

Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards

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PURPOSE

The Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards outlines the College's expectations for respectful behaviour, and the accompanying procedures outline the processes that will be followed when a student's behaviour contravenes the College's behavioural expectations. These standards are grounded in the College's core values and seek to foster an environment of reciprocal dialogue to ensure learning, solve problems and strengthen the George Brown community based on the principles of access, diversity and inclusion, mutual respect and accountability. As partners in student development, the standards and procedures outlined in this policy provide an opportunity for students to develop on both academic and personal levels.

The College's approach to student conduct is fourfold: (1) to be educational, (2) to prevent future violations, (3) to address violations in a manner proportionate to the seriousness of the violation, and (4) to repair any harm done to the community. Whenever possible and when appropriate, sanctions focus on helping students learn from their mistakes and model skill development that will be useful as they continue in their education, and in their future employment.

SCOPE

Who the Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards applies to:

- Registered full-time and part-time students, whether as individuals or as a group.
- Accepted applicants to George Brown College programs, whether as individuals or as a group.
- College Alumni

Where the Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards applies:

- Conduct that takes place on College property including College classrooms and the Student Residence.
- Conduct that takes place off-campus during any field placement, co-op or other work placement, whether in Canada or outside Canada, that is part of a George Brown College program or course.
- Conduct that takes place when representing George Brown College in activities off campus, such as conferences, meetings or sporting events.
- Conduct that takes place either in person or via telephone or electronic devices (e.g., email, social media, etc.) that has the potential to interfere with relationships between students/faculty and staff at the College.
- Conduct that takes place off campus that interferes or has a significant potential to interfere with relationships between students/ faculty and staff at the college.
- Conduct that takes place on or off campus that negatively impacts or has a significant potential to negatively impact the reputation of the College or compromise campus safety.

Conduct that is covered by other College policies:

- Allegations of student misconduct pertaining to the Sexual Assault & Sexual Violence Policy and Protocol and/or the Discrimination and Human Rights Policy of the College will be directed to the Diversity, Equity & Human Rights Services office. When an issue arises involving both the Sexual Assault & Sexual Violence Policy and the Code of Student Behavior and Community Standards Policy, both offices will communicate and consult to determine the best course of action.

Conduct covered under this policy:

Threats and violence

- (a) The exercise of physical force by a student against an employee, another student or any other person, in the classroom, elsewhere on campus, or in the context of field or clinical placement, that causes or could cause physical injury to the employee, student or other person.
- (b) An attempt to exercise physical force by a student against, an employee, another student, or any other person in the classroom, elsewhere on campus, or in the context of field or clinical placement, that could cause physical injury to the employee, or student or person.
- (c) A statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for an employee or another student or other person to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against them or their personal property.

This would apply in residence, in placements or co-op situations, as well as on College premises.

Important note: Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence will be addressed under the George Brown College *Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence Policy and Bill 132 Occupational Health and Safety Act.*

Harassment

A course of vexatious comment or conduct against an employee, student or other person that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.

Important note: Harassment that is related to any of the prohibited grounds under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* will be addressed under the George Brown College *Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment* policy.

Disruptive Student Behaviour

Conduct that is disruptive to the teaching, learning and working environment either in person or in the online learning environment. Behaviors that can reasonably be viewed as interfering with the ability of faculty to teach or students to learn, or negatively impacting the learning or working environment.

Such behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

- repeated interruptions or outbursts during class or during interactions with College staff,
- repeated disruptions and demands which take away from the faculty's ability to teach, other students' ability to learn and/or College staff's ability to perform their employment duties,

- use of obscene language,
- unreasonable interference with class discussion,
- persisting in disruptive personal conversations with other class members,
- failure to comply with the reasonable directions of College staff or faculty,
- contentious interactions between students both in the classroom and outside the classroom (Learning Commons, gymnasiums, lounges, cafeterias and other College spaces, placements, clinical settings, on-line) that do not adhere to the community standards outlined in this policy and potentially interfere with the teaching and learning environment,
- contentious interactions with faculty and staff inside and outside the classroom (Learning Commons, gymnasiums, lounges, cafeterias and other College spaces, placements, clinical settings, on-line) that do not adhere to the community standards outlined in this policy and that potentially interfere with the working and learning environment of the College,
- physical abuse or threats of violence, disorderly conduct or disturbing the peace,
- destruction of College property,
- abuse or sale of alcohol and prohibited substances, or
- disruptive behavior in a placement or co-op.

