
- Parents and schools work together to formulate an individualized education plan to help students with achievement or to address accessibility issues.
- Parents are the primary contact in determining what services their child needs, work closely with teachers and other school officials to communicate about needs, get updates and monitor the provided services.

Higher Education Reasonable Accommodations:

- Governed by Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Subpart E.
- Students must self-advocate and engage in the interactive process with the campus disability office – faculty or staff cannot assume or imply that a student needs disability support services.
- Students self-identify to request disability services and provide supporting documentation of their disability issue.
- Reasonable accommodations are approved on a case-by-case basis, depending on the supporting documentation.
- Services and accommodations may differ from what the student received in the K-12 setting, or even at a different college.
- Accommodations may vary across classes, programs of study, or modality in which the course is taken.
- Students have the choice to decline to self-identify if they prefer not to have accommodations, or decline to utilize them even if they are approved to do so.

Encourage your student about the importance of them taking an active role in understanding their accommodations and asking for assistance if clarification about their accommodations is needed. If your student is proactive about communicating their questions or concerns, SDS can assist them and provide guidance to help them navigate issues.

The SDS Office is your student's point of contact if they find their circumstances have changed or that their accommodations are no longer meeting their needs. Students can request additional accommodations at any time and those requests will be reviewed through the interactive process. Approval depends on their supporting documentation. Although it is important for your student to work with their faculty on any course-related concerns, only the SDS Office can approve or modify accommodations.

The SDS Office is required to communicate directly with the student receiving services. Although your student may opt to share certain information with you by completing the Student Information Release Form

(SIRF), it does not allow GCU staff the authority to communicate with you in lieu of your student, or for you to be included in or copied on all communication between GCU and your student. Outside of an authorized release of records, the student chooses what information they want to share, and to whom. If your student would like you to be present during a meeting or phone call, they are welcome to schedule time with SDS at a time you are able to participate with them.

Reference Guide

Quick Reference Guide to Common Student Issues

You are one of your student's biggest sources of support, and as such they may reach out to you when they come across an issue while at college. Although you may want to, don't try to solve their problem. It is essential that students learn to advocate for themselves and resolve their own problems. If/when your student shares a concern with you, encourage them to think through the problem and offer guidance where needed. Empower them to make their own decisions and work towards a resolution on their own. Below are some common issues students come across and corresponding resources on campus.

Issue	Suggested Parent Response	Resources for Student
Academic Problems	If your student is struggling academically, ask them about what steps they have taken to work on the issue. Have they spoken with their instructor? Have they sought help from the ACE Center? Encourage them to be proactive so that they don't fall too far behind.	Faculty member, ACE Center, Math Center, Writing Center, Science Center, English Language Learner's Center, Theology Commons, Library
Academic Integrity	Academic integrity represents the core of Grand Canyon University's values and is essential to the educational community's success. The University investigates, and addresses reports of academic dishonesty. If your student is found to be in violation of the University's policy, they may face academic consequences as well as additional sanctions.	University Policy Handbook-Code of Conduct and Academic Standards
Alcohol/drug use	Grand Canyon University is a dry campus, which means alcohol, bottles, cans, containers and paraphernalia are prohibited. Discuss with your student the potential consequences of drinking/drug use. Aside from potential conduct violations, drug/alcohol use may negatively affect their health, safety, academics, etc.	University Policy Handbook-Drug-Free Campus and Workplace Policy; Community Standards/Incident Review Process; Code of Conduct and Academic Standards

