WESTERN PIEDMONT COMMUNITY COLLEGE
SECTION 4: STUDENT SERVICES

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4.1

PURPOSE AND GOALS OF STUDENT SERVICES

Services to students are an integral part of the overall educational process for each student enrolled at Western Piedmont Community College. Therefore, the Division of Student Services offers a variety of integrated programs and services to students in order to more fully implement the Mission of the College. In this regard, Student Services operates under the following assumptions:

a. Student Services offers support to the College’s instructional programs;

b. Western Piedmont Community College recognizes that individual student differences and the wholeness of the person are of utmost importance;

c. An effective counseling function is the core of a successful student services program;

d. The College is obligated to maintain fair practices in recruiting, admissions, financial assistance, job placement, and maintenance of academic progress records;

e. The student is entitled to have meaningful associations through cocurricular activities, student governance, and programs which increase awareness of democratic responsibilities and social issues; and

f. The administration, faculty, and Student Services staff will work together to promote self-directing, responsible student behavior for academic success.

Primary goals for the Division of Student Services include:

Administrative Services: To administer a quality program with carefully defined responsibilities for each function.

Admissions: To assist each applicant with his/her educational development by following the principles of a comprehensive, open door, community college.

Career Planning: To provide integrated experiences in career planning through counseling or classroom alternatives in order to assist students in making a vocational choice or in assessing the validity of career choices already made.

Cooperative Education: To include the opportunity, and award credit for appropriate related work experience, in technical, vocational, and designated associate degree programs.

Counseling: To provide vocational, educational, counseling services directed toward the self-development of each student, and for those students who are undecided or ambiguous about their career plans. Career testing and counseling is available on an individual basis.

Financial Aid: To provide information and/or assistance to all students and prospective students so that no individual is denied an opportunity to pursue further education because of the lack of financial resources.
**Job Placement:** To provide students a service which affords each access to an appropriate segment of the job market.

**Orientation:** To provide positive experiences which enable the new student to enter with the greatest amount of information concerning career opportunities, academic programs, student life, and the responsibilities of the student to the College and the College to the student.

**Recruitment:** To support a comprehensive marketing and recruitment plan that reaches all segments of Burke and surrounding counties and to target areas which need special emphasis.

**Registration:** To provide up-to-date registration and recordkeeping services for prospective, current, and former students.

**Special Populations:** To provide eligible students with childcare and tutorial assistance, job development and life skills training, career and academic counseling and/or other direct support necessary to complete an educational training program that will assist them in becoming self-sufficient.

**Student Activities:** To encourage student identification with the College and provide opportunities for participation and leadership through student government and other activities which promote culture, educational and personal growth, and fellowship.

**Testing:** To provide appropriate testing services which aid students in academic goal setting and/or career decision-making.

**Veteran’s Affairs:** To assist students eligible for Veterans Administration educational benefits by providing the necessary information, materials, and counseling for a smooth transition into college and for the successful completion of their chosen program.
4.2

STUDENT ADMISSIONS

As a member of the North Carolina Community College System, Western Piedmont operates under an “open door” admission policy. Any person, 18 years of age or older, or who is a high school graduate, and who is able to profit from further formal education, will be served by the College. The College serves all students regardless of race, religion, association, sex, age, disability, or ethnic origin. Admission requirements for “limited enrollment” programs are published with the program description.

All students must submit a properly completed application to the Office of Admissions. Application forms are available in Student Services, from local high school counselors, and online.

Residency Requirements: Under North Carolina law, a person must qualify as a resident to receive a tuition rate lower than that for non-residents. North Carolina General Statutes 116-143.1 require that “To qualify as a resident for tuition purposes, a person must have established legal residence (domicile) in North Carolina and maintained that legal residence for at least twelve (12) months immediately prior to classification as a resident for tuition purposes.” Failure to provide requested information on residency classification can result in classification as a non-resident and disciplinary action. A student who believes that he or she has been erroneously classified shall appeal the case in accordance with the procedure outlined by the State Residence Committee. Regulations concerning the classification of students by residence are set forth in “A Manual to Assist the Public Higher Education Institutions of North Carolina in the Matter of Student Residence Classification for Tuition Purposes.” A copy of the manual is available in the Admissions Office.

Applicant Appraisal: All students except those classified as Special Students, must furnish a high school transcript or a GED equivalency for appraisal. Transcripts for transfer college credit will be evaluated by Appraisal of transcripts and test results will be furnished to advisors. Other faculty may request needed information from Student Services.

Minimum Student Eligibility: Policies regarding enrollment of students at Western Piedmont Community College are based on regulations of the North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges. These minimum requirements include:

1. Any high school graduate, regardless of age, or any holder of a high school equivalency certificate, may enroll in either curriculum or continuing education courses at the College, if otherwise eligible.

2. Non-high school graduates over eighteen years of age, and not currently enrolled in public school, may enroll in courses at the College which do not have high school completion as a prerequisite.

3. Three classes of persons between the ages of 16 and 18 years may reenroll in certain specified courses at Western Piedmont Community College if they are:
a. Bona fide public school dropouts who receive individual written permission from their public school superintendent to enroll in specific courses at the College.

b. Institutionalized persons, such as students at the North Carolina School for the Deaf, patients at Broughton Hospital and Western Carolina Center, or inmates, none of whom fall under the jurisdiction of the public schools, and who are classified by the administrators of the institutions to which they belong as “persons with special needs”, may be admitted to certain courses and/or programs at the College by direct arrangement between the appropriate program director at Western Piedmont Community College and the appropriate responsible individuals at another agency.

c. Under regulations issued by the North Carolina State Board for Community Colleges, Burke County Public Schools and Western Piedmont Community College have entered into an agreement under which high school students between the ages of 16 and 18 may concurrently enroll in courses at the College while still enrolled in high school. See “Academic Policies” for further details.

4. Per NC Administrative Code 23 NCAC 02C .0301 (d), Western Piedmont Community College reserves the right to refuse admission to students under “disciplinary suspension or disciplinary expulsion” at another institution of higher education. Prospective students may request an appeal of the college’s policy by contacting the Dean of Student Services using the “Student Grievance Procedure”. Final decision as to the prospective student’s admission will be made by the Dean of Student Services.

