



Parent Handbook 2019-2020

Letter from the Director of Admissions

Dear Future GCU Parent,

We welcome you and your family to Grand Canyon University! College is an exciting time filled with new opportunities, often coinciding with the substantial changes your loved one is likely to experience in their social, emotional, and academic development as they fully transition into adulthood. Research indicates that 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 obstacles largely on their own.

Because of this, students own their academic experience, and GCU encourages parents to promote their 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. In most cases, you will hear about your student's experiences directly from them. While we understand your immediate reaction is likely to get involved, as you would have when they were in high school, college is different, and this responsibility transitions to the student. 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 issue. If your student does not know where to initiate the dialogue, their Student Services Counselor (SSC) is the best starting point.

While at GCU, your student is responsible for their own academic, personal, and spiritual growth, and we look forward to working with them as they foster and develop these important life skills. We believe that the more familiar parents are with college, the more you will be prepared to help your student effectively navigate their time at GCU. Our goal is to provide you with helpful information that will assist you in supporting your student's success.

Congratulations to you and your student's achievement of this amazing milestone!

Welcome to LOPE Country. Go Lopes!

Dr. Jennifer Lech
Director of Admissions

Version Record

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2019-2020	V1.0	6/12/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New document

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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 which you participate in meetings with your son or daughter 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. In order 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.

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 They Head Off to 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/Loud Cloud 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.

High School	College
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.
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.

In the recent "2018 Deloitte Millennial Survey," over 10,000 millennials revealed concerns with a lack of developed skills in the following areas: Interpersonal skills; Confidence and motivation; Critical thinking, and; Innovation and creativity. The report further indicates that Millennials are increasingly looking to employers who will help them develop these much-needed skills. 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.

- GCU's RAVE Emergency Text Notification system is programmed to send text alerts to all registered students, faculty, and staff in the event of a campus emergency. Students should be automatically enrolled into the system. Students can update their contact information through the Student Portal at <https://myportal.gcu.edu/> or by contacting their Student Services Advisor.

- Keeping Lopes in the loop, the GCU Engage app is loaded with information for student and parents. Use this app 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.

- Office of Welcome Programs- The Office of Welcome Programs serves GCU families and incoming students through orientation, transition, and connectedness. Our team of student leaders—the Welcome Pros—continue to reach out to students who identify as struggling to get connected. The Welcome Pros reach out via phone call, text message, in-person meetings, and invitation to events. They also host a small number of events aimed at students who may have a challenge finding resources or community.

- 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 clubs, intramurals, commuter life, the Associated Students of Grand Canyon University (ASGCU) 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.

- 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@gu.edu for more information.

- Intramural Sports – More recreational in nature than club sports, intramural sports and teams are designed to foster the spirit of competitiveness and fellowship through sports. There are several levels of

competition for each of our intramural sports, including male divisions, female divisions and coed divisions.

- Club Sports - GCU offers a wide range of intercollegiate men's and women's club sports, from nationally recognized and competitive 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 Chapel and The Gathering services where staff, faculty and students come together to worship, hear God's Word and connect with one another.
- Career Resources - Whether your student is looking for student employment or internship position, or looking at potential career paths, the career resources available through the ACE centers can help. GCU offers hundreds of part-time student worker positions, in a wide variety of campus departments each year. Student worker positions are not guaranteed, but Career Resources can help increase your student's chances of success.
- 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.

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.

Student Behavior Expectations

Understanding Grand Canyon University's 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 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!

Student Conduct 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. Residence Life's Student Conduct Process addresses such concerns. Decisions made by the Student Conduct office 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 Student Conduct Coordinator
- Meet with the Student Conduct Board
- Meet with the Code of Conduct Committee

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

Appeals of Student Conduct 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 Student Conduct 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 www.gcu.edu/studentconduct.

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 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 SIRF 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.

Weapons and Firearms

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.