Violation of Digital Citizenship Involves the understanding that on-line conduct, regardless of where or when the conduct occurs, can have an equal or greater impact on the learning and working environment as in-person comments and behaviours. Social media that is used in a manner that is harassing, threatening, hateful, and discriminatory or in any way has an adverse impact on the college environment or the college's reputation is unacceptable and may be subject to sanctions under the Student Behavior and Community Standards Policy.

Cyberbullying Harassment or disrespectful behavior that takes place using electronic technology that a reasonable person could reasonably view as negatively interfering with the ability of college staff and faculty to perform their work related duties and /or for other students to learn and feel safe. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites. Examples of cyberbullying include inappropriate text messages or emails, rumours sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing or inappropriate pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

Violation of Digital Responsibility Inappropriate use of social media when it relates to the College, other students, employees and other persons within the College or outside the College, which in particular violates individual and/or College confidentiality or harms reputation; or violates the privacy of clients and client records in placement institutions and partner institutions.

DEFINITIONS

Chair*	Note that in this policy and procedure Chair also refers to any manager and or administrator who is attempting resolution or investigation of student violations of the Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards policy and procedures.
Circle of Care	The Circle of Care (see appendix) is initiated when the Manager of Student Concerns is alerted to a student’s behaviour that may cause a risk of harm to that student or others. The Circle of Care team is an interdisciplinary team that will examine the behaviour, assess the risk, and make recommendations to support the student and and others to ensure the safety of George Brown College community members.
Confidentiality	The College expects everyone involved in the complaints process to respect the confidentiality of personal information of individuals. The College will provide the person making the complaint and the student who is the subject of the complaint with regular updates on the progress of the complaint and notification of final resolution of complaint. Please note that under the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act colleges are permitted to disclose personal information “in compelling circumstances affecting the health or safety of an individual.”
Facilitated Discussion:	<p>Facilitated discussion aims to neither erase what happened in the past, nor to determine who is right or wrong. It provides individuals with an opportunity to step back and engage in a respectful and confidential discussion where they can, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-establish trust and engage in meaningful communication; • Speak freely and openly about their needs, interests and opinions, and understand the other’s point of view; • Propose viable and lasting solutions to a conflict; and • Negotiate the terms of an agreement. <p>Whether this type of discussion is appropriate would be determined by the Chair of the program.</p>
Restorative Practices	Focus on restoring relationships between parties in conflict and assisting individuals in seeing the impact their actions have had on others; seeking to repair relationships that have been in conflict.

POLICY

Students and all other members of the George Brown community have both rights and responsibilities in fostering and maintaining a safe and respectful learning community for all. As a partner in students’ learning, the College’s approach to upholding this Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards is primarily educative, rather than punitive, and aimed at helping students to understand their behavior and its impact on others. However, significant sanctions can be imposed based on the severity of the violation of the Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards.

1. Individual Rights

- 1.1.** Every member of the George Brown community has the right to learn and work in an environment that is safe, secure and free of harassment and discrimination.
- 1.2.** Every student has the right to procedural fairness in response to allegations related to a violation of the Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards. Procedural fairness includes but is not limited to the right to notice of a complaint or allegations and an opportunity to respond to the complaint or allegations. It also includes the right to have the complaint considered by an impartial decision maker.
- 1.3.** Every student has the right to the provision of information and advice related to the Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards or any other policies at George Brown College from the Student Concerns Resolution Services office. Information and advice may also be obtained from College administrators and staff, Aboriginal Services and the Student Association.

