



# Abilene Christian University™

## 2011-2012

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## **GREETINGS FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT LIFE AND DEAN OF STUDENTS**

Dear new and returning students – I am excited to welcome you to the 2011-2012 academic year at ACU! I hope that you have enjoyed your summer months, and that relationships among family and friends have been a rich blessing to you.

We embrace each and every one of you for who you are in Christ and what you contribute to this campus community. We continue to seek ways to enhance your total university experience, and invite your input and partnership in keeping our promise to be: *a vibrant, innovative, Christ-centered community that engages students in authentic spiritual and intellectual growth equipping them to make a real difference in the world.*

With high excitement, we anticipate an August 2011 opening of the Royce & Pam Money Student Recreation & Wellness Center, and know that it will transform your campus experience. We are also excited about several other campus and programmatic improvements, aimed solely at providing you the very best overall learning and social experience possible. As we work through such initiatives, please know that, YOU, the students are at the center of all that we do. The extent to which you take advantage of the many opportunities here for you will make all the difference in your college experience and life-long journey.

It is a privilege for all of us to live, learn, and grow within the ACU community. As such, we are called to carry ourselves in ways that respect one another, our educational mission, and ultimately glorify God. During the Welcome Week session in August you will be introduced to several of us on the Student Life team, as well as to the ACU *Student Handbook and Planner*, which serves as an important resource and guide for your time here.

The ACU community welcomes you wholeheartedly. May God grant you a healthy, productive, and overall amazing 2011-2012 academic year here at ACU. Please let us in Student Life know if there is anything that we can do to encourage you in this transition.

Blessings and best wishes!

Dr. Jean-Noel Thompson (known by students as Dr. T.)  
*Vice President for Student Life, Dean of Students*

### **For More Information**

Office of Student Life

*Office Location:* McKinzie Hall 135



## **GREETINGS FROM THE EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT OF THE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

Greetings Wildcats,

For those of you that are just beginning your journey at ACU, I would like to congratulate you and welcome you into the ACU family. College is a unique time in each person's life where they can increase their understanding of the world, begin to figure out who they are, and grow as a person and a follower of Christ. I believe there is no better place to do this than Abilene Christian University. Here at ACU, we are privileged to be a part of an incredible community that cultivates close relationships, challenges each of us to mature and develop our own thoughts and beliefs, and pushes us towards the heart of God.

This is a time to take ownership of your faith, increase in knowledge, and expand your horizons. I encourage you to get involved; whether it's playing intramural sports, being a member of the Students' Association, becoming part of Residence Life, serving at your church, joining a student organization, or one of many other opportunities on campus. The memories and friendships that develop from these experiences will stay with you for years to come.

Push yourself over these four years. There is no better time to challenge yourself, learn from your mistakes, and grow; but don't be too hard on yourself. College is meant to be a fun and enjoyable experience. Take advantage of the opportunity that you have been given. I am excited to be a part of this with each and every one of you as we move forward together as an institution and as a body of believers.

On behalf of the Students' Association, welcome to the 2011-2012 school year at ACU.

Sincerely,

Connor Best  
Executive President  
Students' Association  
Abilene Christian University



## THE MISSION OF ACU

The mission of Abilene Christian University is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.

### VALUES

Fulfilling our mission is possible because of important values held by all members of the ACU community:

1. **God** is the source of strength, purpose and hope. The only natural response is to glorify Him in all things.
2. **People** are the greatest resource. Members of the ACU community will treat students, parents, colleagues, alumni and friends as they would wish to be treated.
3. **Learning** is the reason for existence as a university. It is a part of everything done at ACU.

### PRINCIPLES

Achieving our mission depends upon loyalty to God, to the university, and to each person in this kingdom matter. Five important principles guide the way people live and learn at ACU:

1. **Integrity:** Conduct as individuals and as a university will be trustworthy.
2. **Service:** The motivating question behind all relationships is “How can I be of service?”
3. **Stewardship:** Being good stewards of the things, which God entrusts to us, is essential.
4. **Involvement:** Decisions and actions, which are beneficial for the university, require broad-based participation and teamwork.
5. **Excellence:** Doing the very best requires continuous improvement and learning.

Abilene Christian University is comprised of “people with a purpose.” This is not just a clever motto – it’s who we are. The ACU community is committed to “purpose-full” living.