Registration: Student registration dates are published each semester. Each student must comply with registration regulations as published in the General Catalog, Student Handbook and other College publications. The Registrar supplies official registration forms and registration change forms.

Class Rolls: Each instructor will receive a class roll showing each student registered in the class. No student will be admitted to a class unless their name appears in the class roll or they have a validated registration form. The instructor must notify the Registrar immediately if a student is in class but not on the class roll. Class rolls will be printed after the close of later registration. Class rolls and validated forms must agree.

Schedule Adjustments: Required changes in registration may be made during the schedule adjustment period. The student must complete the Schedule Adjustment Card for all course or class section changes. The card is not accepted until it is signed by the student’s advisor and returned to the Director of Registration and Records. A course dropped during the schedule adjustment period does not appear on the student’s transcript.
4.3

COUNSELING SERVICES AND CAREER CENTER

Western Piedmont Community College provides free, confidential counseling and related services for its students through the Office of Student Services. These services are offered on an as-needed basis for both full and part-time students dealing with issues which affect them as individuals, or which may affect their academic progress. After initial assessment, students found to need highly specialized or long-term services will be referred to appropriate resources within the community to receive further assistance. Students requesting or requiring drug and alcohol counseling, treatment, or rehabilitation will be referred to an appropriate agency.

Career counseling and exploration is also available for those students who are undecided or ambiguous about their career plans. Western Piedmont Community College’s Career Center, houses a variety of printed, audio-visual and computer resources to assist students in their exploration. Career testing and counseling are also available on an individual basis.
4.4

JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES

In conjunction with the Employment Security Commission Joblink, the College provides employment referral services for students and graduates. Information on full and part-time employment is posted, and updated information is available online. The College maintains a list of personnel requests from local business and industry, state and federal government, and volunteer agencies. Representatives of various industries, businesses, and four-year colleges are invited to the campus to talk with students concerning post-graduation plans and opportunities. Coordinator of Career/Testing Services, located in Student Services.

VOTER REGISTRATION

As mandated by the Voter Registration Act of 1993, public colleges offer the opportunity for persons to register to vote. The voter registration site on campus is located within the Office of Student Activities in Hildebrand Hall. Everyone who meets the criteria for voter eligibility is welcome to register. If requested, help will be provided to students needing assistance in completing the registration form.

FINANCIAL AID

Financial assistance is available to qualified Western Piedmont Community College students in the form of grants, loans, work-study, and scholarships. Most aid is obtained by filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Further details are in the General Catalog. Western Piedmont Community College complies with all Federal requirements prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age, race, religion, sex, and disability. Students applying for financial aid must complete the following steps:

1. Students should apply for admission to the College;
2. Students should complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) available online at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). Approximately 3-5 weeks after the application has been submitted, the student will receive an award letter from the Financial Aid Office. The Financial Aid Office will send all notifications (requests for missing items, award letters, etc.) electronically. Students MUST check campus email or Pioneer Pass accounts to see what items are needed by the Financial Aid Office or to see award letters
3. Students register for classes.

**Application Deadlines:** Students should submit financial aid applications at least six weeks prior to the time of enrollment. The Financial Aid Office accepts applications at any time, but those received by June 1 are given priority for available funds. If students apply by June 1, and their files are completed shortly thereafter, students will be notified concerning eligibility during June. If Federal or State funds are delayed, notification may come as late as early August. For further
information, students should refer to the General Catalog or consult the Director of Financial Aid.

Federal Financial Aid Regulations: All federally funded awards through the Office of Student Financial Aid are subject to the following rules and regulations:

1. The Financial Aid Office reserves the right, on behalf of Western Piedmont Community College, to review and adjust or cancel an award any time there is indication of changes in financial status, academic program, academic standing, or failure to observe reasonable standards of conduct as described in the General Catalog and Student Handbook. Recipients of financial assistance from the College are to notify the Financial Aid Office of any other financial aid awarded from sources outside the College prior to acceptance of outside aid.

2. The primary purpose of financial aid is to assist the student in receiving education. To be assured of continued financial assistance, students must maintain “satisfactory progress” in accordance with College policy.

3. Financial Aid Awards are made for an academic year and funds are disbursed during each semester (except Federal Work-Study funds which are paid monthly according to the hours worked). Grant funds, federal loans and institutional scholarships are credited to the student’s account and may be used to charge against tuition, fees, books, and supplies. Any monies in excess of charges are disbursed by the WPCC Business Office and mailed to the student at the address recorded in Student Records. Check disbursement dates for these monies are published in the award information available on the WPCC Financial Aid Office website. Students who apply for financial aid after payment of tuition and fees for each semester, and are eligible for assistance, are reimbursed with a check mailed directly from the WPCC Business Office. Late disbursements are typically made bi-weekly.

Students using financial aid to purchase books and supplies in the WPCC bookstore must provide bookstore staff with a copy of their current semester schedule and present valid picture identification. Students are notified of the last day to make purchases, exchanges, or refunds in the bookstore using their awarded financial aid.

4. Most student aid is based on full-time enrollment. Twelve (12) semester credit hours are required for full-time status; 9-11 semester credit hours for ¾-time status; 6-8 semester credit hours for ½-time status; and 1-5 credit hours for less-than ½-time status. However, some students may qualify for a reduced Federal Pell Grant or certain scholarship funds if they are enrolled less than full-time. Any commitment of Federal funds or State is tentative and contingent upon subsequent Congressional or State appropriations and actual receipt of funds by Western Piedmont Community College.
5. Students must complete a new Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each academic year. To maximize eligibility for more types of aid, students should complete the FAFSA between January 1 and March 15 for the term that begins the following fall. Also, any changes in name, address, academic program, or enrollment status must be reported to the Financial Aid Office.

6. The General Catalog and other special College publications offer details on specific student aid funds. Students with special concerns or questions should contact the Office of Financial Aid or the Veteran’s Office at Western Piedmont Community College.
4.5

STUDENT RECORDS

Western Piedmont Community College maintains accurate and confidential student records and recognizes the rights of students to have access to their educational and personal records in accordance with existing College policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Buckley Amendment) and its revisions.