2. Student Responsibilities

- 2.1.** Students are responsible for conducting themselves in a manner which maintains a safe and respectful learning and working environment at George Brown College and for refraining from conduct which has the potential to have a significant negative impact on the reputation of the College or to compromise campus safety.
- 2.2.** Students are responsible for avoiding behaviours which violate the College's Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards, the College's policies on Academic Integrity; Discrimination and Harassment; Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence Policy; College Residence Policies; the Ontario Human Rights Code, and all other applicable College policies and federal, provincial and municipal laws.
- 2.3.** Students are responsible for obeying all health and safety procedures specifically outlined for various learning environments including but not limited to, classrooms, clinics, laboratories, field placements, field trips, practicums and co-ops.
- 2.4.** Students must comply with directions from any College employee who is acting in the proper performance of their duties, to ensure a safe and respectful learning and working environment for all students, faculty and staff at the College. An example of this would be following fire alarm protocol and leaving the building during an emergency or attending a meeting that has been requested to follow up on a Student Code of Conduct-related concern.

- 2.5. Students are expected to resolve conflicts peacefully and, whenever feasible, through dialogue with the other person involved in the conflict. See Appendix #1 Attempting initial resolution of the conflict through dialogue. This includes attempts at early and positive resolution of concerns by discussing, in a respectful manner, the concern with the person it relates to (and wherever possible, doing this in person rather than through email or text messaging). Students may seek the assistance of the Student Concerns manager or the Chair or other College staff or faculty on how to approach the resolution of a conflict.
- 2.6. Students can seek clarification of this policy and advice from appropriate College staff including but not limited to: Chair of their program, Manager of Student Concerns, Counselling Services, Public Safety and Security, Student Association staff, or Aboriginal Student Services, when conflicts arise that they are unsure how to resolve or cannot resolve directly with the other person involved.

3. The College's Responsibilities

- 3.1. The College must meet its legal obligation to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of all students, faculty, staff, and other persons.
- 3.2. During any informal or formal procedures outlined in this policy, the person handling the complaint may consult with the Student Concerns Resolution Services office for advice and/or assistance or any other office that may provide assistance.
- 3.3. Where the Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards is alleged to have been violated, the Chair will focus on ensuring that any inappropriate behaviours are addressed and that they stop. When the infraction of the Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards is one where there is an opportunity for the student to develop a learning and skills development plan the Chair will focus on this as a means of resolution. However, where a serious infraction has occurred, it may be necessary to impose sanctions instead of or in addition to a learning and skills development plan.
- 3.4. In cases involving physical abuse or threats of violence against themselves or any member of the college community, disorderly conduct or disturbing the peace, the College will take immediate action to ensure the safety of the student and others through the department of Public Safety and Security.
- 3.5. Where any of the following sanctions are imposed, they will be reported to the Registrar by the Manager of Student Concerns Resolution Services and or the Dean of the student's program: suspension of more than ten days, expulsions, and/or refusals for further registration. The College reserves the right at all times and at any time to discipline, suspend, expel, place terms and conditions upon, or refuse admission or registration to any individual whose action or influence is considered contrary to this policy.

4. Formal Complaints

- 4.1. George Brown College community members have the right to submit a formal written complaint relating to behaviour in violation of the Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards.

- 4.2. Wherever feasible, community members are encouraged to make attempts at resolution informally and directly with the community member before filing a formal complaint [see Appendix 1 for the recommended steps at informal resolution].
- 4.3. When a George Brown community member wishes to submit a written formal complaint against a student the written formal complaint will be given to the Chair of the student's program. The student receives notification within 5 business days of a formal written complaint related to their behaviour in the form of an email that will be sent to their George Brown College email address from the Chair, upon receipt of the complaint.[See Appendix 1 for template].
- 4.4. The Chair will attempt to meet with the student to discuss the formal written complaint within 5 business days [see Appendix 1 for Chair Meeting Process].
- 4.5. Where the Chair or College member has reason to suspect that a student's disruptive behaviour may be linked to physical, emotional or health challenges the Manager of Student Concerns will be notified. Where they determines that it is appropriate to do so in the circumstances, the Manager of Student Concerns will employ an interdisciplinary approach to assess risk and make recommendations (Circle of Care).
- 4.6. If the matter is not one that should or can be resolved informally through the initial meeting, the Chair will launch an investigation of the complaint within 5 business days [see Appendix 1 for the Investigation Process].
- 4.7. The Chair may, depending on the seriousness of the complaint, initiate interim measures prior to starting a formal investigation.
- 4.8. A formal meeting with the Chair and/or a related investigation **may** result in one or more of the following outcomes:
 - A dismissal of the complaint based on lack of supporting evidence that a violation of the Code of Student Behavior and Community Standards has occurred;
 - A written letter of warning, signed by the student and Chair, with a copy provided to the student (this step in process will only occur once);
 - A requirement that the student sign a behavioural contract (this would permit the student to continue to attend class under a binding written contract that outlines the expected standards of behaviour and the consequences if this contract is not followed);
 - Relocation of the student to another class or practicum location;
 - Request that the student provide compensation for damages;
 - Suspension of the student from a particular course or from the program or College for a specific time period;
 - Denial of College Services
 - Expulsion of the student; and/or

- Other actions deemed appropriate by the Chair.