## THE MISSION OF STUDENT LIFE

Student life works in partnership with Academic Affairs to integrate living, learning, and faith, whereby students learn to live lives of Christian service and leadership throughout the world. Student Life educates the whole student by providing opportunities outside of the classroom that challenge the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, physical, and social development of students. Our core purpose is to instill within our students **strong moral character** and **wisdom-focused learning**, manifested through Christ-centered living. As such, we are committed to the following objectives in your preparation for life:

- Provide and support on-going co-curricular experiences that challenge students to practice **critical thinking** and **Christ-centered leadership**.
- Encourage among students **responsible and active participation in community** through service learning experiences, in chapel and worship opportunities, among student clubs/organizations, and within residence hall communities.
- Foster efforts throughout the campus community and beyond that embrace **integration and commonality** among all of God’s people on the one hand, yet encourage the **understanding and celebration of cultural and ethnic uniqueness**.
- Promote habits among students that encourage **strong physical and mental health** in their readiness to learn and in their pursuit of personal excellence.
- Working from a “**student led/staff mentoring**” approach, engage students in creating an **exciting, fun, and meaningful campus life experience**.
- Strengthen **collaborative partnerships** with academic affairs, student services, and other campus departments **to support overall student success, culminating in graduation from ACU**.

## ACADEMIC POLICIES

The following is a list of policies frequently of interest to students. For a complete statement of academic policy, please see the University Catalog. The current university catalog is available online at <http://www.acu.edu/catalog/index.html>

### ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The ACU academic calendar is available through the Depot tab on myACU. Instructions are provided there to add the academic calendar to your Google calendar tab.

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Abilene Christian University is a community of learners that supports the quest for knowledge and truth through intellectual and personal integrity, honesty in learning, instruction, research and service. Its educational programs, faculty and staff, administration, and campus environment all exist to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world. Academic integrity is essential to the most effective development of a person's intellectual skills and abilities. Academic dishonesty is not insignificant in its impact on student development. Violations of academic integrity and other forms of cheating, as defined below, involve the intention to deceive or mislead or misrepresent, and therefore are a form of lying. The complete policy may be viewed at <http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/studentlife/Policies/index.html>

### ADDING AND DROPPING COURSES

University policies regarding adding and dropping classes, including charges and/or refunds, may be found in the current schedule bulletin under 'Withdrawal Policies', available online at: <http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/registrar/schedulebulletin/index.html>

### CLASS ATTENDANCE

"ACU expects students to attend and participate in all class and laboratory meetings. Students must adhere to the policies published in each course syllabus. ACU normally offers classes in a series of regularly scheduled meetings. The most common patterns are Monday-Wednesday-Friday, Tuesday-Thursday, and once-per-week. Some classes have regularly scheduled laboratories (labs).

Students are responsible for initiating a Withdrawal from Class form for any class that they have never attended or have stopped attending. If students do not initiate a withdrawal form, one of the following actions may be taken:

- The professor may initiate a withdrawal for a student who has violated the attendance policy as stated in the course syllabus. A 'W' or 'WF' grade will be assigned at the discretion of the professor; or
- The professor may choose not to initiate a withdrawal form and simply assign a grade of 'F' at the end of the semester.

Faculty who initiate Withdrawal from Class forms must designate whether the student is to receive a 'W' or 'WF' and provide the last date the student attended the course. After the 12th week of the semester, students may not withdraw from courses; however, a professor may withdraw a student for non-attendance but only with a grade of 'WF'."

The complete policy on class attendance can be found in the most updated ACU Online Catalog at [www.acu.edu/catalog/index/html](http://www.acu.edu/catalog/index/html)

# STUDENT CONDUCT

## PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE

Abilene Christian University maintains a Christian discipline, promoting a way of life that is intended to uphold the teachings of Jesus Christ, calling all people to God's truth. Therefore, community life at ACU is a disciplined life. Community standards reflect biblical principles and traditional Christian teaching and encourage students, staff and faculty to live lives of holiness, honesty, decency and civility. The intent of all discipline is to enhance growth and maturity, especially responsibility for one's own behavior and accountability for one's own actions.

ACU's philosophy of discipline is neither legalistic nor permissive. Instead, members of our community are called to a high standard of behavior in order to establish and maintain an environment conducive to learning and personal growth. Our desire is that all people reach their greatest potential in Jesus Christ.