“Educational Records” include files, documents, and other materials which contain information directly related to students. The term “educational records” does not include the following:

a. Records and documents of institutional personnel which are kept apart from educational records.

b. Records on the student which are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, counselor, or other recognized professionals or paraprofessionals acting in their official capacity.

c. Financial records on the parents of the students.

d. Records of instructional, supervisory and administrative personnel kept their sole possession provided they are “not accessible or revealed to any other person except a substitute.”

Release of Student Education Records: The following “Directory Information” may be made available to the public by the College without the student’s written permission unless the student notifies the Office of Student Services in writing by the third week of the semester that such information concerning them is not to be made available.

a. Student’s name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address and date and place of birth.

b. Major field of study, participation in officially-recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams.

c. Dates of attendance, grade level, enrollment status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate, full or part-time), degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

Faculty and administrative officers of the College who demonstrate a legitimate educational need will be permitted to look at the official student file for a particular student. Requests for confidential information shall not be honored without proper written consent for the release of such records by the student. The written consent must specify the records or the specific data to be released and to whom it is to be released, and each request must be handled separately. Exceptions to this policy are:

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a. Requests for confidential information will be honored without prior consent of the 
student in connection with an emergency.
b. Official requests in connection with the audit and evaluation of federal or state 
supported programs or in connection with enforcement of federal or legal 
requirements which relate to such programs.
c. A lawfully issued subpoena or court order instructing the College not to disclose the 
existence or contents of the subpoena or the College’s response.
d. All other subpoenas. (Students will be notified immediately by registered mail that 
their records have been subpoenaed.)
e. An Ex Parte Order from the Attorney General of the United States in connection with 
the investigation or prosecution of terrorism crimes as specified in the U. S. Code.
f. Non-directory information required by the Immigration and Naturalization Service 
about International Students.
g. Persons or organizations providing financial aid to the student or determining 
financial aid decisions.

Control of Student Records: Transcripts and other information are released only with the 
written permission of the student. Students have the right to inspect their own records. Upon 
inspection students are entitled to an explanation of any information contained in their record. 
Students have the right to copies of academic records of credits earned at Western Piedmont. 
Copies of transcripts and/or other information from institutions other than WPCC must be 
requested from the originating institution.

An official student file shall not be sent outside the Counseling Office, Records Office, Financial 
Aid Office, Veterans Affairs Office, Adviser’s Office or other custodial offices except in 
circumstances specifically authorized by the Dean of Student Services. The authorization for 
such special circumstances must be in writing. College officials responsible for the maintenance 
of education records include the Director of Enrollment Management, Director of Registration 
and Records, and Dean of Student Services.

Request to Amend Education Records: A Student who believes that information contained in 
educational records is inaccurate or misleading may request that the record(s) be amended. The 
student should first meet with the official responsible for the record. If such a meeting is not 
sufficient to resolve the request, the matter should be reviewed by an appropriate supervisor. If 
the request remains unresolved, the student should submit a written request to the Dean of 
Student Services. If required, the student will be provided advance notice of the date, place, and 
time of a hearing which follow

established grievance procedures published in this manual. A hearing may not be requested to 
contest the assignment of a grade, but may be requested to determine whether or not the grade 
was recorded accurately.

Copy of Records: Copies of education records to which students have access (see above) will 
be made at the student’s request in writing and upon payment of an appropriate charge. The

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copies will be ready for the student within a reasonable period of time following the written request.

**Offices With Records:** Education records of the College are maintained by the Director of Admissions, Registrar, Dean of Student Services, and Academic Division Deans. The Dean of Student Services is responsible for the administration of policies and procedures governing student educational records.

*(STUDENT RECORDS, amended by Trustees on July 21, 2003.)*
4.6

GRADUATION

Graduation exercises are held annually. Specific requirements for each of the degrees and diplomas awarded by Western Piedmont Community College are listed in the General Catalog. Students petitioning for graduation shall meet the program requirements of the General Catalog in effect during the year of their original attendance in that program (as long as there has been no break in enrollment) or the General Catalog in effect during the year of their graduation from that program. Every student expecting to meet graduation requirements must present a petition for graduation to the Director of Registration and Records and must fulfill all financial obligations to the College prior to graduation.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

The Student Government Association is designed to promote the general welfare of the College in a democratic fashion and to facilitate communication between students, the faculty, and the administration. Through the Executive Council of the Student Government Association and the Student Senate, activity funds are budgeted for social and cultural events, special interest clubs, and organizations that have been officially recognized by Western Piedmont Community College. Every curriculum student is entitled to participate in these activities. Under the direction of the Director of Enrollment Management, the Coordinator of Student Activities is responsible for supervising the Student Government Association and student activities.

The College encourages student participation in institutional decision-making through Student Senate meetings, the and by the appointment of students to the Standing Committees of the College.

The President of the Student Government Association serves as an Ex Officio member of the Trustees of Western Piedmont Community College. The Vice President of the Student Government Association serves as a member of the Curriculum/Academic Standards Committee. The President of the Student Government Association, under the direction of the Coordinator of Student Activities, is responsible for appointing the student members of the Standing Committees of the College.

(STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION, amended by the Trustees on April 7, 2003.)

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4.7

STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY

A formal complaint may be filed at any time by a student who believes a personal right has been violated. However, all students, faculty members, administrators, and/or staff members involved have an obligation to make every effort to resolve problems fairly and informally so that they do not become sources of grievances to be pursued formally through the grievance procedure. Grievances may arise over sexual harassment or alleged discrimination on the basis of race, religion, status, sex, age, national origin or handicap.

(Approved by WPCC Trustees on June 15, 2015)

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCESS

A formal complaint may be filed at any time by a student who believes a personal right has been violated. However, all students, faculty members, administrators, and/or staff members involved have an obligation to make every effort to resolve problems fairly and informally so that they do not become sources of grievances to be pursued formally through the grievance procedure. Grievances may arise over sexual harassment or alleged discrimination on the basis of race, religion, status, sex, age, national origin or handicap.