Students possessing a firearm on campus are subject to immediate expulsion from the University, and the expulsion is not subject to appeal. 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, and grief and loss.
- 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, yoga, resiliency, grief/loss, 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 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM
- The staff consists of nurses and nurse practitioners.
- Medical services are billed through insurance with a small copay.
- Some prescriptions are available on-site.
- Please note that the Health and Wellness Clinic is not an emergency facility. If your student experiences a medical emergency they should seek care from an urgent care, or emergency room.

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

- If you believe your student is in immediate psychological danger, call 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

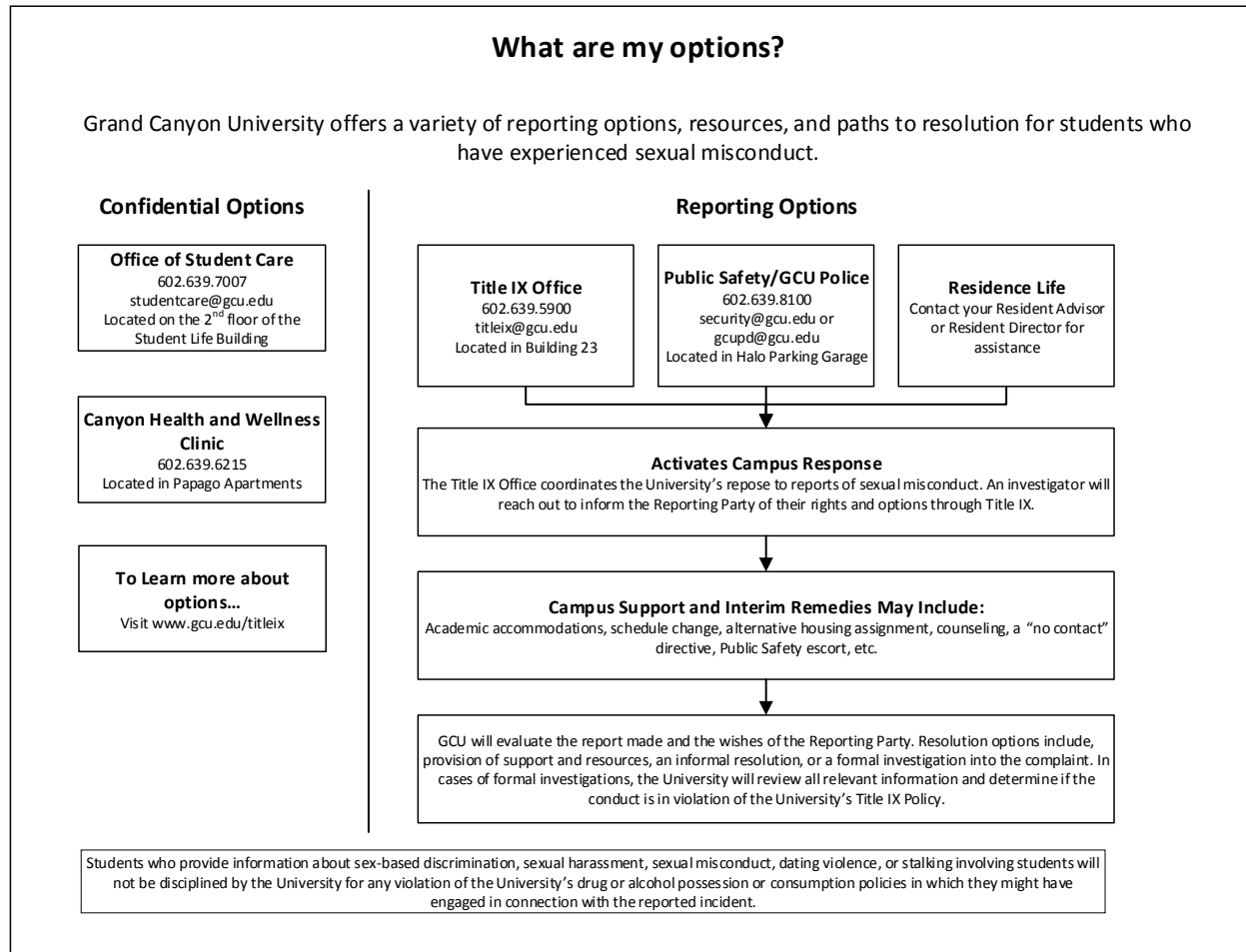
- **Emergency Notification System** - GCU uses an Emergency Notification System to communicate time-sensitive information during an emergency to the campus community. Get the latest information from Public Safety about what is going on around campus and in our local neighborhood. Students can update 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.
- **Self-Defense Training**- A GCU Police Officer leads a training wherein participants learn various self-defensive tactics to protect themselves from an attacker. For more information, contact security@gcu.edu.