### Standards of Conduct

Within the context of ACU's mission and its determination to be Christ-centered, students are expected to develop and maintain a high standard of personal and behavioral values. These expectations include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Respect for the personal worth, dignity and rights of others.
2. Respect for the right and necessity of ACU to develop and maintain a Christian atmosphere conducive to academic study and personal growth.
3. Respect for ACU's longstanding tradition of honesty, moral and ethical integrity, freedom of expression and open inquiry.
4. Respect for the diverse backgrounds, personalities, convictions and spiritual traditions of students, staff and faculty who comprise the ACU community.
5. Respect for local, state and federal laws and ordinances.
6. Respect for the discipline, policy, procedures and authority established by ACU for the systematic management of university activities, the well being of the members of the university community, and the integrity of the institution.
7. Willingness to offer service, support, guidance and friendship to others.
8. Regard for the nature of a moral community by embracing the need to lovingly confront and hold accountable members of the ACU community whose conduct falls outside the boundaries of Christian behavior, university policy, state and federal laws.

### Purpose of Disciplinary Responses

In order to preserve moral community, it sometimes becomes necessary to confront and hold accountable members of the ACU family. Procedures have been designed to provide a loving disciplinary response, balanced by justice and mercy. Justice requires that those who violate community standards are held accountable, and those who are innocent are protected. Mercy requires an understanding that all people are fallen sinners in need of God's grace and a mandate to encourage hope rather than condemnation. Therefore, discipline must be both corrective and restorative. The goal must be to redeem individuals and to restore relationships so that people can grow and develop in knowledge and grace. The purpose of the disciplinary response is:

- to redirect behavior,
- to protect the rights of others in the community,
- to encourage and teach responsibility, and
- to maintain a Christian environment compatible with the educational mission of the university.

## CONDUCT SUBJECT TO SANCTION

The violations listed below are not construed as all encompassing. The Dean of Students and other university officials are given discretion in addressing incidents of violation not listed here. All policies and regulations of the Student Handbook may apply to all students on or off campus regardless of whether school is in session.

**Category One violations.** Sanctions assigned as disciplinary responses to Category One violations may include, but are not limited to

- Written Warning;
- Minimum fine of \$25 and/or restitution;
- Accountability agreement with university staff or faculty;
- Discretionary assignments; and/or
- Participation in educational programming

Category One violations include, but are not limited to:

- Violation of general residence life policies. (Refer to the Residence Life Section of the Student Handbook for specific policies.)
- Minor disturbances of the peace.
- Violation of curfew policies for freshmen and for sophomores pledging a social club.
- Engaging or threatening to engage in behavior that would cause minor damage to university property or to the personal property of others.
- Violation of dress code principles.
- Violation of parking/safety regulations.
- Illegal gambling.
- Use of tobacco in any form on campus or at any university-sponsored event.
- Use of profanity, vulgarity or obscenity in any form.
- Failure to present official ACU ID card upon request of university authorities.
- Failure to accurately list with the university a current place of residence and to promptly inform the university of any subsequent changes in the listing.
- Knowledge of a violation of certain university policies or of students who are in violation of certain university policies without notifying proper university officials.
- Photographs or comments on social networking sites that document or publicize suspected violations of the Student Handbook. (Refer to the Internet Information section of the General Policy Guide.)

**Category Two violations.** Sanctions assigned as disciplinary responses to Category Two violations may include, but are not limited to:

- Conduct Probation for either a definite or indefinite period;
- Accountability agreement with university staff or faculty;
- Loss of privilege;
- In cases of Chapel violations, loss of Chapel credits;
- Minimum fine of \$50 and/or restitution;
- Discretionary assignments;
- Loss or reduction of scholarships;
- Participation in educational programming; and/or
- Suspension or Dismissal.

Category Two violations include, but are not limited to:

- Repeated or severe Category One violations.
- Violation of the visitation policies of residence halls and University Park apartments.