If a suitable solution cannot be reached through independent means among the aggrieved parties, a formal grievance may be initiated by a student who wishes to appeal to the Dean of Student Services in cases arising from violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

It is expected that formal complaints will begin with Step I as outlined below. However, because of the private and sensitive nature of sexual harassment and possibly certain other incidents, aggrieved students may choose a third-party mediator to help resolve such a complaint on an informal basis. Such mediation activities shall continue for a period of no more than 30 class days or until resolution is achieved. Should such resolution efforts fail, students may initiate the formal grievance procedure outlined in Step II below (or in the case of disputes among students, the complaint may be referred to the Dean of Student Services). Continued grievances or appeals that address the same issue and present no new evidence may be considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Step I: Any and all complaints must be presented formally, in writing, within ten (10) business days of students becoming aware of the alleged grievance and within one year of its occurrence. In cases where this is the first formal step in an alleged sexual harassment or other private and sensitive grievance, students should move to Step II. Students opting to exercise the formal grievance procedure should so notify the concerned staff/faculty member or administrator, present a written summary of the complaint to the individual, and set up a time to meet and discuss the issue. In the oral presentation of the complaint, all parties shall make a good faith effort to resolve the matter. The staff/faculty member or administrator shall then give a formal written response to the complaint within ten business days and make a copy available to the student from the Dean of Student Services.
Step II: If aggrieved student believes the policy/procedures of WPCC were not followed in making the decision or new facts arise, they shall, within ten business days of receiving the above decision, notify the appropriate parties in writing that they wish to pursue the issue with the Dean of Student Services. In cases where this is the first formal step in an alleged sexual harassment or other private and sensitive grievance students should notify the concerned staff/faculty member or administrator in writing, within ten (10) business days of the failure of informal resolution with a summary of the complaint. Proper notification depends on the College employee involved.

1. For a faculty member: notify that faculty member, the Division Dean, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
2. For a staff member: notify that staff member, the staff member’s supervisor, and the appropriate Vice President.
3. For a senior administrator: notify that person and the College President.

Students shall meet with the faculty/staff member or administrator and the above notified parties to discuss the grievance within ten business days of the notification. The Dean, administrative officer, or immediate supervisor (whichever is applicable from above) shall render a decision and advise the parties in writing of a decision within ten business days.

If the decision involves a finding of fault, it will include a statement of the sanction to be imposed. Failure of the faculty/staff member or administrator to meet the deadline dates established within any of the steps of the grievance procedures moves the process to Step III. Failure of students to meet time specifications acknowledges students’ acceptance of the decision of the previous step. Students then forfeit the right to pursue the grievance further.

Step III: If aggrieved student believes WPCC policy/procedures were not followed in making the decision or new facts arise, they shall, within ten business days of receiving the above decision, notify the appropriate parties in writing that they wish to pursue the issue. A formal hearing may be held as determined appropriate by the President. The party requesting the review shall provide a written summary of the specific facts of the complaint, the position of the parties involved, and the decisions that have been recommended.

The President may render a decision, conduct a hearing personally, or appoint a committee to conduct a hearing, which shall make recommendations to the President. In any case, the President shall render the decision in writing to the parties involved within ten business days from receipt of the written complaint. The formal hearing will be conducted in closed session, and the parties involved may be represented by legal counsel. Transcripts of the proceedings will be maintained by the College for one year with copies made available to the complainant. The President’s decision is final.

(Student Grievance Process as of June 2015)
DISRUPTION OF COLLEGE ACTIVITIES

In accordance with *N. C. General Statutes*, Western Piedmont Community College does not permit actions by individuals or groups which in any way disrupt, interfere with, or instigate disruption of or interference with teaching, public service, or any other authorized College function or activity. The College reserves the right to take necessary precautions to insure the safety of its faculty, staff, students, buildings and grounds, and to protect College property. Staff members are expected to support all efforts designed to protect the College from such activities. (See the [General Catalog](#), and Student Code of Conduct, Section 4.13 of this manual.)

STUDENT HOUSING

Western Piedmont Community College does not operate a housing office to locate living facilities for students; however, persons interested in renting to students are encouraged to use the Bulletin Board in the basement of Hildebrand Hall. The Burke County Chamber of Commerce keeps a compiled list of rooms, apartments, and houses in the area that are available for public rent.

STUDENT ILLNESS OR ACCIDENTS

If a student becomes ill on campus, College employees should determine, if possible, the nature of the illness and contact Student Services giving the student’s name and present location. Some responsible person should remain with the student until assistance is obtained. Avoid giving medication or fluids without knowledge of the course of illness. If the student is involved in any accident on campus, College employees should determine, if possible, the nature and extent of injuries and administer first aid. First aid kits are found in the following locations:

- Student Services Office
- Laboratories and Shops
- Physical Education Office
- Criminal Justice Office
- College Business Office
- WPCC Pick-up Truck
- Maintenance Shed
- Buildings and Grounds Office

Report the accident to Student Services immediately, giving the location, name of the injured student, and the nature of the accident. Stay with the injured student until assistance arrives and observe the following basics of First Aid: (a) do not attempt to move; (b) do not use medication; (c) protect against shock by covering the victim; and (d) apply surface pressure against heavy bleeding injuries.

Student Services will respond to student illnesses or accidents by contacting appropriate emergency personnel, informing faculty and staff of potential or existing health problems (if known), initiating accident reports which detail any witnesses of accidents, reporting accidents to...
the Vice President for Administrative Services, and providing follow-up studies if any are indicated.

A low-cost accident insurance policy is made available to curriculum students through the Business Office. All curriculum students are required to purchase this protection at registration, except those groups determined to be exempt by the College. Certain specialized programs may require additional insurance coverage.
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES/PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

The communicable disease/pandemic influenza policy of Western Piedmont Community College is an effort to ensure the good health and safety of all employees and students. The College adopts this policy in an effort to control communicable diseases and the threat of pandemic influenza on campus based upon established rules and regulations of the N. C. Division of Health Services. Employees, employees of contractors or contracted services, or students infected with a communicable disease have the responsibility of reporting this fact to the Director of Human Resources or the Dean of Student Services, as appropriate.

