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**SWTJC**  
**Student Handbook**

Welcome to Southwest Texas Junior College, one of the top ten community colleges in the United States!

Founded almost 70 years ago, we have grown from a small, one-campus college into a wide-reaching college system. Along with three main college campuses and multiple outreach sites, we also offer dual credit courses in high schools throughout our eleven county service region. Additionally, we work closely with state and national four-year colleges and universities to support and encourage continuing education through transfer.

Our goal is to provide every student with what they need to become successful. We offer degrees in a broad range of fields and disciplines, including Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Applied Science. Certified technical programs are available for students who wish to learn or improve upon a trade skill. We support a wide student demographic with programs that include English as a Second Language and Adult Basic Education.

As a growing institution, we are continuously evaluating and improving our offerings to students. In recent years we have taken steps to improve and update facilities, sometimes building new structures or introducing new technology, sometimes updating existing spaces. Our online presence has increased with more internet classes, greater wireless access at our sites, more smart classrooms, a re-designed website, and social networking connections. Even our organizational structure has been updated for greater efficiency and better student access to administrative channels.

Southwest Texas Junior College administration, faculty, and staff work hard to make SWTJC both an excellent education and an excellent college-going experience. We are here for our students – their success is our success.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Hector Gonzales  
President  
Southwest Texas Junior College

## Directory of Student Services

### Advising and Counseling Centers

Uvalde Campus	Flores Building- 830-591-7271
Del Rio Campus	Administration Building
Eagle Pass Campus	Administration Building

### Disability Support Services

Lorena Lopez	Uvalde Campus , Flores Building,	830-591-7352
Brenda Hoffman	Eagle Pass Campus, Administration Building	830-591-4102
Marilyn Casson	Del Rio Campus , Administration Building	830-591-1560
Cruz Mata	Crystal City Campus, Administration Building	830-591-7600

### Financial Aid

Uvalde Campus	Uvalde Campus , Flores Student Services Building	830-591-7368
Eagle Pass Campus	Eagle Pass Campus, Administration Building	830-758-4117
Del Rio Campus	Del Rio Campus , Administration Building	830-775-1579

### Library Services

Uvalde Campus	Will C. Miller Memorial Library	830-591-7254
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### Registrar/ Admissions Offices

Luis Fernandez	Flores Building	830-591-7255
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**SWTJC Administrators**

Vice President Administrative Services	Joe Barker	830-591-7284
Vice President Student Services	Dr. Blaine Bennett	830-591-7275
Vice President Finance	Anne Tarski	830-591-7294
Vice President Academic Affairs	Dr. Mark Underwood	830-591-7286
Associate VP Eagle Pass	Gilbert Bermea Jr	830-591-4111
Associate VP Outreach	Margot Mata	830-591-7223
Associate VP Del Rio	Derek Sandoval	830-591-1555
Associate VP Institutional Advancement	Dick Whipple	830-591-7326
Dean of Liberal Arts	Dr. Cheryl Sanchez	830-591-7202
Dean of Applied Sciences	Johnny Guzman	830-591-7264

**Student Services Directors**

Luis Fernandez	Uvalde, Flores Building	830-591-7255
Irma Garcia	Uvalde, Flores Building	830-591-7292
Yvette Hernandez	Uvalde, Flores Building	830-591-7318
Lorena Lopez	Uvalde, Flores Building	830-591-7352
Randa Schell	Uvalde, Fly Memorial Building	830-591-2908

## **WELCOME TO SOUTHWEST TEXAS JUNIOR COLLEGE**

Southwest Texas Junior College is a comprehensive, public college serving eleven counties in Southwest Texas. The College provides accessible, affordable, high-quality education that prepares students to successfully transfer to senior colleges and universities; enter the job market; pursue their professional and personal goals; and contribute to the economic growth of the region.

### **I. STUDENT SERVICES**

#### **Academic Advising**

(<http://swtjc.edu/pages/student-life/counseling-and-advising>)

Academic advisors and counselors are available to assist students in the selection of coursework for specific degrees and educational objectives. Each student has been assigned an advisor; you can identify your advisor by logging into SWTJC [WebAdvisor](#). The first step to succeeding at SWTJC is to contact your advisor in order to discuss your educational plans and goals with them.

Transfer Centers on each campus provide information about universities and transfer planning. University representatives are regularly scheduled in our campuses and are available by to provide individual assistance.

Advisors assist students who have not yet met the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) requirements by providing interpretation of TSI regulations, exploring options for acquiring basic skills and guidance for developing an Academic Success Plan. (See page 20 for additional information about the Texas Success Initiative.)

Academic advisors also are available to assist students who are undecided about their academic direction and can provide information, identify appropriate options to consider, and make referrals for additional assistance.

#### **Testing and Assessment**

(<http://inet4.swtjc.cc.tx.us/testing/homepage.html>)

Services provided by the Testing Centers include on-site administration of various placement and assessment exams. Please visit the SWTJC Testing Center website for detailed information.

Vocational interests, aptitude and personality inventories are available to support career planning or personal counseling by SWTJC counselors. Students are advised to make an appointment with their assigned advisor in order to discuss these options.

#### **Career Counseling/Planning**

(<http://swtjc.edu/pages/student-life/counseling-and-advising>)

Career assessment, exploration, and planning are vital components for students in making career decisions. The Advising and Counseling Centers assist students with career planning, identifying their career objectives and exploring future needs, likes and dislikes, career paths, long-term and short-term goals. Counselors may suggest that students take various interest and career tests, including a computerized career exploration system.

## **Disability Support Services (DSS)**

(<http://swtjc.edu/pages/student-life/counseling-and-advising/disability-support-services>)

SWTJC offers various support services for students with a disability through the Disability Support Services Office (DSS). On each campus, various services are offered. Documentation for each disability must be provided to the DSS Counselor prior to the need for services. Please consult the [DSS Handbook](http://swtjc.edu/pages/student-life/counseling-and-advising/disability-support-services) (<http://swtjc.edu/pages/student-life/counseling-and-advising/disability-support-services>) for specific guidelines required for requesting accommodations. DSS is staffed by employees who provide services such as interpreting, note taking, tutoring, and readers for the blind or dyslexic student as well as tape recorders.

Documents used in high school such as an Individual Educational Plan (IEP), 504 plan, or ARD reports will not substitute for the documentation required. To ensure the provision of reasonable and appropriate accommodations, students requesting services must provide a current (within the last 3 years) and comprehensive neuropsychological examination or psychological educational evaluation for the provider before eligibility for services can be determined. All documentation submitted to the DSS Counselor will be kept confidential.

The DSS Counselor works closely with SWTJC counseling staff in helping students with academic and personal adjustment problems, and career choices. Students needing to bring a service animal on campus must provide appropriate documentation for review and approval by DSS.

## **Financial Aid**

(<http://swtjc.edu/pages/academics/financial-aid>)

The Student Financial Aid Services (SFAS) Offices administer grants, scholarships, work-study and loans at the College. Financial aid funds can be used for tuition, books, transportation and other school-related expenses.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is required to apply for financial aid. Complete information on financial aid at SWTJC is available <http://swtjc.edu/pages/academics/financial-aid>.

## **Health Services**

For life-threatening episodes such as heart attack and uncontrolled bleeding, 911 should be called first to report the emergency. The SWTJC campus police department, at 830-591-7333 or ext. 7333 should be alerted to every emergency.

Students with life-threatening illnesses, including but not limited to cancer, diabetes, heart disease and AIDS, may wish to continue participating in activities including classroom attendance. When medical evidence indicates that the health status of these students is not a threat to themselves or others, the College and faculty will ensure that they are treated consistently with other students.

## **Health and Fitness/Intramural Activities**

(<http://swtjc.edu/pages//student-life/athletics>)

The intramural program provides a variety of competitive activities (team, individual and dual sports) for SWTJC students. Individual activities for men and women and coeducational activities are available.

Health and Physical Education facilities will be available to students during posted hours for student recreation. Hours and facilities will be announced each semester at <http://swtjc.edu/pages//about-swtjc/recreation-and-fitness/fitness-and-swim-center>).

## **Student Success & Writing Centers**

The Student Success & Writing Centers provide support with the goal of increasing student success by assisting students in making a seamless transition from beginner courses to university degree completion. The ultimate goal is that every student who visits the Centers exhibits improved skills that have a positive, cumulative effect on their academic goals.

Peer tutors along with many additional resources are available in the Student Success & Writing Centers. Centers are open to all SWTJC students, and are located on Uvalde, Eagle Pass, Del Rio, and Crystal City campuses.