4.8.1. Student(s) will receive written documentation of actions taken by the Chair.

4.8.2. The student has a right to appeal the decision [See Appendix 1 for Appeal process].

NON-COMPLIANCE IMPLICATIONS

Violation of the Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards may result in academic consequences for a student such as suspensions and/or expulsion from the College (See 4.8).

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendix 1: Procedures under this Policy

Supporting documents for Chairs

- how to write an apology letter;
- informal resolution actions / outcomes;
- letter of discipline;
- Letter of assurance re: suspension
- Terms of Reference Circle of Care
- Administrators Fairness Checklist

RELATED POLICIES

Academic Integrity Policy

Educational Resolution Policy

Academic Promotion and Progression Policy

Student Acceptable Use of Technology Policy

Academic Appeals Policy

Discrimination and Harassment Policy

Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence Policy and Protocol

Human Rights Discrimination and Harassment Policy

Residence Policy

Occupational Health and Safety Policy

Student Acceptable Use of Technology Policy

RELATED MATERIALS

Supporting documents for Chairs

- how to write an apology letter;
- informal resolution actions / outcomes;
- letter of discipline;
- Letter of assurance re: suspension
- Terms of Reference Circle of Care

APPENDIX 1, PROCEDURES**1. Attempting initial resolution of the conflict through dialogue**

Students are expected to resolve conflicts peacefully and, whenever possible, to do so through dialogue with the other person involved in the conflict. This includes attempts at early and positive resolution of concerns by discussing in a respectful manner, the concern with the person it relates to (and wherever possible, doing this in person rather than through email or text messaging). Students should set up a place and time to meet with the person whom they have a conflict with. At this meeting the student should express to the other party what the issue is and why the behaviour is problematic. The student should be open to hearing what the other party has to say and seek resolution to the issue. If a meeting is either not viable or safe the student should seek advice from their Chair on how to proceed.

2. Making a formal complaint about a student's behaviour

Wherever feasible, community members are encouraged to make attempts at resolution informally and directly with the community member before filing a formal complaint. In some cases, it may not be possible to resolve the conflict directly, and therefore it may be necessary to proceed directly to the formal complaint stage.

2.1 When a complaint about student behaviour within a course/classroom/placement has been initiated by or received by the faculty:

- If a student's behaviour is deemed by the faculty member to be disruptive to the class, the faculty will speak to the student privately about the behaviour and request that they modify their actions, the faculty will follow up this discussion with an email to the student outlining their discussion and the agreement to modify the behaviour.
- If after this discussion the behaviour continues, the faculty may take their concern directly to the Chair of the program and ask the Chair to meet with the student.
 - The Chair will attempt to contact the student before the next class is scheduled and meet with the student to discuss and attempt to resolve the behaviour.

- **If immediate removal of the student from the classroom is required:**

If the student's disruptive behaviour continues after the faculty has spoken to the student privately and if that behaviour is such that it is interfering with the teaching and learning process for the faculty and other students, the faculty has the right to ask the student to leave the class. **If the student's behaviour constitutes a serious threat faculty should contact Public Safety and Security immediately.**

- If the student refuses to leave the class and the faculty deems it necessary, the faculty may call security to assist in removing the student from the class. The faculty member will immediately inform the Chair that the student was removed from their class and the circumstances that lead to this decision. The student will not be allowed to return to class until the Chair of the program has met with the student to discuss the issues and has approved their return to class.
- The Chair will contact the student immediately upon being informed by the faculty that the student was removed from the class and set up an appointment to meet with the student to discuss and attempt to resolve the behaviour, prior to attending the next class with that faculty member. The Chair will keep the faculty member up to date on the outcome of their discussions with the student and what steps are being taken should the student be returning to the classroom.
- Where the Chair or faculty member has reason to suspect that a student's disruptive behaviour may be linked to physical, emotional or health challenges the Student Concerns manager who will advise the Chair or faculty member concerning the appropriate next steps.
- The Student Concerns Manager will consult with other professionals at the college to recommend next steps in addressing the concern and will ensure a coordinated effort on the part of college professional staff to seek the appropriate supports and actions for the student of concern.