Communicable Disease is defined as an illness due to an infectious agent, which is transmitted directly or indirectly to a person from an “infected person or animal through the agency of an intermediate animal, host, or vector, or through the inanimate environment (N.C.G.S. 130A-133). Communicable disease could include for example, Chickenpox, Infectious Mononucleosis, Influenza (New Type A Virus), Measles, Meningitis, Tuberculosis, and Whooping Cough.

Persons who are infected with a communicable disease are expected to seek expert medical advice and are encouraged to advise local health authorities. Local health authorities should offer counseling to these persons about measures that can be taken to prevent the spread of infection and to protect their own health.

Employee: is a person permitted to work for a specified purpose in the interest of the College and over whose work activities the College exercises direct control. For the purposes of this policy and its procedures, a case involving an intern, volunteer, or other non-regular worker shall be handled as in the case of an employee.

Student: any officially enrolled and matriculated student in a curriculum or continuing education course at Western Piedmont Community College during the semester in which the communicable disease is reported, or at other times.

Notification Procedures for Employees and Students: A person who knows, or has a reasonable basis for believing, that he or she is infected with a communicable disease has an ethical and legal obligation to behave in accordance with such knowledge to protect him or herself and others. In this respect, employees are required to report this information to the Director of Human Resources. Students are required to report this information to the Dean of Student Services. Medical information relating to the communicable disease of a student or employee will be disclosed to responsible college officials only on a strictly limited need-to-know basis. No person, group, agency, insurer, employer, or institution should be provided any medical information without the prior specific written consent of a student or employee unless required by state and/or federal law. Furthermore, all medical information relating to the communicable diseases of students and employees will be kept confidential, according to state and federal law, including the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.

a. If an employee reports a communicable disease condition to the Director of Human Resources, the employee may be excluded from the workplace until an appropriate
evaluation of the employee’s medical condition can be made. The evaluation will be made by a physician or health department official and testing may be required if appropriate.

b. The assessment of an employee with a suspected communicable disease, and the final determination of that employee’s ability to remain on the job, will be made by the President, after consultation with the Director of Human Resources and based on professional medical judgment.

c. If an employee is found to have a communicable disease, then the President will prohibit the attendance of the employee on campus or at any College activity until a satisfactory letter or certificate is obtained from one or more licensed physicians or public health officials stating the attendance of the employee presents no health risk to other employees and students at the College.

d. If a student reports a communicable disease condition to the Dean of Student Services, the student may be excluded from the institution until an appropriate evaluation of the student’s medical condition can be made. The evaluation may be made by a physician or a health department official and testing may be required if appropriate. Students in any Allied Health program may have additional requirements, as specified in each program’s student handbook; therefore, this student should report any suspected communicable disease to the Program Coordinator who in turn will notify the Dean of Student Services.

e. The assessment of a student with a suspected communicable disease and the final determination of that student’s ability to remain in school will be made by the Dean of Student Services, after consultation with a Communicable Disease Committee and based upon professional medical judgment.

f. If a student is found to have a communicable disease, then the Dean of Student Services will prohibit the attendance of the student on campus or at any College activity until a satisfactory letter or certificate is obtained from one or more licensed physician or public health officials stating that the student is not a health risk to employees and other students at the College.

**Communication:** Internal and external communications are essential components of the Communicable Diseases/Pandemic Influenza Plan. The following actions will be taken in the event of an outbreak:

1. The President’s Office will be notified of potential exposure to a communicable disease within the workplace. This notification may be a result of communication from a public health department, or the result of a report directly to the College from an employee. If the notification was directly from an employee, the Burke County Health Department must be contacted immediately.

2. The President’s Office will work closely with the Burke County Health Department and follow their guidance with respect to actions needed.

3. Established internal and external communication protocols will be immediately reviewed and followed.

4. The President’s Office will assist local health officials and medical teams as needed in the establishment of an alternative care site.

5. If the Burke County Health Department advises that WPCC should be closed, established shutdown procedures will be initiated.
6. The Office of Human Resources will establish a database to track employees not reporting to work and the reason provided.

7. Employee questions and comments will be tracked by the Director of Human Resources and student questions and comments will be tracked by the Dean of Student Services.

Post-Crisis/Recovery: Once the threat of the pandemic is over, the Pandemic Response Planning Committee will begin the process of assisting the College in recovery efforts. The recovery phase will determine which activities/services need to be carried out in a priority sequence and which areas are responsible for completing those tasks. A timeline will be developed for the completion of activities/services and the College will keep employees and students informed on key issues. The date and time that the College will reopen for normal operations will be communicated.

The Pandemic Response Planning Committee will include the President, Executive Vice-President & Chief Financial Officer, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Student Development, Dean of Continuing Education, Dean of Student Services, Associate Dean of Technology, Director of Human Resources, Director of Planning and Research, Controller, Director of Maintenance, and Chief of Security.

Notification Procedures for an Employee of a Contractor or Contracted Service: If an employee of a contractor of contracted service reports a communicable disease condition to a supervisor, or to an official of the College who is a liaison with the contractor or contracted service, the employee may be excluded from the workplace until an evaluation of the employee’s medical condition can be made.

The assessment of a contractor or a contracted service employee with a suspected communicable disease, and the final determination of that person’s ability to remain on the job, will be made by the Executive Vice President & Chief Financial Officer, after consultation with the Director of Human Resources, based on a recommendation from the local health authorities.

Educational Program: Western Piedmont Community College will establish a committee, as needed, to coordinate an on-going educational program and to advise the Dean of Student Services on individual cases of communicable disease. The educational program is the responsibility of the entire College and will be designed to reach all constituencies. It will convey basic information in various ways, including the distribution of printed material, posters, meetings, and classroom information. The program will be a continuing one that accommodates the turnover in students and employees.