Issue	Suggested Parent Response	Resources for Student
Bias, prejudice or racial/ethnic intolerance	The University makes every effort to address statements, actions, or behaviors reflecting bias, prejudice, or intolerance from prospective and current students, faculty, and staff. Reports of racial or ethnic intolerance can be made to diversity@gcu.edu .	Institutional Access and Compliance Office; University Policy Handbook – Multicultural, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
Conduct issues	If your student engages in behaviors that are in violation of the University's Community Standards, they may face consequences through the Community Standards Incident Review Process. If they engage in behaviors that are in violation of the University's Code of Conduct, there may be consequences through the University's Code of Conduct process. Possible sanctions range from a letter of warning to suspension or expulsion.	Community Standards; University Policy Handbook-Community Standards/Incident Review Process, and Code of Conduct and Academic Standards
Disabilities	If your student needs accommodations through Student Disability Services, they should reach out to them as soon as possible so that accommodations can be established prior to the start of the semester. Your student will be required to provide documentation to verify their accommodation needs.	Student Disability Services
Dropping a class	There are various drop deadlines that impact your student's financial responsibility for their course. Additionally, they need to be enrolled in the proper number of credit hours to maintain certain financial statuses and housing opportunities. Any concerns relating to scheduling should be addressed with their Student Services Counselor.	University Policy Handbook-Add/Drop, Student Services Counselor

Issue	Suggested Parent Response	Resources for Student
Grading Concerns	<p>Advise students to first try to work with their instructor on whatever issue they are experiencing. If there is no resolution, they should reach out to their Student Services Counselor for next steps.</p> <p>Faculty are responsible for issuing earned grades. The University supports this assessment made by the faculty based on student performance throughout the course, and overturning a grade is unlikely only if miscalculation occurred. GCU does not condone rounding grades, and therefore that is not considered miscalculation.</p>	Student Services Counselor; University Policy Handbook- University Appeal Procedures
Homesickness	<p>Homesickness is to be expected. Talk to your student about getting involved and connecting to people and groups on campus. The more they get involved the less likely they are to feel homesick. Try to limit home visits during the first month or two, to help them transition to their new college lifestyle.</p>	Office of Student Care, Office of Student Engagement, Office of Spiritual Life, Office of Welcome Programs, Office of Campus Recreation, RA, RD
Illness	<p>The Canyon Health and Wellness Center is a good resource for your student to utilize if they are feeling unwell. In the event of an emergency, they should seek care from an emergency room.</p>	Canyon Health and Wellness Center
Lost ID	<p>Your student's GCU ID permits their access to campus and accesses their dining dollars. If they lose their ID, they should connect with their Student Services Counselor to receive a new one and address any potential concerns regarding their dining dollars.</p>	Student Services Counselor

Issue	Suggested Parent Response	Resources for Student
Money issues	Discuss with your student the plan for paying for their education, as well as how to handle their expenses while they're at college. Do they have their own account or income? Who is responsible for paying their bills? Are you authorized to make payments on their account?	Student Services Counselor, University Policy Handbook- Financial Services
Roommate conflicts	This may be their first time sharing a living space with someone else, and with that may come some conflict. Stress the importance of learning to get along with others and learning to communicate and compromise. If they are unable to resolve their issues alone, support them in reaching out to their RA for assistance.	Residence Life, University Policy- Roommate Conflict Resolution, https://students.gcu.edu/student-life/residence-life.php
Safety issues	Grand Canyon University considers the safety of its students a top priority and works to keep the campus safe. However, there are steps your student can take to keep themselves safe. Advise them to lock their door when they're not in their room, lock their bike, not to leave their laptop or phone unattended, etc. If your student is the victim of a crime, they can seek assistance from Public Safety and/or GCU PD.	Public Safety
Sexual misconduct or assault	If your student is the victim of sexual misconduct, listen to them about their experience. Encourage them to seek support from the Office of Student Care, and from the Institutional Access and Compliance Office.	Institutional Access and Compliance Office, Office of Student Care, Public Safety

Issue	Suggested Parent Response	Resources for Student
Unhappy, lonely, or otherwise uncertain about their college experience	Some students may struggle to integrate into campus life right away. Talk to your student about where they feel they're struggling- is it social or academic? Encourage them to get involved outside of class, connect with other residents in their hall (everyone is new)!	Residence Life, Spiritual Life, Student Engagement, Office of Campus Recreation, First Year Experience (FYE)

University Appeals

Students are provided multiple options for resolving matters.