2.2 When a complaint about a student's behaviour has been directly received by the program Chair

- The Chair will first determine if this behavioural concern is one that should be dealt with under the Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards or if another policy of the college applies.
- Within three business days of receiving the complaint, the Chair will contact the student to request a meeting.
- At this meeting the Chair will outline the nature of the concern that has been brought to their attention and ask the student for their input and/or explanation. The Chair will determine at that time whether the matter can be resolved informally. The Chair may also consult with the Student Concerns Resolution Services office to seek advice on how to proceed or to seek the office's direct assistance.
- If the student who is the subject of the complaint upon getting a request from the Chair to attend a meeting, refuses to meet with the Chair or does not respond to the Chair, the Chair may proceed to look into the complaint and impose sanctions as appropriate, without input from the student.
- **Developing a plan for informal resolution:**
 - If appropriate in light of the severity of the issue, the Chair will ask for the student's input on how to resolve the matter and will provide directions on how it can be resolved informally. For example, this could include writing a reflection paper on the impact of the student's actions; an apology or a letter of apology and/or a facilitated discussion with the party who has been affected by the behaviour as a means to finding resolution and moving forward. The student may also be asked to voluntarily participate in a restorative process. The focus of this process is on restoring relationships between parties in conflict and assisting individual student(s) in seeing the impact their actions have had on others.
 - The agreed-upon plan for informal resolution will be recorded in writing by the Chair and signed by the student, the student will be given a copy of this agreement.
- **Where informal resolution is not possible:**
 - If the matter is not one that should or can be resolved informally due to the severity of the issue, the Chair must launch an investigation of the complaint within 5 business days.
 - The Chair will ask the student to present their side of the story and share any information the student has that is relevant to the incident; they will also seek all parties' input (main person who the conflict is with, witnesses to the behaviour, and other sources of information such as security reports).

- In matters that involve a perceived threat to an individual's safety, the Chair should also contact and seek the assistance of the Public Safety & Security department. The Chair will then schedule a follow-up meeting with the student within 10 business days, at which time they will outline what their investigation has found and what actions the Chair has determined need to be taken to correct the behaviour.
- **Where the Chair determines that a violation of the Code of Student Behaviour and Community Standards has occurred, the Chair may:**
 - issue a written letter of warning (this will only be done once);
 - require the student to sign a behavioural contract (this would permit the student to continue to attend class under a binding written contract that outlines the expected standards of behaviour and the consequences if this contract is not followed);
 - relocate student to another class or practicum location;
 - request the student compensate the College for damages done to property ;
 - deny specific college services
 - suspend the student from a particular course or from the program or college for a specific time period,
 - expel the student, or
 - Take other actions that the chair deems appropriate in the circumstances – for example if the behaviour constitutes illegal activities the Chair may be required to request that Public Safety and Security inform the Toronto Police.
- The Chair will provide the student with a written confirmation of their decision within three business days of having met. **Note a decision that involves a suspension of the student for more than 10 days or expulsion of the student from the College requires approval by the Dean and notification to the Registrar's office.**
- Confidential records will be kept of all informal and formal actions taken to address behavioural issues.

2.3 Appeal

Appeals: If the student(s) wishes to appeal a decision made by the Chair, they may do so within 5 business days of receiving the decision. They must provide a written letter of appeal to the Dean of their program which outlines why they feel the decision by the Chair should be appealed. The Dean will review the decision within 5

business days based on three criteria: was the policy followed; is there new information that has come to light that the Chair did not have access to; or are there extenuating circumstances that would lead the college to change its decision. The Dean will have ten working days to review and provide a decision on the appeal. In the event that the Dean is unavailable a designate will be identified by the Dean to conduct the appeal of the decision.