## **Library Services**

(<http://www1.youseemore.com/swtjc/>)

SWTJC libraries provide access to information in print and electronic format as well as serve as a place to study. Library staff is available to provide assistance for on-site and electronic resources. A current SWTJC I.D. card is required to access library resources.

Access to databases, e-books, websites, and the library online catalog are available at all campus libraries. Wireless Internet access is also available in all the campus libraries. Printers and photocopy machines are available.

The library collections include magazines, journals, newspapers, literary criticism, children's books and other print and non-print materials to support instruction. During the fall and spring semesters, circulating books are checked out for a period of three weeks, and for summer terms for two weeks. The circulation/reserve desks maintain materials that faculty have placed on reserve for students. The SWTJC libraries participate in the TexShare Program that allows students to obtain TexShare cards for access to resources at other participating Texas college and public libraries.

For more specific information and for campus library hours, contact the campus libraries or view the campus library Web pages.

## **Personal Counseling**

(<http://swtjc.edu/pages/student-life/counseling-and-advising/services-offered#article-700>)

Various circumstances can inhibit academic performance. Counselors are professionals who care about the personal and academic well-being of students. Counselors can assist students in dealing with such personal problems as anxiety, depression, and physical and emotional abuse. When appropriate, counselors will refer the student to community or private resources. They also can

help students investigate better ways to achieve academic success through developing effective study habits, enhancing communication skills, minimizing test anxiety, improving time management, and exploring opportunities for the evolution of critical and independent thinking. The counselor's role is to assist students in developing self-awareness and self-satisfaction as well as in taking individual responsibility for personal growth and development.

## **Registrar's Office**

(<http://swtjc.edu/pages//admissions/registrar-and-admissions>)

The Registrar's Office provides a variety of services to students. Most services also are available online through [WebAdvisor](#).

1. Admission and readmission to the College
2. Academic Fresh Start
3. Registration assistance and information about credit and continuing education courses
4. Information about academic policies and procedures
5. Unofficial transcripts and requests for official transcripts
6. Student records information and updates
7. Assistance with course withdrawals
8. Verification of enrollment
9. Certification for Department of Veterans Affairs education benefits
10. Residency determination and eligibility for tuition waivers and exemptions

A SWTJC I.D., driver's license, or other photo identification is required for most in-office business transactions. SWTJC I.D. can be obtained through each campus at the following locations; Uvalde campus location is Flores Student Services Building, for Del Rio and Eagle Pass Campuses location is their respective campus library.

## **Student Activities**

The Student Activities office provides a wide variety of educational experiences with the direct goal of enhancing leadership skills, refining communication and collaboration skills, and developing problem-solving skills. Student Activities programs meet students' individual needs and interests, as well as enhance their academic experiences. Events and activities include speakers, cultural arts, collaborative, co-curricular programs, leadership training, and clubs and organizations.

Student Organizations fulfill a variety of student interests. A list of organizations and a calendar of events and activities can be found on [CampusCruiser](#). Any group of students wishing to meet on behalf of a common interest may seek organization status by consulting with the Director of Student Engagement & Success.

## **Transfer Information & Advising**

(<http://swtjc.edu/pages//academics/transferring>)

### **Articulation Agreements**

Articulation agreements are written agreements between two and four year institutions that describe partnership to facilitate the transfer process. This can include, but is not limited to: transferability or associate degree programs, exchange of information, recruitment/admissions processes and support services, development of 2 + 2 plans, core curricula equivalents, transfer guides for specific majors and/or course equivalency tables.



## **2 + 2 Degree Plans and Transfer Guides**

Degree plans and/or guides are available for most of the major Texas colleges and universities. This makes it easier for the student to determine what courses will transfer to a particular institution in the desired major. Joint admissions agreements and 2+2 degree plans are available with a number of institutions.

## **Services for Active Military, Reservists, and Veterans**

<http://swtjc.edu/pages//student-life/counseling-and-advising/veteransmilitary-students>)

Southwest Texas Junior College is approved by the Texas Veterans Commission to participate as a District in veterans' educational programs under one facility code, located at 1500 Houston Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76102. Certification for Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) educational assistance benefits are processed by each Registrar's Office. Applications for benefits should be submitted prior to registration. The Department of Veterans Affairs and the College require that veterans qualifying under Chapters 30, 35, 1606 and 1607 must enroll for 12 semester hours in a regular semester and 4 semester hours each six- week summer term in order to be eligible for full-time benefits. Veterans qualifying under Chapter 33, Post- 9/11/2001 are certified based on rate of pursuit and must enroll in at least 51percent of the hours required to be full-time students in order to receive their monthly housing allowance.

A Veterans' Advocate is available in each Financial Aid Office to provide information about College programs and services and, as needed, to provide liaison with other college offices.

State regulations provide financial and academic options to National Guard members and reservists who are called into active service after the beginning of a semester:

1. Withdrawal from courses with grade of W and complete refund of tuition;
2. Receive an Incomplete (I) grade for the semester's coursework with a contract to complete at a specified date in the future; or
3. Receive an appropriate grade (as determined by each instructor) if a substantial amount of coursework has been completed.

State regulations do not provide any option to refund tuition of students in the active military whose duties require extended absences from classes.

## **Withdrawal for Active Military Service**

The College may require reasonable proof of the fact and duration of student's military assignment.

Active military members who incur temporary or intermittent absences due to their military assignment will be allowed to complete assignments and examinations within a reasonable time following the absence/s; excused absence/s are allowed for up to 25 percent of the total class meetings or the contact hour equivalent.

Students who must withdraw from the College to perform active military service as a member of the United States Armed Forces or the Texas National Guard must be accorded certain accommodations except when that service is solely to perform one or more training exercises as a member of the Texas National Guard.

For any academic term that begins after the date a student described above is released from active

military service but not later than the first anniversary of that date, the College from which the student withdrew shall readmit the student, without requiring reapplication if the student is otherwise eligible to register for classes. On readmission of the student under this subsection, the College shall:

1. Provide to the student any financial assistance previously provided before the student's withdrawal if the student meets current eligibility requirements for the assistance other than a requirement of continuous enrollment, and
2. Allow the student the same academic status as before the student's withdrawal, including any course credit awarded to the student by the College.

### [Veteran Affairs Policies & Guidelines](#)

## II. BUSINESS SERVICES

(<http://swtjc.edu/pages/student-life/student-business-office>)

The campus Business Services Office is in charge of all financial transactions including collection and accounting of all tuition and fees, traffic violations, and returned checks. Payroll checks for student assistants and work-study students are distributed from the Business Services Office.

### Payment Information

Students are responsible for prompt payment of all financial obligations to the College. Students who knowingly give the College a check, draft or money order with intent to defraud the College are subject to disciplinary action.

Payments by check, cash or credit card can be made at any campus Business Services Office. Payment plans are available for payment of tuition. The student will be responsible for all collection costs and attorney fees. Restitution of funds is the responsibility of the student when a bank returns a check. A \$25 fee per check will be charged to the student's account. Southwest Texas Junior College will stop accepting checks if this activity continues to occur. A stop payment on tuition checks will be considered as NSF which may also cause the withdrawal of students from courses. To officially withdraw, contact the Admissions Office. Returned checks, delinquent installment contracts, and past due student balances will be sent to a third-party agency for collection.

A voucher must be submitted to the Business Services Office by the payment deadline if payment is to be provided by any agency or organization. Documentation to qualify for state reimbursed programs (Early High School Graduate, Educational Aides and Substitute Teachers, TANF/AFDC Recipients, and National Guard Scholarships) and evidence of eligibility for payment from the Texas Tomorrow Fund should be submitted each semester to the Business Services Office by the payment deadline.

It is the responsibility of students to be aware of tuition payment due dates assigned for a semester. Failure to pay tuition or to make payment arrangements by the deadline **may** result in students being dropped from their courses. Students are responsible for dropping any course they do not wish to be enrolled in, and for verifying that they have been withdrawn from unpaid courses.

Students have two payment options they may choose: [Ecashier](#) is available through the college website, [www.swtjc.net](http://www.swtjc.net). Ecashier is to pay tuition as an installment plan or to pay in full with a \$25.00 fee. Ecommerce is available through Web Advisor on the college's website. This payment

method is to pay tuition in full without a fee.