- **Informal resolution process:** University departments may attempt to address student concerns through an informal resolution process which is separate from the formal University Appeal procedure. Students may request to escalate their appeal to the University Appeal process at any time; any decision made at the University Appeal level will supersede all previous proposed resolutions.
- **Formal University Appeal:** In some cases, students may appeal University policies or decisions related to financial or academic matters, when extraordinary extenuating circumstances supported by documentation exist.

Your student is strongly encouraged to discuss the intended appeal with a Counselor prior to submission, as not all issues are appealable. Your student's Counselor will also provide them with the information needed to complete the University Appeal. The appeal must be completed and submitted by your student, in accordance with FERPA guidelines; therefore, the University cannot accept an appeal you submit on your student's behalf.

Documentation Requirements

If your student chooses to submit an appeal, the University may request additional documentation to support their case. If any documentation is missing, the appeal will be considered incomplete – which is not the same as a denied appeal. Your student will be notified of what is needed and will have up to five weeks to submit the required materials. Once everything is received, the appeal will move forward.

Encourage your student to provide clear, detailed evidence, such as emails, assignments, transcripts, or other relevant information, to support their appeal. This helps demonstrate their efforts to resolve the issue and allows the University to complete a thorough review of the concerns.

Requirements and Guidelines

The following is a non-exhaustive list of requirements and guidelines for specific appeal types:

- *End-of-course grades:* Faculty determine final course grades based on student performance, and the University supports that their assessment. Grade changes are rare and only considered if there is clear evidence of a miscalculation, and rounding is prohibited. To appeal a final grade, students must provide strong documentation showing an actual miscalculation and prior communication with their instructor about the concern. Individual assignment grades cannot be appealed while the course is still in progress.
- *Code of Conduct Sanctions:* GCU takes violations of the Student Code of Conduct seriously. Depending on the severity, consequences can range from warnings to expulsion and revocation of a degree. If a violation also breaks state or federal law, it will be referred to the proper legal authorities. Students at risk for a University-level penalty are given a fair opportunity to participate in the conduct process and present evidence. Because of this, appeals are only considered if there was a procedural error or if new, previously unavailable evidence comes to light.
- *Request for Reinstatement:* Students who have been dismissed from the University due to academic or conduct issues may request reinstatement after completing the required dismissal period. To be considered, they must explain the circumstances that led to dismissal and show what steps they have taken to improve and prevent future issues.

Reinstatement is not guaranteed and is based on a careful review of each case. For academic reinstatement, GCU evaluates your student's full academic history to assess if they can successfully move forward by following a structured Academic Plan, which must be followed to remain enrolled.

For disciplinary reinstatement, factors such as past behavior, their academic record, and compliance with previous sanctions will be considered.

If approved, reinstatement is valid for one year. If the student does not return to class within that time, they must reapply, and approval is not automatic.

- *A published policy*: In some cases, students may appeal a published policy. The following is a non-exhaustive list for which an exception to published policy is unlikely to be granted to a student's:
 - Lack of knowledge or understanding of a stated policy
 - Reliance upon verbal statements which conflict with the University's written policies, regardless of the source of the verbal communication
 - Failure to investigate, understand, or consider the financial ramifications of their action/decision
 - Failure to comply with a University directive or communication
 - Appeal related to an illness or death of a third-party person

Please keep in mind that not all matters are appealable. For a detailed list of non-appealable policies and more information on University Appeal procedures, your student should carefully review the University Policy Handbook at <https://www.gcu.edu/academics/academic-policies.php>.

Adjusting to College Life

Be Prepared that Your Student May Want to Leave

Students experience many challenges and responsibilities as they transition from high school to college and adulthood. Below are some common reasons students may want to drop out of college.

Homesickness	Students may be living on their own for the first time, away from family and friends, and may miss the familiarity of home.
Academic rigor	Students are challenged in new ways academically. The rigor of college can be much more intense than it was in high school, as students begin to experience more opportunities for critical thinking, adapting to different instructors and education styles.
Work schedule conflicts	Often a student must choose between their semester class schedule and a work schedule, which can cause difficulty in balancing work and academics.
Family commitments	Caring for family members, balancing time commitments to school, as well as family.
Financial burdens	College introduces new financial stressors: paying for college, scholarship availability, responsible borrowing concerns, ability to stay current on payments, managing bills and financial commitments of cost of living.
Mental health/anxiety	Many students experience anxiety and stress related to learning difficulties, spiritual stability, and overall wellbeing.