Commitment to Title IX

GCU is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex or gender, this includes pregnancy and/or disability discrimination based upon complications related to pregnancy. The University’s Title IX Policy and Procedures, 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 are as follows:

- **Sexual harassment**- unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment of a student can deny or limit, on the basis of sex, the student’s ability to participate in or to receive benefits, services, or opportunities in the University’s educational program and/or activities.
- **Non-consensual sexual contact**- any intentional sexual touching, however slight, with any object, by one person upon another, that is without consent and/or by force.

- Non-consensual sexual intercourse- any sexual intercourse, however slight, with any object, by one person upon another, that is without consent and/or by force
- Sexual exploitation- when someone takes non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for his/her own advantage or benefit, or to benefit or advantage anyone other than the one being exploited, and that behavior does not otherwise constitute one of other sexual misconduct offenses.
- Intimate partner violence- any act of abuse, violence or threatened act of violence that occurs between individuals who are involved or have been involved in a sexual, dating, spousal, domestic, or other intimate relationship. Psychological abuse is a form of Intimate Partner Violence.
- Stalking- Engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person, on the basis of sex/gender, that is unwelcome, and would cause a reasonable person to fear bodily injury or to experience substantial emotional distress.



If your student has questions or concerns about sexual misconduct, they can contact the Title IX Office at 602.639.5900, or titleix@gcu.edu.

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 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

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.
- **Worship Services:** Spiritual Life hosts two weekly worship services where the GCU students, staff, and faculty gather to hear teaching from the Bible and worship together. Worship is student led, 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.
- **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 missions fair each fall to provide students with the opportunity to sign up for a spring break or summer mission trip experience.

Academic 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 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, spiritually and personally.
- Ask your student if they have visited an ACE Center. Our numerous Academic Excellence (ACE) Centers across campus serve as convenient, one-stop-shops for students seeking academic and career support at no additional cost, including one-on-one and small group academic assistance by major or course, assistance searching for on-campus employment, resume reviews, events, workshops, and so much more!
- 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 ACE Centers, Library, and Disability Services.

Student Disability Services

Grand Canyon University (GCU) seeks to serve all of its students equally. This plan is established in order to provide all students with equal access to GCU's 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. As students transition from the high school setting, it is important that they are aware of the differences in disability services as they pursue their higher education goals.

- **IDEA/504 Plan/IEPs in High School:**

The laws require that schools that identify a disability issue for a student work together with parents to formulate an individualized education plan to help students with achievement or to address accessibility issues. In the K-12 setting, parents are the primary contact in determining what services their child needs. Parents or guardians work closely with teachers and other school officials to communicate about needs, get updates and monitor the provided services.

- **In Higher Education (Accommodations):**

The student is responsible to advocate for themselves. They are required to self-identify for services by completing the accommodation request form and providing supporting documentation of their disability issue. Depending on the supporting documentation, accommodations in higher education are put in place on a case-by-case basis. The students participate in an interactive process to determine what their concerns are, and what reasonable accommodations may be available to them in the various environments and situations they will encounter as part of their experience at GCU. The University cannot assume or imply that an individual has a disability or is in need of services. Students also have the right to decline services if they prefer to not have accommodations in place for any reason.

Students need to take an active role in understanding their accommodations and asking for assistance if clarification about their accommodations are needed. Student Disability Services works as their advocate to help them navigate issues, but the student needs to be proactive in communicating any concerns they have in order for SDS to assist them.