## **Refund of Tuition and Fees**

([http://swtjc.edu/tinybrowser/files/academic/2013-2015catalog\\_final.pdf#page=63](http://swtjc.edu/tinybrowser/files/academic/2013-2015catalog_final.pdf#page=63))

A student should be aware of refund implications when dropping a course. Refund schedules will be posted at the Business Services Office on campus. Special-length courses may have a refund schedule different than the published standard term schedule. A student may inquire about these at the Business Services Office. Refunds are generated automatically on withdrawal from a class. If payment has been made by credit card, refund will be made to the credit card used for payment. Refunds require two-three weeks for processing. Refunds are processed by the issuance of a check from the Business Office or through a third party provider, Higher One. Students will receive a card from Higher One at which time they will have to log in to [www.myrefundcard.com](http://www.myrefundcard.com) to choose their preferred method for receiving refunds. Students will be charged a fee to replace a lost Higher One card. A student who has opted for the installment payment plan, has dropped classes, and/or withdraws from the College is responsible for the full payment of the promissory note. Refunds will be applied to any balance due on the note.

## **III. STUDENT RECORDS**

### **Access to Student Records/Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

([http://swtjc.edu/tinybrowser/files/academic/2013-2015catalog\\_final.pdf#page=60](http://swtjc.edu/tinybrowser/files/academic/2013-2015catalog_final.pdf#page=60))

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (PL93-380), or FERPA, provides that all records pertaining to a student which are maintained by the College must be open to inspection by the student and may not be made available to any other person, except parents/guardians who can prove that a student is a legal dependent for tax purposes, without the written authorization of the student. A "student" is defined as a person who has registered and paid for one or more credit or continuing education courses and who is enrolled in and actually attends the College. The Act further provides that certain portions of the student record are deemed directory information, and under some circumstances may be released without the student's written permission. Directory information includes name, current address and telephone number, major, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received and dates granted, most recent educational institution(s) attended, and eligibility and participation in officially recognized activities and sports. Directory information may be released without student consent unless a written request not to release is filed with the Registrar's Office. The request may be canceled only upon receipt of the student's written authorization.

Requests for release of student information or verification of enrollment should be directed to the Registrar's Office.

Additional information concerning FERPA may be obtained from the Registrar's Office or the SWTJC Catalog.

### **Change of Name**

([http://swtjc.edu/pages/admissions/registrar-and-admissions/forms\\_-\\_registrar](http://swtjc.edu/pages/admissions/registrar-and-admissions/forms_-_registrar))

Students are required to use their LEGAL name for all student records. Any change of name should be reported to the Registrar's Office immediately. An official document supporting the name change (i.e., marriage license, adoption decree, divorce decree, Social Security card, or valid driver's license) is required.

## Student Address & Contact Information

Students must provide the College with correct and current contact information including: mailing address, phone number, and personal email address. This information must be confirmed/updated each semester a student is enrolled and/or a change occurs.

A system-assigned email address is provided to each student to enhance communication of important announcements and information. **Any communication from the College that has been mailed to the name and address or SWTJC email address or posted on a College bulletin board is considered to have been properly delivered, and the student is held responsible for the information.**

## Use of Student Identification Number

The automated student information system assigns every student a random number called their **Student ID**. This number is required to identify students' permanent records. The Student ID is used for all internal printed materials and provides additional protection of students' privacy. Students are required to know their Student ID and to use it when communicating with College offices.

Students are requested to provide their Social Security Number to the College for maintenance of their student records. This allows the College to meet federal and state-reporting requirements, enables communication with financial aid providers and service agencies, and substantially eases transfer of information between SWTJC and other colleges and universities. Students who do not provide their Social Security Number may risk loss of services and benefits, and may encounter delays when transferring from or to other institutions. **The College makes every effort to protect students' Social Security Numbers from disclosure.** Questions about College use of the Social Security Number should be directed to the Registrar's Office.

## Right to an Academic Fresh Start

Under the provisions of the Texas Education Code, Section 931, a Texas resident applying for admission/reactivation to the College or to any specialized admission program is entitled to elect to have all academic coursework that was earned 10 or more years prior to the requested enrollment date ignored for enrollment purposes and GPA computation. The applicant must complete the Right to an Academic Fresh Start Agreement with the campus Registrar's Office or the Office of Admissions Services prior to registration, confirming the decision to enroll under the Academic Fresh Start statute. An applicant who makes the decision to apply under this statute may not receive any course credit for courses taken at any college or university 10 or more years prior to the starting date of semester of enrollment.

Students who were awarded Academic Fresh Start through another Texas public college or university may request SWTJC recognition of that agreement by completing a Right to an Academic Fresh Start agreement and presenting an official transcript from the awarding institution showing the beginning Academic Fresh Start semester.

An applicant who chooses to exercise the Right to an Academic Fresh Start must meet all SWTJC admission/reactivation requirements and must submit official transcripts from all colleges or universities attended for credit courses.

The Right to an Academic Fresh Start can be rescinded by the student through a request made to the campus Registrar's Office.

## Course Load

A student enrolled for 12 or more semester hours during the fall or spring semester is considered a full-time student. Special terms of less than semester length comprise a proportionate share of full-time or part-time enrollment. Students enrolled in a special term should consult the campus Registrar to determine how special terms might affect their enrollment.

Twelve hours constitute a full-time course load. No student will be permitted to enroll for more than 18 semester hours without permission of the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The College reserves the right to limit the course load of any student.

The allowed student course load during each six-week term of the summer semester is 7 semester hours. The maximum load, with permission of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, shall not exceed 8 semester hours for one six-week term. The maximum credit that a student can earn during the entire summer semester shall not exceed the number of weeks of the student's summer enrollment, up to 17 semester hours. The May-mester is considered part of the summer term.

Students who are employed or who plan to seek employment are cautioned to consider carefully the amount of college work they attempt in relation to the number of hours they are employed each week and to the student and community activities in which they participate. Students who overload themselves in these areas are likely to have scholastic difficulties. A good rule to remember is that two hours of preparation outside class are necessary for each hour of class time.

## Calculating Grade Point Average (GPA)

([http://swtjc.edu/tinybrowser/files/academic/2013-2015catalog\\_final.pdf#page=61](http://swtjc.edu/tinybrowser/files/academic/2013-2015catalog_final.pdf#page=61))

Grade Point Average (GPA) is a ratio of the semester hours taken and the grade points earned for each grade.

Students must be concerned about two separate Grade Point Averages:

- **College Courses GPA** is computed at the end of the spring, fall and summer terms and represents the GPA for courses taken at any time during that semester with the exception of developmental education courses.
- **SWTJC GPA** is also computed at the end of the spring, fall and summer terms and represents the GPA for ALL courses taken at SWTJC.
- **Overall GPA** is also computed at the end of the spring, fall and summer terms and represents the GPA for ALL courses attempted at SWTJC as well as any transfer courses.

Note that neither GPA includes grades for courses taken for Pass/No Pass (P/NP), or courses taken for audit (AU). Courses dropped earn a grade of "W" and do not affect GPA.

## GPA Calculation

Each time a course is taken, grade points are earned:

Grade of A receives 4 grade points per semester hour  
Grade of B receives 3 grade points per semester hour  
Grade of C receives 2 grade points per semester hour

Grade of D receives 1 grade point per semester hour

Grade of F receives 0 grade points per semester hour

- For **Semester GPA**, divide total grade points earned in eligible courses for the semester into total hours attempted.
- For **Overall GPA**, divide total grade points earned for ALL eligible SWTJC courses into total hours attempted.

## Texas Common Course Numbers

([www.tccns.org](http://www.tccns.org))

The Texas Common Course Numbering System is a voluntary, cooperative effort among Texas community colleges and universities to facilitate transfer of freshman- and sophomore-level general academic coursework.

The TCCNS provides a shared, uniform set of course designations for students and their advisors to use in determining both course equivalency and degree applicability of transfer credit on a statewide basis.

When students transfer between two participating TCCNS institutions, a course taken at the sending institution transfers as the course carrying, or cross-referenced with, the same TCCNS designation at the receiving institution.

## Credit by Examination

([http://swtjc.edu/tinybrowser/files/academic/2013-2015catalog\\_final.pdf#page=49](http://swtjc.edu/tinybrowser/files/academic/2013-2015catalog_final.pdf#page=49))

Southwest Texas Junior College provides students with the opportunity to earn Credit By Examination. Any college student may receive credit in certain courses subject to the requirements and policies below.

### General Requirements

To receive Credit By Examination a student must meet the following general requirements:

1. The student must be enrolled in SWTJC.
2. The student must be TSI complete in all areas.
3. The students must have completed at least six semester credit hours at SWTJC through regular coursework.
4. Credit By Examination awards are limited to 24 semester credit hours

## Academic Standing

In order to remain in Academic Good Standing, students must maintain a minimum semester and overall GPA of 2.0. Students who fail to maintain this minimum standard will be placed on Scholastic Probation or Scholastic Suspension, as appropriate. In determining whether a student will be placed on probation or suspension, all grades except W, EW, NP, P, or I, will be used in computing GPA. Students are responsible for knowing their scholastic standing. Ineligible students who register with the college will be subject to dismissal with forfeiture of all tuition and fees.