*(COMMUNICABLE DISEASES/PANDEMIC INFLUENZA, amended by the Trustees on April 14, 2008.)*
4.10
SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Western Piedmont Community College complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the American Disabilities Act of 1990 in providing equal access to education for persons with disabilities. The Department of Education has defined a person with disabilities as “Any person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment or is regarded as having such an impairment.” (Federal Register, Part IV, 4 May 1977.) Federal law prohibits the College from making preadmission inquiries about disabilities. Any information received regarding disabilities will not adversely affect an otherwise qualified student’s admission to a program or course.

It is the responsibility of the student to make a disability known to the Office of Disability Services and to request academic adjustments. Requests should be made in a timely manner, prior to registration, to the Coordinator of Disability Services. Every reasonable effort will be made to provide services.

In order to establish eligibility for services, the documentation of a disability is required of each student’s request for academic adjustments or auxiliary aids. Documentation should be submitted to the Coordinator of Disability Services and may include results of medical, psychological, emotional diagnostic tests or other professional evaluations that verify the existence of a disability and that prescribe appropriate adjustments or aids. Students with learning disabilities should provide a current psychological evaluation with testing completed within the last three years that states the specific learning disability. All documentation and records provided shall be maintained in a confidential manner as outlined in the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

Auxiliary aids may include audio books, interpreters or other effective methods of making orally-delivered materials available to students with hearing impairments, readers for students with visual impairments, writers for use by students with manual impairments, and other similar services and actions as necessary on a case-by-case basis. The College will not assume the responsibility to provide personal attendants, devices, readers, or other services of a personal nature.

College-sponsored Functions: In adherence to the mission and goals statement of Western Piedmont Community College and in compliance with State and Federal regulations as required by the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Office of Disability Services at Western Piedmont Community College accepts responsibility for the provision of auxiliary aids and services upon request for any College-sponsored event and/or activity in accordance with the following notice: WPCC complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will make every effort to honor reasonable requests made by individuals with qualifying disabilities. Accommodations must be requested three business days in advance of school events or activities through the Office of Disability Services in room 103 Hildebrand Hall or call 828-448-3154 (v) or 828-438-6066 (TTY).

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Non-College-Sponsored Functions: The primary obligation of the Office of Disability Services is that of addressing and serving the needs of the students at Western Piedmont Community College. The nature of funding for the provision of auxiliary aids to students is specifically allocated by the N. C. Legislature and defined by state mandate. Such funding shall be used solely for supporting program needs of students at Western Piedmont Community College.

Therefore, Western Piedmont Community College cannot be responsible for securing auxiliary aids or for payment of auxiliary aids as needed or requested by any group or organization utilizing Western Piedmont Community College solely as a facility site for activities. Any group or organization hosting a non-college sponsored event on the campus of Western Piedmont Community College will assume the responsibility of being the service provider for any requested auxiliary aids.

Giving College Personnel Sufficient Notice: Students who believe they will need an accommodation to receive or participate in a College service, program, or activity, should make it known to the Office of Disability Services a minimum of three working days in advance, so that the College will have sufficient time to consider the request and make any necessary arrangements. Additional time may be required for requests of an unusual or specialized nature. Failure to provide the College with adequate notice for an accommodation may result in the College being unable to provide accommodations in a timely manner.

Providing Acceptable Documentation: Official notification of a disability requires that the student provides documentation of the disability. The documentation must certify that the disability creates a substantial limitation of a major life activity in order to establish eligibility for protection under the law.

1. Official notification of a disability requires that the student provides documentation of his/her disability to the Office of Disability Services. To receive services, the student must complete the Application for Disability Services and Accommodations forms and provide a copy of his/her class schedule and acceptable documentation to the Office of Disability Services.

2. Documentation of a disability must be provided from an appropriately licensed/certified professional and must be complete enough to establish the student’s status as a person with a disability, as well as establish the need for any requested accommodations. The age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student, and the student’s specific request for accommodations. The Office of Disability Services may require that the documentation be no more than three years old. Necessary documentation to request accommodations/services, in general, should include the following:

   a. Identification of the nature and extent of the disability including diagnosis,
b. Specific information on the functional limitation as related to the academic environment,
c. Description of the current course of treatment including medical side effects,
d. Prognosis of the disability, and
e. Recommended reasonable accommodations.

3. Upon receipt of the documentation necessary to request accommodations and/or services, the Office of Disability Services will determine whether the documentation reveals the existence of a disability as defined under the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and/or North Carolina law.
4. The Office of Disability Services shall make an appropriate determination of what is a reasonable accommodation for the student based on documentation provided to that office.
5. The student shall notify his/her instructors of the accommodations and/or services that the Office of Disability Services determined they are eligible to receive by presenting an Individual Academic Adjustment Plan that is provided to the student by the Office of Disability Services.
6. The College, through the Office of Disability Services, reserves the right to review the accommodations provided from time to time to determine whether they continue to be necessary and appropriate for the student.

The College does not make pre or post admission inquiries or referrals based on an assumption that a student has a disabling condition.

Confidentiality: Disability-related information is considered to be highly confidential; and in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), such information will be kept in secure files with limited access.

The Office of Disability Services will be responsible for collecting and holding disability-related information on behalf of the institution. Access will be limited to the Office of Disability Services and will be shared only on a need-to-know basis.
Western Piedmont Community College prohibits any form of disability harassment. Any act, comment, or behavior which is of a harassing nature, interferes with an employee or student’s performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment is strictly prohibited. Any student or employee who feels he/she has been subjected to harassment due to a disability may file a complaint with the Office of Disability Services. Complaints involving the Office of Disability Services should be filed with the Dean of Student Services.

**Grievance Procedure**

Grievances based on discrimination, accommodation issues and/or denial of services based on a disability are to be filed initially with the Office of Disability Services. If this action does not resolve the problems within the standards of College policies and procedures, then students may appeal decisions under the guidelines of Student Due Process outlined in the College Policy Manual.
4.12

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Rights:

Students, by nature of their citizenship and residence, have certain rights and freedoms established by the Constitution and laws of the United States, the State of North Carolina, and the respective communities in which they live.

The possession of these rights and freedoms is neither increased nor diminished by a student’s association with Western Piedmont Community College.