Parents have a limited role. It is up to the student to communicate with their parents for updates on information regarding their accommodations. Students that want their parents to be included in a conversation about their accommodations, can do so, however, the student has to be present in order to speak with SDS. If students do not want their parents involved, the University has to respect their rights under FERPA, and cannot discuss details with the parents.

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, Learning Lounge, 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

Issue	Suggested Parent Response	Resources for Student
Appeals	If your student believes a final course grade was miscalculated, or disagrees with the application of a University policy, in some cases, a student may appeal a financially or academically related University policy or decision when extenuating circumstances merit and where supporting documentation exists.	University Policy Handbook – University Appeal Procedures
Bias, harassment, and/or discrimination	Grand Canyon University is committed to providing an educational environment free from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, complications related to pregnancy, or any other legally protected status. Reports of bias, harassment, and/or discrimination can be made to diversity@gbu.edu .	Office of Diversity
Conduct issues	If your student engages in behaviors that are in violation of the University’s Community Standards, they may face consequences from Residence Life’s Student Conduct 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.	Residence Life, University Policy Handbook- Student Conduct Process, and Code of Conduct and Academic Standards

Issue	Suggested Parent Response	Resources for Student
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 in order 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
Faculty issues	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.	Student Services Counselor
Homesickness	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.	Office of Student Care, Office of Student Engagement, Office of Spiritual Life, Office of Welcome Programs, RA, RD
Illness	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.	Canyon Health and Wellness Center

Issue	Suggested Parent Response	Resources for Student
Lost ID	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.	Student Services Counselor
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

Issue	Suggested Parent Response	Resources for Student
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 Title IX Office.	Title IX Office (www.gcu.edu/titleix), Office of Student Care, Public Safety
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 (www.gcu.edu/student-life/student-engagement)

Appeals

In some cases, your student may not have been able to resolve their concerns using one of the above methods. An appeal may be the next step in their path to resolution. The appeal process can be initiated, by your student, by contacting their Student Services Counselor. The following are some of appealable matters:

- End of course grades- the University supports the assessments made by the faculty, and grades will only be overturned if a miscalculation has occurred. As such, grade changes are unlikely.
- Reinstatement- if a student has been dismissed from the University, they have the option to submit a request for reinstatement. Reinstatement is not guaranteed.
- Code of Conduct- a student may be able to appeal sanctions received through the Code of Conduct process.
- A published policy- student who have issues with a particular policy may in some cases appeal the policy. Not all policies are appealable.

Please keep in mind that some matters are not appealable. Also, if an appeal is submitted with insufficient documentation, it will be considered incomplete and will not be processed until it has been resubmitted with appropriate documentation. For more information on the appeal process, your student should contact their Student Services Counselor, and review the University Policy Handbook.

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 groups, commuter lounge, chapel and the gathering services to gain new support. Schedule visits to home during vacations. Participate in Parent's 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 and Career Service 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 groups, commuter lounge, chapel and the gathering services to gain new support. Schedule visits to home during vacations. Participate in Parent's 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	diabilityoffie@gcu.edu
Office of Residence Life	602.639.6244	residencelife@gcu.edu
Office of Housing Operations	602.639.6240	housing@gcu.edu
Title IX	602.639.5900	titleix@gcu.edu
Library	602.639.6641	http://library.gcu.edu/AskALibrarian
Academic and Career Excellence (ACE) Center	602.639.8901	ace@gcu.edu
Campus Operations (Parking)	602.639.7739	Campus.parking@gcu.edu
Canyon Health and Wellness Clinic	602.639.6215	gcuhealth@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
Office of Spiritual Life	602.639.6750	spirituallife@gcu.edu
Office of Student Engagement	602.639.7250	Student.Engagement@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
Office of Student Care	602.639.7007	studentcare@gcu.edu
Office of Welcome Programs	602.639.6002	welcomeprograms@gcu.edu
Parent Resources	602.639.8950	ParentConnection@gcu.edu