Requests for exceptions to the following policies and procedures must be made in writing to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs.

### Scholastic Probation

Scholastic Probation is an emphatic warning that the quality of the student's work has not met minimum scholastic standards. A probationary status is an opportunity for students to continue at SWTJC in order to improve their scholastic performance. Students will be placed on scholastic probation at the end of any semester if their semester OR overall GPA is less than 2.0. Students on Scholastic Probation may register after meeting with an academic advisor.

A student on probation will be limited to enrolling in no more than 12 semester credit hours during a regular term and 3 semester credit hours during a summer term. In addition, priorities below will be followed:

1. Students must enroll in all required Developmental Education courses.
2. Students must enroll in a College Success Skills course if required.
3. Students will be encouraged to re-take a course or courses not successfully completed.
4. Students must follow course requirements of their degree plan.

### Removal from Scholastic Probation

A student on Scholastic Probation returns to Academic Good Standing by earning a GPA of 2.0 or higher

In the next semester of enrollment AND by having an overall GPA of 2.0 or higher. A student continues on academic probation while either the current semester or the overall GPA is less than 2.0.

### Scholastic Suspension

A student on Scholastic Probation who fails to earn at least a 2.0 GPA for the next semester of enrollment AND who fails to earn an overall GPA of at least 2.0 by the end of that semester will be placed on scholastic suspension. The student will not be permitted to enroll at SWTJC until a Fall or Spring semester has elapsed.

### Appeal of Scholastic Suspension

A student placed on Scholastic Suspension may appeal to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs or an appropriate designee. The appeal must be in writing. The 'Scholastic Suspension Appeal Form' is available online. If the Vice-President for Academic Affairs grants the student's appeal, the student will be admitted under Conditional Probation. If the student's appeal is denied, the student may appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee. If the appeal is denied by the Committee, the student shall be informed of the right of appeal to the President of the College.

### Conditional Probation

If the appeal is approved, the student will be admitted under Conditional Probation. A student on Conditional Probation will be limited to enrolling in no more than 6 semester credit hours during any long term and no more than 3 semester credit hours during any summer term. In addition, priorities below will be followed:

1. Students must enroll in all required Developmental Education courses.
2. Students must enroll in a College Success Skills course if required.
3. Students must re-take a course or courses not successfully completed.
4. Students must follow course requirements of their degree plan.
5. Other conditions may apply as deemed appropriate.

If the student's semester GPA while on Conditional Probation equals or exceeds 2.0, the student will advance to Scholastic Probation. If the student's semester GPA is below 2.0, the student will be placed on Scholastic Suspension.

### **Removal from Scholastic Suspension**

A student enrolling after a Fall or Spring semester's lapse due to Scholastic Suspension will automatically be placed on Conditional Probation.

### **Admission Following a Scholastic Suspension at Another College**

Students who are on Scholastic Suspension at another college or university may be admitted to SWTJC through the following procedure:

1. Each student must appeal in writing for admission to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs or an appropriate designee.
2. If denied admission by the Vice-President, the student may appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee.
3. In case of denial of admission by the Committee, the student shall be informed of the right of appeal to the President of the College.

## **Attendance/Absence**

Students are expected to regularly attend all classes in which they are enrolled and are responsible for the subsequent completion of all work missed because of an absence. Any class work missed because of an absence and not subsequently completed may affect the grade of the student regardless of the reason for the absence. The manner in which makeup work for absences is administered is left to the professional discretion of the individual faculty member. SWTJC makes no distinction between excused or unexcused absences. Therefore, the instructor may count all absences except when prohibited by State law or statute. According to State law there may be a valid reason for a student's absence from class. Acceptable reasons are, but not limited to: personal illness, death in the immediate family, religious holy days in compliance with Section 51.911 of the Texas Higher Education Code, military or legal obligations, or school trips. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor of an excused absence related to one or more of the aforementioned categories and to ask for make-up work.

An instructor may request the withdrawal of a student from a class when the total number of absences exceeds SWTJC criteria for "Excessive Absences" and the student has failed to make the appropriate contact with the Instructor regarding the validity of the absence and the need for make-up work. The SWTJC definition of "Excessive Absences" is when the total number of absences exceeds the equivalent of two weeks of class meetings in a course; specifically, (a) six absences from a class that meets three times per week (typical MWF schedule), (b) four absences from a class that meets two times per week (typical TTH schedule) and, (c) two absences from a class that meets once per week (typical evening course). Attendance counting begins on the official first day of class. When a student reaches the "Excessive Absence" threshold, the instructor may request that the student be reported to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. The "Excessive Absences Form" is used for this purpose. If the absences continue, the instructor may initiate a forced withdrawal by using the "Class Withdrawal Form." Following agreement by the Vice-President for Academic Affairs, the student will be dropped from the class. When an instructor requests the forced withdrawal of a student from a class, a grade of "EW" will be considered if the student has at the time of the request a class grade equivalent to the numeric average of sixty (60) or higher; otherwise, a grade of "F" will be given.

## **Student Degree Planning (Degree Plan)**

A student degree plan is an outline to guide students in the completion of an associate degree or a certificate of completion. All SWTJC students are required to declare a major. Students also are required to complete a degree plan with their designated advisor. When changing majors a student



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must obtain approval from their designated advisor. The student degree plan assists the student in three ways:

1. The degree plan aids the student in choosing required and elective courses. An advisor can work with the student in the selection of courses.
2. The degree plan not only guides a student in the completion of a certificate or an associate degree, but also aids transition from SWTJC to a four-year college or university.
3. The degree plan enables a student to complete coursework for a specific degree or certificate of completion.

All SWTJC degrees and certificates are available online at [WebAdvisor](#); students can determine how their SWTJC and transfer courses meet requirements for any SWTJC degree or certificate. The online SWTJC degree audit includes coursework transferred from another regionally accredited college or university.

## Transcript Evaluation

Students who have transferred from another college or university and are working toward a SWTJC Associate of Arts or Associate of Applied Sciences degree or Certificate require a transcript evaluation. Evaluations include **only** coursework completed through regionally accredited colleges and universities and appropriate international institutions.

An evaluation is used to:

1. Provide a consistent method of applying transfer coursework to a SWTJC degree
2. Assist students in tracking progress toward a degree
3. Support academic advisement
4. Record course prerequisites required for registration
5. Transfer core completion information

Students transferring to SWTJC from another regionally accredited college or university will have their transcript evaluated only for equivalent SWTJC courses. An official transcript from each previous, regionally accredited collegiate institution must be on file prior to an evaluation.

Students transferring to SWTJC can expect that approved academic courses earned at any Texas public institution will be accepted. Academic courses are identified by [Texas Common Course Numbering System](#). Students who dispute a transfer decision made by SWTJC should contact the Registrar's Office to request a review of the coursework involved.

Evaluations can be completed only after ALL required transcripts are on file. Evaluations usually are completed seven to 10 business days from the date the request was received **and** all transcripts have been received. However, due to the large volume of requests from mid-July to September 1 and from December 1 to January 31, completion time may increase to three weeks or more.

Students planning to transfer SWTJC coursework to another college or university must contact their designated SWTJC advisor. It is extremely important that students work with their advisor on all transfer related questions. SWTJC has established transfer agreements with area colleges and universities.

## Drop/Withdrawal From One or More Courses

(<http://swtjc.edu/pages/admissions/registrar-and-admissions/registration-and-withdrawal>)

Students considering drop/withdrawal should first consider the impact (if applicable) on financial aid, veterans benefits, third party sponsorships, and/or other entitlements. Students must get their designated advisor's approval prior to dropping/withdrawing from courses.

Courses can be dropped through the campus Registrar's Office. Until a student is officially withdrawn, the student remains on the class roll and may receive a grade of F for the course.

Students who are unable to withdraw in person may mail, email or fax a letter to their designated advisor specifying class(es) from which the drop/withdrawal(s) is/are requested. The letter must be signed by the student; it must include the student's Colleague ID and, if mailed, emailed or faxed, the date shown on the postmark or fax confirmation must be on or before the last day to drop a class.

## Drop Six Regulation

(<http://swtjc.edu/pages/admissions/registrar-and-admissions/registration-and-withdrawal>)

Students entering any college Fall 2007 or thereafter may not drop more than six courses, including those taken at another college or university (*Education Code 51.907(e); 19 TAC 4.10(a)*). All courses dropped after the official day of record (census date) are included in the six course limit unless (1) the student withdraws from all courses, or (2) the course to be dropped is a developmental course or is taken by a student still enrolled in high school, or (3) a drop exception is authorized.