The freedom of students to receive an education at Western Piedmont Community College, and the freedom of the College to provide such an education to students will be protected by the Trustees of Western Piedmont Community College and the State Board of Community Colleges.

Student Responsibilities:

Each student is responsible for the proper completion of his or her academic program, for familiarity with the General Catalog, for maintaining the appropriate grade point average, and for meeting all other requirements to graduate or transfer. Counselors and academic advisors will work with all students, but the final responsibility is that of the individual student.

A student is held responsible for information published in the General Catalog, the Student Handbook, and official announcements of the College. Upon enrollment, each student accepts the benefits of membership in the academic community and acquires the obligation to observe and uphold the principles and standards set by the College. The Student Code of Conduct describes conduct which the College will not tolerate.

Each student is responsible for maintaining communication with the College and keeping on file with the Record’s Office at all times a current address, including zip code, and telephone number.

Each student, while associated with the College, is expected to participate in campus and community life in a manner that will reflect positively upon the student and the College.

(STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES, approved by Trustees on July 21, 2003.)
4.13

STUDENT ROLE IN DECISION MAKING

Western Piedmont Community College recognizes the value of student contributions in institutional decision-making and seeks to involve students in this process. Two formal structures exist within the College which are necessary for both decision-making and operational purposes: (1) administrative operations responsible for the execution of policy and (2) a system of committees responsible for the evaluation and review of policies and procedures. Both incorporate appropriate student participation and encourage student involvement.

The College’s administrative structure reflects its commitment to student involvement by including the President of the Western Piedmont Community College Student Government Association as a member of the Western Piedmont Community College Trustees. While the student representative serves in an ex-officio, non-voting capacity, he or she may express to the Trustees any concerns students have about College policy and procedure, and may serve as a liaison between the student body, the Student Senate, and the administration.

Student involvement is also apparent in the College’s Standing Committee structure. Four of the College’s standing committees provide for student representation, including the Curriculum/Academic Standards Committee, the Campus Facilities Committee, the Safety Committee, and the Student Activities Committee. Student representatives to the committees are appointed by the SGA President or as students who hold office through the SGA. In addition, any student wishing to express comments or concerns about the governance of the College may do so through the Student Government Association.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The administration, faculty, staff, and Student Government Association of Western Piedmont Community College believe that self-discipline is an integral part of each student’s education. They also assume that students will maintain standards of conduct appropriate for students; however, in those rare instances when individuals interfere with the rights of others to educational opportunities, the College will maintain order. To that end, the following conduct is prohibited:

1. Intentionally causing physical harm or severe emotional distress to any member of the campus community;
2. Theft or malicious damage to College property or to the personal property of a student or employee;
3. Possession or use of an unauthorized firearm, other dangerous weapon or explosive device;
4. Possession, use or distribution of any unauthorized drug, alcoholic beverage or other controlled substance (as defined by the North Carolina General Statutes) while on College grounds or when participating in any College activity (Medical prescriptions are not a violation of this rule; however, students are accountable for their behavior while under the influence of a prescribed medicine);

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5. Falsifying information including that on official College records;
6. Dress that does not conform to published standards in specified program areas (e.g. vocational shop, health science lab/clinical areas);
7. Failure to comply with the Western Piedmont Community College Communicable Disease Policy as published in the College Policy Manual, Section 4.9;
8. Academic dishonesty which includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating or collaborating on a test, or submitting the academic work of another as one’s own (See Plagiarism, College Policy Manual, Section 2.18);
9. Disruption of any process of the College by force, noise, coercion, threat, passive resistance or any other action or inaction that could impede normal College operations;
10. Failure to comply with the instructions of a College official acting in accordance with the performance of his/her duties;
11. Violation of a local, state, or federal ordinance or law;
12. Lewd or indecent conduct including offensive and vulgar language;
13. Mental or physical abuse of any person, including verbal or inconsiderate behavior which threatens or endangers health or safety (See Communicable Disease Policy, College Policy Manual, Section 4.9);
14. Violation of the College’s Sexual Harassment Policy, (College Policy Manual, Section 3.47);
15. Unauthorized occupation or seizure, in any manner, of College property or any portion thereof (See Emergency Procedures, College Policy Manual, Section 7.7);
16. Tampering with fire and/or safety equipment;
17. Gambling;
18. Smoking and/or using other tobacco products on College property or in College vehicles;
19. Violation of College regulations regarding the operation and parking of motor vehicles (See Traffic and Parking, College Policy Manual, Section 7.6);
20. Violation of the terms of an imposed disciplinary probation or any College regulation during the period of probation;
21. Fiscal irresponsibility such as failure to pay College-levied fines, to repay College-sponsored loans, or to issue a worthless check to College officials;
22. The submission of substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without prior authorization;
23. Committing an act of academic dishonesty or intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty;
24. Violation of the College Computer and Internet Use Policy;
25. Unauthorized use of electronic communication and equipment such as telephones and pagers in College classrooms, labs, test taking situations and assemblies. (The only exception to this policy will be for on-call emergency personnel, i.e. EMS, police and firemen who are required to notify their instructor of their need for such devices at the beginning of the term and to provide documentation verifying their occupation.); and
26. Disruption of peace and order by playing loud music while on campus with electronic devices or in motor vehicles.

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Enforcement:

1. A student violating any local, State or Federal ordinance or law will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

2. A student disrupting a class, after the instructor has explained the unacceptability of such conduct, will be told to leave the class. The instructor will notify the Dean of Student Services and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

3. Complaints, or other indications that student has violated the Code of Conduct, will be reported to and investigated by the Dean of Student Services to determine if the charges are significant. If significant, the Dean may, after appropriate administrative consultation, counsel the student and issue a written warning to that student or impose measures that restrict a student’s access to activities, or in extreme cases, to the College. Campus Security should be contacted about disruptive behavior occurring in public areas on campus, e.g. hallways, lounges, cafeteria, etc.

4. Students will be accorded due process in all disciplinary proceedings. The due process procedure is detailed in Section 4.7 of this manual.

(StUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT, amended by Trustees on April 4, 2005, on November 21, 2005, and on February 2, 2009.)
4.14

SANCTIONS DEFINED

Reprimand: A written communication which provides official notice to a student that a violation of the Student Code of Conduct has been committed and that any further or subsequent violation of the Student Code may carry heavier penalties.

General Probation: A minor offense of the Code may result in general probation which includes two important provisions: (1) the student is offered a period of time of no more than two academic terms to exhibit a willingness to observe the Code without further penalty; and (2) this action includes an understanding that additional sanctions will be imposed if another violation occurs within the stated period.

Restitution: Under certain circumstances, a student may be required to pay for damages to College or personal property.

Emergency Suspension: Under certain circumstances, an act may require immediate exclusion of an individual from class or College activities until a final decision can be made for the alleged violation.

Loss of academic credit or grade may occur as a result of academic dishonesty.

Withholding diploma or right to register is imposed when financial obligations are not met.

Suspension: This sanction is reserved for offenses warranting discipline more severe than probation and includes exclusion from classes and/or all other privileges or activities of the College for a specified period of time. Written permission from the Dean of Student Services must be obtained to return.

Expulsion: When a student is dismissed from the College for an indefinite period of time with a loss of current student status. Only the President of the College may approve readmission.

Group probation may be imposed on a College club or other organized group for a specified period of time. Their charter may be revoked for repeated violations during the conditions of probation.

Group restrictions: Imposes specific conditions for a period of less than one term. While under restriction, the group may not seek or add members, hold or sponsor events, or engage in other activities as specified.

Group Charter Revocation: This rule removes official College recognition for a group, club, or other organization for a minimum of one year. The re-charter, after that time, must be approved by the President.
4.15

EVALUATION OF STUDENT SERVICES

The Division of Student Services shall annually conduct an evaluation of its major operations through questions included in the Graduate Survey conducted each year with students completing their program of study at Western Piedmont Community College. In addition, the Division of Student Services conducts an extensive review of all major functions periodically.

The periodic review shall consist of a survey among currently enrolled students during the fall or spring semester, along with a Peer Evaluation to be conducted by a Dean of Student Services and other professional student services staff from Western Piedmont Community College’s cohort campuses in the North Carolina Community College System. Reports will be forwarded to the President.

Responsibility for these evaluations, and for the implementation of recommendations which may result from these studies, shall rest with the Dean of Student Services and other staff members as assigned.

SEX OFFENDER NOTIFICATION

According to the federal Campus Sex Crime Prevention Act, Western Piedmont Community College is authorized to notify the College community when knowledge is received that a registered sex offender is enrolled. This Act amends The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 to clarify that nothing in the Act can prohibit an educational institution from disclosing information provided to the institution concerning registered sex offenders.

The College developed the procedures below to increase the safety and welfare of students and employees by providing timely and appropriate notification of the presence of a registered sex offender. This notification shall be in accordance with applicable federal law and will be in such a manner that maintains safety without creating excessive anxiety among students and staff.

Procedure:
Upon notification from local law enforcement that a registered sex offender is enrolled, or intends to enroll at the College, the Dean of Student Services will take the following steps:

- Obtain additional information, as necessary, from law enforcement;
- Meet with the Chief of Security to review relevant information and assess safety issues posed for students, faculty and staff;
- Meet with the offender to make him or her aware of the notification procedure. Other than the notification procedure approved by FERPA and the Department of Higher Education, registered sex offenders will receive the same rights and privacy protections provided to all students;
- Advise the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the appropriate academic deans of the student’s enrollment; and
Place a binder with Registered Sex Offender information in the Office of the Dean of Student Services on the main campus and the Office of the Dean of Continuing Education on the Jim A. Richardson Campus that will be available for viewing by the College community.
STUDENT LOAN PROGRAM CODE OF CONDUCT

1. **Revenue Sharing Ban:** The College will not enter into revenue-sharing arrangements with any lenders that result in a financial benefit to the College or its employees.

2. **Gift Ban:** Employees and officials will not solicit or accept gifts, cash or other payments from any lender, guarantor, or servicer. The term “gift” means any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan or other item having a monetary value of more than $10.00. This ban does not include the following:
   a. Brochures or training material related to default aversion or financial literacy.
   b. Food, training or information materials that contributes to the professional development of individuals attending the training.
   c. Entrance and exit counseling that does not promote the services of a specific lender.
   d. Philanthropic contributions from a lender, guarantor or servicer unrelated to education loans.
   e. State education, grants, scholarships or financial aid funds administered by or on behalf of the state.

3. **Advisory Board Compensation:** Employees with responsibilities related to student loans will not accept compensation for serving on the advisory board of any lending institution or guarantor.

4. **Opportunity Pools:** The College will not request or accept from any lender any offer to be used for private education loans, including funds for an opportunity pool loan, in exchange for providing concessions or promises of a specified volume of Title IV loans, or a preferred lender arrangement for Title IV loans.

5. **Contract Arrangement Prohibition:** Employees with educational loan responsibilities will not receive any remuneration from a lender as compensation for any type of consulting arrangement, or other contract to provide services relating to education loans.

6. **Staffing Assistance Ban:** The College will not request nor accept any assistance with financial aid staffing from any lender of educational loans.

7. **Assignment of Lenders:** The College will not assign a loan to a particular lender for any borrowers through award packaging or other methods.

8. **Recommended Lender List:** If the College develops and publishes a list of recommended or preferred lenders (“recommended lender list”), the College will do so based solely on the best interests of student and parent borrowers. The College will prominently disclose on all publications of a recommended lender list:
   a. The process and criteria by which the list was assembled.
   b. Comparative information regarding interest rates and other benefits offered by the Lenders.
c. Borrowers have the right and ability to select lenders not included on the list.

9. **Loan Certification:** The College will not refuse to certify or delay certification of any loan based on the borrower’s selection of a particular lender or guarantor.

10. **Private Loans as a Last Resort:** The College will not certify student eligibility for a private loan without first informing the borrower of the availability of federal grants and loans, and that federal loans may provide more advantageous terms than private loans.

(STUDENT LOAN CODE OF CONDUCT, adopted by Trustees on September 14, 2009.)