Conversation Tips

Homesickness	Encourage campus involvement. GCU's campus is full of clubs, spiritual life groups, intramural sports, campus events and activities, outdoor recreation trips, commuter lounge, chapel and the gathering services to gain new support. Schedule visits to home during vacations. Participate in Family Weekend to come visit your student at GCU.
Academic rigor	Set the expectation that college academics will be more challenging. Remind them to take advantage of our free Academic & Career Excellence Centers (ACE). Prepare them to create their own study habits. Encourage students to speak with their instructors if they are having any difficulties with a class.
Work schedule conflicts	Students can select their class times, view, and edit future semester class times in advance. The ability to view and edit course times can help make time for employment. Discuss with them the importance of their future career vs a momentary job. Setting priorities when seeking employment to allow time for their studies.
Family commitments	Some students may feel an obligation to be home to support their families. Try to keep your student's focus on building their new college life, rather than at home.

Homesickness	Encourage campus involvement. GCU's campus is full of clubs, spiritual life groups, intramural sports, campus events and activities, outdoor recreation trips, commuter lounge, chapel and the gathering services to gain new support. Schedule visits to home during vacations. Participate in Family Weekend to come visit your student at GCU.
Financial burdens	You can assist your student with seeking out external scholarships. Check with your company for scholarship opportunities for your student. Advise your student to speak with their student services counselor for other ways of paying for college. Set a budget with them so they are prepared to manage their expenses and income.
Mental health/anxiety	Encourage them to seek help when they need it. GCU's Office of Student Care has several counselors available as well as resources to help through these issues.

Completing their education is an important factor in a student's long-term success. A student who takes a semester off is less likely to graduate than a student who continues through. The first year of a student's college career is usually the most difficult. Being prepared for these new challenges will better ensure your student finishes what they start and achieve their goals. Although your student may face obstacles during their college career, overcoming those challenges is part of the maturing process and will prepare your student for success in their life after college.

Resources

Important Resources and Contacts

Contact	Phone	Email
Public Safety	602.639.8100	security@gcu.edu
Student Disability Services	602.639.6342	disabilityoffice@gcu.edu
Department of Residence Life	602.639.6244	residence.life@gcu.edu
Department of Housing Operations	602.639.6240	housing@gcu.edu
Institutional Access and Compliance (Title IX)	602.639.5900	titleix@gcu.edu
Library	602.639.6641	http://library.gcu.edu/AskALibrarian
Academic Centers for Excellence (ACE)	602.639.8901	ACE@gcu.edu
Career Services	602.639.6417	CareerServices@gcu.edu
Student Employment Team		studentemploymentteam@gcu.edu
Campus Operations (Parking)	602.639.7739	campus.parking@gcu.edu
Canyon Health and Wellness Clinic	602.639.6215	healthcenter@gcu.edu
International Students Office	602.639.8105	ISO@gcu.edu
Mail and Copy Center	602.639.7905	mailcenter@gcu.edu
Office of Academic Records	1.800.800.9776	academicrecords@gcu.edu
Department of Spiritual Life	602.639.6750	spirituallife@gcu.edu
Department of Student Engagement	602.639.7250	student.engagement@gcu.edu
Department of Campus Recreation	602.639.7559	campusrecreation@gcu.edu
Student Services Counselors	1.800.800.9776	
Technical Support	1.877.428.8447	techsupport@gcu.edu
Diversity	602.639.7756	diversity@gcu.edu
Department of Student Care	602.639.7007	studentcare@gcu.edu
Department of Welcome Programs	602.639.6002	welcomeprograms@gcu.edu
Parent Resources	602.639.8950	parentconnection@gcu.edu