Drop exceptions can be approved by the Vice President of Student Services if the student properly documents an acceptable reason allowed by the law:

1. A severe illness or other debilitating condition that affects the student's ability to satisfactorily complete a course;
2. The student's responsibility for the care of a sick, injured, or needy person if the provision of care affects the student's ability to satisfactorily complete a course;
3. The death of a person who is either considered to be a member of the student's family or is otherwise considered having a sufficiently close relationship to the student.
4. The active duty service as member of the Texas National Guard or the Armed Forces of the United States of either the student or a person who is considered to be a member of the student's family or a person who is otherwise considered to have a sufficiently close relationship to the student, as described by the Higher Education Coordinating Board's Rules;
5. The change of the student's work schedule that is beyond the control of the student, and that affects the student's ability to satisfactorily complete the course; or
6. Other good cause as determined by the institution of higher education.

Students who incur six withdrawals that have not been approved with exceptions will incur registration and drop restrictions during all subsequent semesters and may incur other enrollment limitations or requirements.

## Repeating a Course

(<http://swtjc.edu/pages/admissions/registrar-and-admissions/registration-and-withdrawal>)

Students may opt to repeat a course to improve a grade or extend mastery of course content. In general, when a course is repeated only the highest grade is included in GPA computation; however, all courses and grades are a part of the official record and remain on the students' transcripts.

The decision to repeat a course should be made very carefully by students receiving financial aid, veterans' educational benefits, or other third-party benefits. Repeated courses may negatively affect benefits.

A few courses designated in the course description that they may be taken for a specific number of times without constituting a repeat. In other instances students should be aware that they may be subject to additional tuition and fees due to excessive repeats. (Education Code 130.0034;54.014;19 TAC Chapter 13, subchapter F). State regulations allow an institution of higher education to charge a higher tuition rate to a student who enrolls in a course more than two times, regardless of the grade received (including grade of W). At this time, SWTJC is charging an additional \$300 for those courses.

## Grade Review

Students may petition for review of a grade within 30 calendar days after the first class day of the next long semester by following these procedures:

1. The student must inform the instructor and the department chairperson in writing of the reason for review of grade;
2. The instructor should then examine the records and submit his/ her recommendations through administrative channels to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, who will make the final decision regarding the grade and notify the student. If the instructor recommends not changing the grade, it should be explained in a memo.
3. If the decision is to change the grade, the instructor should submit a completed "Change of Grade Request" form. A copy of the grade appeal must be attached. The process of review of grade must be completed within 30 calendar days after receipt by the instructor of the written appeal.
4. If the instructor is no longer employed, the department chairperson will then examine the instructor's records, make a recommendation, and send the recommendation through the proper channels to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who will notify the student of the decision.

## Grade Reports and Transcripts

(<http://swtjc.edu/pages/admissions/registrar-and-admissions/transcripts>)

Grade reports are **not** mailed to students. Students can access and print grade reports through SWTJC online services on [WebAdvisor](#). Unofficial transcripts are provided online without charge or can be requested through each campus Registrar's office.

Official transcripts are provided without charge and can be requested through online services or any SWTJC Registrar's office.

## **Recognition of Outstanding Academic Achievement**

### **Honor Graduates**

Students satisfying the requirements for the A.A. , A.A.T., A.S., and A.A.S. degree with the following GPA will graduate as follows:

3.90 to 4.00 GPA --- Summa Cum Laude

3.70 to 3.89 GPA --- Magna Cum Laude

3.60 to 3.69 GPA --- Cum Laude

### **Honor Roll**

The Vice-President's Honor Roll is composed of those students who are enrolled for 12 or more semester hours of work, excluding all developmental hours, and who make a GPA of 3.60 or better on their semester grades. The Vice-President's Honor Roll is published as soon as possible after the close of the fall or spring semesters.

The President's Honor Roll is composed of those students who are enrolled for 12 or more semester hours of work, excluding all developmental hours, and who make a GPA of 4.0 on their semester grades. The President's Honor Roll is published as soon as possible after the close of the fall or spring semesters.

### **Assessment/Placement Testing**

(<http://inet4.swtjc.cc.tx.us/testing/homepage.html>)

THECB Rule 4.55 requires that an institution assess the academic skills of each entering undergraduate student prior to enrollment of the student. Under exceptional circumstances, an institution may permit a student to enroll in freshman-level academic coursework without assessment but shall require the student to be assessed not later than the end of the first semester of enrollment in freshman-level academic coursework. SWTJC complies with this request by requiring assessment of all entering students who do not meet the TSI exemption criteria.

ESOL coursework can satisfy required developmental education in writing and in reading, if student exit scores verify readiness.

### **Texas Success Initiative (TSI) - Mandatory Testing Requirement**

The Texas Success Initiative (TSI) has been mandated by the Texas Legislature and is designed to measure competency in reading, writing and mathematics and to indicate the need for remedial work to address deficiencies.

All students not eligible for a TSI exemption or waiver must have taken the TSI Assessment or an approved alternative test prior to enrolling in any Texas public college or university. Enrollment without test scores will prevent enrollment in many courses with test score prerequisites.

Students who score below specified levels in any section of the TSI Assessment or alternative test will be required to enroll in developmental studies until a grade of C or higher is earned in the final course of the developmental series, or until the student passes the test.

Students whose test scores in reading, writing and mathematics are below specified levels are restricted from certain courses. The restrictions are in effect until the required score is presented or until the students complete developmental reading courses with a C grade or pass the appropriate test.

## IV. CAMPUS POLICE REGULATIONS

### Southwest Texas Junior College Police Department

(<http://swtjc.edu/pages/about-swtjc/facultystaff/campus-police>)

The Southwest Texas Junior College Police Department would like to welcome you to the campus. While you are on the campus, we want you to have an enjoyable and safe time. We are available to assist you in any way that we can.

We consider the college as our community and consider the students, faculty, staff, and guests as members of the community. We are the police department for the college community in much the same way as a city police department is for a particular city. Southwest Texas Junior College is not within the city limits of Uvalde or within the jurisdiction of its police department. We have our own independent, fully staffed, full-service police department with full-time, experienced police officers. Our officers are fully certified and licensed Texas Peace Officers. We do not employ security guards.

You are here because you have decided to continue your education and enjoy the benefits that a higher education can have on your life. The mission of the Southwest Texas Junior College Police Department is to help promote and protect an atmosphere that assists persons in achieving their educational goals. Our campus community does have its share of accidents, criminal activity, and injuries. Compared to other jurisdictions, however, our crime rate is extremely low. Our goal is to lower it even more. To accomplish this we need everyone's help. If you witness a crime, see something suspicious, or know of someone that may need assistance on campus, please become involved and contact our department.

The SWTJC Police Department office is located in Hubbard Hall. Office hours are generally 8 am to 6 pm. Our phone number is 830-591-7333. Alternate numbers are 278-4401 (switchboard); 278-9147 (Uvalde dispatch); or 911 (countywide emergency). SWTJC Police Cellular Phone number is 830-279-1861

SWTJC Police respond to all incidents on the Uvalde campus of SWTJC. We gather information on, and investigate all crimes and offenses on campus. We report to the college administration. We file criminal cases through the Justice of the Peace Courts, the Uvalde County Courts, and the State District Courts. Campus parking violations are handled on campus through the Business Office and the Vice-President of Finance.

You are welcome to come by our office. We encourage you to take an active role in helping us maintain a peaceful and enjoyable campus community where you can get a quality education.

### Motor Vehicle Parking Permit

(<https://www.permitsales.net/SWTJC>)

All students, faculty and staff employees of SWTJC are responsible for obtaining and displaying motor vehicle parking permits on campus and for obeying the Motor Vehicle Regulations outlined in this document. Citations are issued for parking violations.

Students are prohibited from parking in the visitor's lot. This prohibition applies to parking on campuses other than the one usually attended. Students/faculty/staff are not visitors and will be issued citations for parking in the visitor's lot.

A one-day temporary permit is issued when a student or employee fails to bring his permit to the

campus.

## Emergency Response Plan

(<http://swtjc.edu/pages/about-swtjc/emergency-response-and-alert#article-1482>)

When evacuation of a building is necessary due to a fire, bomb threat, hazardous materials accident or other emergency evacuations, an alarm system is activated or orders to evacuate are given.

1. **Immediately evacuate the building** through the doorways marked by the nearest exit signs.  
Evacuate the building in an orderly manner, without running or crowding. A disorganized evacuation can result in confusion, injury and property damage.
2. **Be familiar with the location of primary and alternate exits and the various evacuation routes available.** Floor plans with escape routes, alternate escape routes, and exit locations are posted throughout the buildings.
3. **Evacuate immediately**, resisting the temptation to locate personal belongings or asking for details about the situation. Remember, things can be replaced--people cannot.
4. **Assist individuals with a disability** or others who may need help.
5. Fire alarms and smoke detectors are to alert building occupants. If smoke or fire is detected, **call the campus police from a campus phone at ext. 7333 or 830-591-7333 from an outside phone.** Whenever possible, activate the nearest fire alarm and close the door upon leaving a room.
6. **Proceed to a predetermined assembly area.** A head count or roll call is necessary to account for all personnel.

## Severe Weather Evacuation Plan

When tornados or other severe weather threatens the campus, all persons must take shelter. The following procedures are to be followed:

1. The city where each campus is located will activate a severe weather siren. **Sound of the siren is the signal to take shelter immediately.**
2. **The safest place to take shelter from severe weather or tornados is inside a building, in a room or hallway, clear of glass doors and windows. Lie face down, head covered, along an interior wall or hallway.** When possible get under heavy furniture as protection from falling debris.
3. **Assist individuals with a disability** as needed.
4. The Police Department will use a public address system to instruct people outside to immediately take shelter inside a building. Each building has diagrams posted on walls showing the exits.
5. **When campus police officers are present, follow their instructions.** No discussion is necessary during an emergency situation.

## **Safety Policy Statement**

It is the policy of the Southwest Texas Junior College to provide and maintain a safe and healthful environment free of injuries and other impairments to the health of students. In the interest of accident prevention, the Southwest Texas Junior College supports a formal safety program designed to reduce accidents and injuries.

Each student is responsible for taking serious interest in safety, cooperating with College officials, complying with safety regulations of the College, reporting immediately any injury incurred or unsafe condition observed, and practicing safety at all times. Students who fail to follow safety regulations may be withdrawn from their course(s).

## **Firearms and Weapons**

The possession of firearms, explosives, fireworks or weapons of any kind on the College premises or at College-sponsored events is unlawful in accordance with Texas law. Even those with permits are not allowed to carry concealed handguns on a college's premises. Law enforcement officers, including College police, are permitted to have firearms while in the performance of their duties.

## **Sex Offender Registration**

Not later than the seventh day after the date on which the person begins to attend school, a person required to register under Chapter 62, code of Criminal Procedure, who is a student at a public institution of higher education shall report that fact to the SWTJCD Police Department.

The offender shall provide the SWTJCD Police Department or the local law enforcement authority all information the person is required to provide under Code of Criminal Procedure Section 62.02(b).

State law prohibits some sex offenders on parole or probation from going within 1,000 feet of an area where "children normally gather." The frequent presence of children on SWTJCD campuses requires that sex offenders on parole or probation check with their parole or probation officers to learn if they fall under this prohibition. Those who do fall under the prohibition may take Distance Learning classes, but only if presence on campus is not required

## **Tobacco Use**

The use of tobacco products is allowed on SWTJC campuses; however smoking must not take place within 50 feet of any window, door, or opening of a building.

## Other Violations and Fees

Parking facilities are available on campus for all students, faculty and staff. Handicapped parking is also available (vehicles must display a handicapped placard to park in these spaces). All cars must park in the appropriate parking lots assigned and designated by the decal that may be obtained in the Business Office.

A non-transferable decal for SWTC students may be obtained in the Admissions Office at no additional charge. Additional decals are available for \$5.00. A non-transferable decal for Sul Ross students valid the current school year may be obtained in the Admissions Office.

Campus Police enforce parking regulations 24 hours a day, seven days a week. All parking citation types and fines, with the exception of space reserved for the disabled are \$25.00. Parking in a space designated as Handicapped Parking without a placard is \$50.

Moving violations will be filed with the Justice of the Peace. When moving violations are filed with the

Justice of the Peace, the fine assessed if found guilty, could range from \$2 to \$200. A fee of \$5 shall be assessed when a parked vehicle causes an unsafe situation or is in flagrant violation of parking regulations.

## V. STUDENT LIFE

Southwest Texas Junior College has administrative responsibility to control and regulate student conduct and behavior that tends to impede, obstruct or threaten the fulfillment of the educational goals of the College, or that tends to impede, obstruct or threaten the legal rights of others on the campus. Therefore, SWTJC has the responsibility and authority to formulate and enforce rules of student conduct necessary for the maintenance of order and property where such rules are reasonable and necessary to further the educational goals of the College. In order to create a positive climate for learning, students are expected to abide by all rules and regulations. Failure to comply with these rules and regulations may be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the College.

### Student Organizations

SWTJC is committed to providing vital, co-curricular activities for students that enhance individual development, promote collaboration, and provide social and recreational activities. Any group of students wishing to meet on behalf of a common interest may seek organization status by consulting with the Director of Student Engagement & Success.

Impetus for the formation of a student organization is expected to come from students. As a prerequisite to operation on campus, all organizations must be recognized by the College and must agree to abide by regulations of the Board and by the club policies and procedures issued by the College administration. Every club must have a faculty or staff advisor responsible to the College. No organization which discriminates against faculty, staff, or students or is in violation of state or federal law will be established or allowed to operate.

See [Local Policy FLAA](#) for additional information regarding student expression and requirements and restrictions pertaining to student and faculty/staff organizations and programs.



## Student Rights and Responsibilities:

### **STUDENT COMPLAINTS**

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to secure at the first possible level prompt and equitable resolution of student complaints.

#### **EXCEPTIONS**

This policy shall not apply to:

1. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on race, color, gender, national origin, disability, or religion. [See FDE]
2. Complaints concerning retaliation relating to discrimination and harassment. [See FDE]
3. Complaints concerning disciplinary decisions. [See FMA]
4. Complaints concerning a commissioned peace officer who is an employee of the College District. [See CHA]

#### **REPRESENTATION**

The student may be represented at any level of the complaint.

If the complaint involves a problem with an instructor, the student shall discuss the matter with the instructor before requesting a conference with the department chairman at Level One.

#### **LEVEL ONE**

A student who has a complaint shall request a conference with the department chairman or counselor as appropriate, who shall schedule and hold a conference with the student.

#### **LEVEL TWO**

If the outcome of the conference with the department chairman or counselor is not to the student's satisfaction, the student has ten workdays to request a conference with the dean of instruction or dean of student services, as appropriate, or designee(s), who shall schedule and hold a conference. Prior to or at the conference, the student shall submit a written complaint that includes a statement of the complaint and any evidence in its support, the solution sought, the student's signature, and the date of the conference with the department chairman or counselor.

#### **LEVEL THREE**

If the outcome of the conference with the dean is not to the student's satisfaction, the student has ten workdays to request a conference with the College President or designee, who shall schedule and hold a conference. Prior to or at the conference, the student shall submit the written statements required at Level Two and the date of the conference with the dean.

#### **LEVEL FOUR**

If the outcome of the conference with the College President or de-signee is not to the student's satisfaction, the student may submit to the College President a written request to place the matter on the agenda.

The College President or designee shall inform the student of the date, time, and place of the meeting. The Board President shall establish a reasonable time limit for complaint presentations. The Board shall listen to the student's complaint and take whatever action it deems appropriate.

The Board's consideration shall be based on the complaint records developed at the administrative reviews and no new evidence shall be received by the Board. Each side shall be entitled to make oral arguments based on the complaint record within the time restrictions established by the Board.

## **CLOSED MEETING**

If the complaint involves complaints or charges about an employee, it shall be heard by the Board in closed meeting unless the employee complained about requests it to be public.

## **DEFINITIONS**

Definitions of terms used in this section shall be as follows.

### **“STUDENT”**

A “student” shall mean one who is currently enrolled in the College District. These policies and regulations shall also apply to any prospective or former student who has been accepted for admission or readmission to any component institution while he or she is on the premises of any component institution.

### **“PREMISES”**

The “premises” of the College District is defined as all real property over which the College District has possession and control.

### **“SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY”**

“Scholastic dishonesty” shall include, but not be limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.

“**Cheating**” shall include, but shall not be limited to:

1. Copying from another student’s test or class work;
2. Using test materials not authorized by the person administer-ing the test;
3. Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test without permission from the test administrator;
4. Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, or soliciting, in whole or in part, the contents of an unadministered test, paper, or another assignment;
5. The unauthorized transporting or removal, in whole or in part, of the contents of the unadministered test;
6. Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for one’s self, to take a test;
7. Bribing another person to obtain an unadministered test or information about an unadministered test; or
8. Manipulating a test, assignment, or final course grades.

“Plagiarism” shall be defined as the appropriating, buying, receiv-ing as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one’s own written work.

“**Collusion**” shall be defined as the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of course requirements.

### **“DISORDERLY CONDUCT”**

“Disorderly conduct” shall include any of the following activities occurring on premises owned or controlled by the College District:

1. Behavior of a boisterous and tumultuous character such that there is a clear and present danger of alarming persons where no legitimate reason for alarm exists.
2. Interference with the peaceful and lawful conduct of persons under circumstances in which there is reason to believe that such conduct will cause or provoke a disturbance.
3. Violent and forceful behavior at any time such that there is a clear and present danger that free movement of other per-sons will be impaired.
4. Behavior involving personal abuse or assault when such behavior creates a clear and present danger of causing assaults or fights.

5. Violent, abusive, indecent, profane, boisterous, unreasonably loud, or otherwise disorderly conduct under circumstances in which there is reason to believe that such conduct will cause or provoke a disturbance.
6. Willful and malicious behavior that interrupts the speaker of any lawful assembly or impairs the lawful right of others to participate effectively in such assembly or meeting when there is reason to believe that such conduct will cause or provoke a disturbance.
7. Willful and malicious behavior that obstructs or causes the obstruction of any doorway, hall, or any other passageway in a College District building to such an extent that the employees, officers, and other persons, including visitors, having business with the College District are denied entrance into, exit from, or free passage in such building.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

Each student shall be charged with notice and knowledge of, and shall be required to comply with, the contents and provisions of the College District's rules and regulations concerning student conduct.

All students shall obey the law, show respect for properly constituted authority, and observe correct standards of conduct. Each student shall be expected to:

1. Demonstrate courtesy, even when others do not;
2. Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline;
3. Attend all classes, regularly and on time;
4. Prepare for each class and take appropriate materials and assignments to class;
5. Obey all classroom rules;
6. Respect the rights and privileges of students, faculty, and other College District staff and volunteers;
7. Respect the property of others, including College District property and facilities; and
8. Cooperate with and assist the College District staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline.

## **PROHIBITED CONDUCT**

The following behavior shall be prohibited:

### **FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL LAW**

1. Violations of federal, state, or local law or College District policies, procedures, or rules, including the student handbook.

### **PROHIBITED WEAPONS**

2. Possession, distribution, sale, or use of firearms or other prohibited weapons without prior approval. [See FLBF]

### **DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

3. The use, possession, control, manufacture, transmission, or sale, or being under the influence, of a drug or narcotic, as those terms are defined by the Texas Controlled Substances Act, or other prohibited substances described in FLBD, unless under the direction of a physician.
4. The use, possession, control, manufacture, transmission, or sale of paraphernalia related to any prohibited substance.
5. The use, possession, control, manufacture, transmission, or sale, or being under the influence, of alcohol or other intoxicating beverage without the permission of the College District.

### **DEBTS**

6. Owning a monetary debt to the College District that is considered delinquent or writing an "insufficient funds" check to the College District.

## **DISRUPTIONS**

7. “Disorderly conduct”, as defined above or disruptive behavior.

## **BEHAVIOR TARGETING OTHERS**

8. Threatening another person, including a student or employee.
9. Intentionally, knowingly, or negligently causing physical harm to any person.
10. Engaging in conduct that constitutes harassment, bullying, or dating violence directed toward another person, including a student or employee. [See DOA, FFD, and FFE as appropriate]
11. Hazing with or without the consent of a student. [See FLBC]
12. Initiations by organizations that include features that are dangerous, harmful, or degrading to the student, a violation of which also renders the organization subject to appropriate discipline.
13. Endangering the health or safety of members of the College District community or visitors to the premises.

## **PROPERTY**

14. Intentionally, knowingly, or negligently defacing, damaging, misusing, or destroying College District property or property owned by others.
15. Stealing from the College District or others.

## **DIRECTIVES**

16. Failure to comply with directives given by College District personnel.
17. Failure to provide identification when requested to do so by College District personnel.

## **TOBACCO**

18. Possession or use of tobacco products on College District premises without authorization.

## **MISUSE OF TECHNOLOGY**

19. Violating policies, rules, or agreements signed by the student regarding the use of technology resources.
20. Attempting to access or circumvent passwords or other security-related information of the College District, students, or employees or uploading or creating computer viruses.
21. Attempting to alter, destroy, or disable College District technology resources including but not limited to computers and related equipment, College District data, the data of others, or other networks connected to the College District’s system.
22. Using the Internet or other electronic communications to threaten College District students, employees, or volunteers.
23. Sending, posting, or possessing electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another’s reputation, or illegal.
24. Using e-mail or Web sites to engage in or encourage illegal behavior or threaten the safety of the College District, students, employees, or visitors.
25. Possessing published or electronic material that is designed to promote or encourage illegal behavior or that could threaten the safety of the College District, students, employees, or visitors.

## **DISHONESTY**

26. Scholastic dishonesty, as defined above.
27. Making false accusations or perpetrating hoaxes regarding the safety of the College District, students, employees, or visitors.
28. Intentionally or knowingly providing false information to the College District.
29. Intentionally or knowingly falsifying records, passes, or other College District-related documents.

## **GAMBLING**

30. Gambling.

## **OTHER CONDUCT**

31. Engaging in any conduct that College District officials might reasonably believe will substantially disrupt the College District program or incite violence.

## **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

SWTJC supports the development, production, and dissemination of intellectual property by its students. Intellectual property includes, but is not limited to, inventions, copyrightable works, trademarks, and tangible research property. (See Policy [CT -LEGAL](#) and [CT -LOCAL](#))

## **DISCIPLINE**

A student shall be subject to discipline, including suspension, in accordance with FM and FMA if the student violates this policy:

1. While on College District premises;
2. While attending a College District activity; or
3. While elsewhere if the behavior adversely impacts the educational environment or otherwise interferes with the College District's operations or objectives.

## **PENALTIES FOR STUDENT MISCONDUCT**

A student shall be subject to discipline for violations of College District policies and procedures, including the rules outlining expectations for student conduct. If a student commits an infraction or engages in misconduct, the College District may impose one or more of the following penalties:

1. **Reprimand** - A verbal or written warning to the student following a rule violation. Repetition of such misconduct may result in more severe disciplinary action.
2. **Restitution** - Reimbursement for damage to or misappropriation of property. Reimbursement may take the form of appropriate service to repair or otherwise compensate for damage.
3. **Scholastic penalties** - The assignment of a failing grade on an assignment or examination or in a course by an instructor based on scholastic dishonesty; including cheating, collusion, and plagiarism; committed by a student. The instructor shall submit a written report of the incident and of the planned action to the instructor's dean.
4. **Conditional Probation** - The placing of a student on notice that continued infraction of regulations may result in suspension or expulsion from the College District. Conditional probation may include restrictions on a student's rights and privileges or specified community service. The probation may be for a specified length of time or for an indefinite period according to the relative severity of the infraction or misconduct. Failure to fulfill the terms of the probation may lead to suspension or expulsion.
5. **Suspension** - Forced withdrawal from the College District for either a definite period of time or until stated conditions have been met. Normally, suspension shall extend through a minimum of one regular long semester (with summer sessions not counting in the one semester minimum time lapse). However, suspension may exceed the one semester minimum.
6. **Expulsion** - Permanent forced withdrawal from the College District. A student receiving disciplinary expulsion shall have the action noted in the student's permanent record.

## **SUSPENDED OR EXPELLED STUDENTS**

No former student who has been suspended or expelled from the College District for disciplinary reasons shall be permitted on the campus or other facilities of the College District, initiated into an honorary or service organization, or permitted to receive credit for academic work done in residence or by correspondence or extension during the period of suspension or expulsion without the prior written approval of the College President or a designated representative.

## **DISCIPLINARY RECORD**

The College District shall maintain for every student alleged or determined to have committed misconduct at the College District, a disciplinary record that shall reflect the charge, the disposition of the charge, the sanction assessed, if any, and any other pertinent information. The disciplinary record shall be separate from the student's academic record and shall be treated as confidential; the contents shall not be revealed except on request of the student or in accordance with applicable state or federal laws.

The disciplinary record shall be maintained permanently in the event that a student is expelled or subject to an extended suspension. In all other cases, the disciplinary record shall be maintained in accordance with the College District's record retention schedule.

## **REPORTS OF ALLEGED MISCONDUCT**

College District faculty and staff shall submit an alleged violation or violations of College District policies and procedures, including the rules for student conduct, committed by a student to the Vice President of Student Services within a reasonable time following an alleged incident, not to exceed ten College District business days. The allegations must be submitted in writing, through traditional or electronic means, and must describe the violation and any surrounding facts.

The Vice President of Student Services or designee shall investigate the matter as necessary. If an allegation is deemed to be unfounded, the Vice President of Student Services or designee shall dismiss the allegation and shall provide the student written notice that the allegation of misconduct was made against the student and that the allegation was dismissed.

## **CONFERENCE**

If, however, the Vice president of Student Services or designee determines that the allegation warrants further consideration, the Vice President of Student Services or designee shall summon the student for a conference to be held within a reasonable time, not to exceed ten College District business days, following the receipt of the allegation of misconduct.

At the conference, the Vice President of Student Services or designee shall notify the student of the allegation or allegations and provide the student an opportunity to respond.

## **UNFOUNDED ALLEGATIONS**

After conferring with the student, if the Vice President of Student Services or designee determines that the student did not commit a violation, the allegation or allegations shall be dismissed as unfounded. The student shall be provided written notice of the dismissal.

## **MISCONDUCT WARRANTING A PENALTY**

If the Vice President of Student Services or designee determines that the student committed misconduct that warrants a penalty other than suspension or expulsion, the Vice President of Student Services or designee shall provide the student written notice of the penalty and the student's right to appeal to the disciplinary appeals committee.

## **SUSPENSION**

If the Vice President of Student Services or designee determines that the student committed misconduct that

warrants a suspension, the Vice President of Student Services or designee shall inform the student in writing of the determination, and a hearing shall be scheduled for consideration by the disciplinary appeals committee as described below.

## **EXPULSION**

If the Vice President of Student Services or designee determines that the student committed misconduct that warrants expulsion, the official shall inform the student in writing of the determination. The Vice President of Student Services or designee shall forward the determination and all evidence collected during the investigation and conference to the College President in order to schedule an expulsion hearing before the Board [see EXPULSION HEARING, below].

## **INTERIM DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

The Vice President of Student Services or designee may take immediate disciplinary action, including suspension pending a hearing, against a student for policy violations if the continuing presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the educational environment.

## **DISCIPLINARY APPEALS COMMITTEE**

The disciplinary appeals committee shall be convened:

1. On request of a student appealing a penalty other than suspension or expulsion. The request must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the College District, within ten College District business days of the date of the administration's written notice.
2. Automatically, if the Vice President of Student Services or designee determines that a student committed misconduct warranting suspension.

## **COMPOSITION**

The disciplinary appeals committee shall be comprised of at least three College District employees and a minimum of one current College District student. The members of the disciplinary appeals committee and the committee chairperson shall be designated according to procedures developed by the College President. All members of the disciplinary appeals committee shall be eligible to vote during the hearing.

## **HEARING NOTICE**

The Vice President of Student Services or designee shall notify the student by letter of the date, time, and place for the hearing. Unless the student and the Vice President of Student Services or designee otherwise agree, the hearing shall take place within a reasonable time period, not to exceed ten College District business days after the date of the student's request for the hearing or the Vice President of Student Services or designee's determination that the student should be suspended.

## **CONTENTS OF NOTICE**

The notice shall:

1. Direct the student to appear on the date and at the time and place specified.
2. Advise the student of his or her rights:
  - a. To have a private hearing.
  - b. To be assisted by an advisor or legal counsel at the hearing.
  - c. To call witnesses, request copies of evidence in the College District's possession, and offer evidence and agreement on his or her own behalf.
  - d. To make an audio recording of the proceedings, after first notifying the Vice President of Student Services or designee in advance of the hearing, or, at the student's own expense, to have a stenographer present at the hearing to make a stenographic transcript of the hearing.
  - e. To ask questions of each witness who testifies against the student.

3. Contain the names of witnesses who will testify against the student and a description of documentary and other evidence that will be offered against the student.
4. Contain a description of the allegations of misconduct in sufficient detail to enable the student to prepare his or her defense against the charges.
5. State the proposed punishment or range of punishments that may be imposed.

## **FAILURE TO APPEAR FOR HEARING**

The disciplinary appeals committee may impose appropriate punishment upon a student who fails without good cause to appear for the hearing; for purposes of assessing punishment, the committee may proceed with the hearing in the student's absence.

## **HEARING PROCEDURE**

The hearing shall proceed as follows:

1. The chairperson shall read the description of the misconduct.
2. The chairperson shall inform the student of his or her rights.
3. The designated official or representative shall present the College District's case.
4. The student or representative shall present the student's defense.
5. The designated College District official or representative shall present rebuttal evidence.
6. The committee members may ask questions of witnesses testifying on behalf of the student or the College District.
7. The designated official or representative shall summarize and argue the College District's case.
8. The student or representative shall summarize and argue his or her case.
9. The designated official or representative shall have an opportunity for rebuttal argument.
10. The committee members shall deliberate in closed session. The committee members shall vote on the issue of whether or not the student violated College District policies and procedures, including the rules for student conduct.
11. If the committee finds the student did commit misconduct, the committee shall determine whether the penalty assessed, or proposed in the case of suspension, by the Vice President of Student Services or designee is appropriate and, if necessary, shall assess a different or additional penalty.
12. The committee chairperson shall communicate the decision and any findings of facts in support of the committee's decision to the student in writing within ten College District business days of the hearing. The notice shall include procedures for appealing the committee's decision to the College President.

A recording shall be made if needed for an appeal, and, on request, the student shall be given a copy of the recording.

## **EVIDENCE**

Evidence shall be handled in accordance with the following:

1. Legal rules of evidence do not apply; the committee chairperson may admit evidence or exclude evidence considered to be irrelevant, immaterial, and unduly repetitious.
2. At the hearing, the College District shall be required to prove by a preponderance of the evidence that the charges are true.
3. A student may not be compelled to testify.
4. The committee shall determine if a violation has occurred and assess an appropriate penalty based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing.

## **APPEAL TO COLLEGE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION**

A student may, within ten College District business days of receiving notice of the disciplinary appeal committee's decision, petition in writing the College President to review the decision. The student's petition shall state with particularity why the decision is believed to be incorrect. After receiving notice of the appeal, the disciplinary appeals committee chairperson shall forward all evidence considered during the



hearing, the audio recording of the hearing, and the digest of the hearing, if applicable, to the College President.

The College President shall hold a conference within ten College District business days after the appeal notice is filed. At the conference, the student may provide information concerning any documents or information relied on by the committee. The College President may set reasonable time limits for the conference. The conference shall be audio recorded.

The College President shall provide the student a written response, stating the basis of the decision, within ten College District business days following the conference. In reaching a decision, the College President may consider the evidence included in the student's petition, provided during the conference, and forwarded by the committee chairperson. The College President may act to affirm, modify, remand, or reverse the decision of the disciplinary appeals committee.

### **APPEAL TO BOARD**

If the College President affirmed or modified the decision of the disciplinary appeals committee or if the time for a response has expired, the student may appeal the decision to the Board. The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the College District, within ten College District business days after receipt of the written response from the College President, or, if no response was received, within ten College District business days of the response deadline.

The College President or designee shall inform the student of the date, time, and place of the Board meeting at which the appeal will be on the agenda for presentation to the Board.

The College President or designee shall provide the Board the evidence presented to the College President, as well as the audio re-cording of the College President's conference with the student and the written response provided by the College President to the student.

The College District shall determine whether the appeal will be presented in open or closed meeting in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and other applicable law.

The presiding officer may set reasonable time limits and guidelines for the presentation, including an opportunity for the student and the administration to each make a presentation and provide rebuttal and an opportunity for questioning by the Board. The Board shall hear the appeal and may request that the administration provide an explanation for the decisions at the preceding levels.

In addition to any other record of the Board meeting required by law, the Board shall prepare a separate record of the hearing. The hearing, including the presentation by the student or the student's representative, any presentation from the administration, and questions from the Board with responses, shall be recorded by audio recording, video/audio recording, or court reporter.

The Board shall then consider the evidence. It may give notice of its decision orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. If for any reason the Board fails to reach a decision regarding the evidence by the end of the next regularly scheduled meeting, the lack of a response by the Board upholds the Vice President of Student Services' decision.

### **EXPULSION HEARING**

If the Vice President of Student Services or designee determines that the student's misconduct warrants expulsion [see CONFERENCE, above], the Board shall convene to conduct an expulsion hearing. The College President or designee shall inform the student of the date, time, and place of the Board meeting at which the appeal will be on the agenda for presentation to the Board. The notice shall contain the contents described at DISCIPLINARY APPEALS COMMITTEE—CONTENTS OF NOTICE, above.

The College President or designee shall provide the Board the documentation presented by the Vice

President of Student Services.

The Board shall proceed according to the procedures set out at DISCIPLINARY APPEALS COMMITTEE—FAILURE TO APPEAR FOR HEARING, HEARING PROCEDURE, and EVIDENCE, above, with the Board substituted for references to the committee and the presiding officer of the Board substituted for the committee chairperson.