- Violation of the university Chapel attendance policy. (Refer to the Chapel Section of the Student Handbook for specific policies.)
- Violation of the university Chapel integrity policy. (Refer to the Chapel Section of the Student Handbook for specific policies).
- Repeated violations of the university academic integrity policy. (Refer to the following site for more information: [www.acu.edu/campusoffices/studentlife/Policies/index.html](http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/studentlife/Policies/index.html))
- Certain violations of the university alcohol policy. (Refer to the Alcohol Policy Section of the Student Handbook or refer to [www.acu.edu/campusoffices/studentlife/judicial/For Students/Alcohol\\_Policy.html](http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/studentlife/judicial/For_Students/Alcohol_Policy.html))
- Failure to comply with a directive of a university official acting in the performance of his or her duties.
- Disrespectful behavior toward a university staff or faculty member.
- Knowingly providing false or misleading information to a university authority, including all staff and faculty.
- Engaging or threatening to engage in behavior that would cause significant damage to university property or to the personal property of others.
- Minor instances of disruptive behavior. Disruptive behavior includes conduct that distracts or intimidates others in a manner that interferes with instructional activities, fails to adhere to an instructor's appropriate classroom rules or instructions, or interferes with the normal operation of the University.
- Minor disturbances of the peace. A disturbance will be defined as an event in which failure to maintain control of the event occurs and/or complaints are reported and/or police respond to the scene.
- Unauthorized possession or use of university keys.
- Unauthorized entry or use of university buildings, facilities, equipment, supplies or resources.
- Possession or use of fireworks or chemicals that are of an explosive or corrosive nature.
- Possession of stolen property.
- Possession and/or use of pornography of any kind.
- Violation of law or university policy related to computer use or copyright infringement (ex. peer to peer file sharing). (Refer to the following site for more information: [www.acu.edu/technology/polic](http://www.acu.edu/technology/polic))
- Theft of services, including failure to meet financial obligations for professional and/or rental agreements.
- Forgery, alteration or misuse of university documents, forms, records, or identification cards.
- Any activity that qualifies under applicable criminal law as a misdemeanor, regardless if charges are filed.

**Category Three violations.** Sanctions assigned as disciplinary responses to Category Three violations may include, but are not limited to:

- Suspension or Dismissal from the university;
- Accountability agreement;
- Loss of privilege;
- Minimum fine of \$100 and/or restitution;
- Discretionary assignments;
- Loss or reduction of scholarships;
- Participation in educational programming;
- Eviction from university housing (residence halls or University Park Apartments);
- Delay in or prohibition of registering for classes; and/or
- Denial of readmission without approval of Dean of Students or his or her designee.

Category Three violations include, but are not limited to:

- Repeated or severe Category Two violations.
- Failure to comply with disciplinary decisions, including conditions of probation.
- Failure to report any criminal history to the university, including but not limited to admissions applications.
- Repeated or severe violations of the university alcohol policy.
- Violation of university drug policy.
- Violation of the university weapons policy.
- Misuse of fire or safety equipment.
- Causing or reporting a false warning of a campus emergency.
- Major instances of disruptive behavior. Disruptive behavior includes conduct that distracts or intimidates others in a manner that interferes with instructional activities, fails to adhere to an instructor's appropriate classroom rules or instructions, or interferes with the normal operation of the University.
- Major disturbances of the peace. A disturbance will be defined as an event in which failure to maintain control of the event occurs and/or complaints are reported and/or police respond to the scene.
- Knowingly accessing a computer, computer network, or computer system beyond the standard assigned and/or accepted permissions.
- Causing physical or emotional harm to another person. Emotional harm includes but is not limited to, intimidation, stalking, cyber-bullying, and/or threats by text messaging or other electronic media.
- Creating a hostile environment, including but not limited to hate speech, harassment, or sexual harassment. (Refer to the university's anti-harassment policy: [http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/hr/handbook/400\\_conduct.html#412](http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/hr/handbook/400_conduct.html#412))
- Sexual immorality, including pre-marital sex (heterosexual and homosexual activity). (For clarification, review the philosophy of discipline above.)
- Participation in hazing. (Refer to the section on hazing in the General Policy section of this handbook for further information.)
- Arson or attempted arson.
- Assault, physical or sexual in nature.
- Any activity that qualifies under applicable criminal law as a felony, regardless if charges are filed.

**Violations of the University Alcohol and Drug Policies.** The full policy may be found in this Handbook under "General University Policies". See the Table of Contents for location.

## **EXPLANATION OF SANCTIONS**

The sanctions listed below are not construed as all encompassing. The Dean of Students and/or other designee are given discretion to assign sanctions not listed here.

**Formal Warning:** A student served with a formal warning is given an official written notice. The formal warning may include other sanctions, and carries the message that continued or repeated violations may result in more severe sanctions.

**Fine:** A financial penalty assessed at the discretion of the Dean of Students or designee and recorded in an official written notice. A charge will be made to the student's account in the amount of the fine.

**Conduct Probation:** A student placed on conduct probation is given an official written notice that defines the terms of the probation period. The terms of conduct probation may include other sanctions, including, but not limited to loss of privilege to participate in university programs, organizations, or activities for a specified period of time. Conduct probation carries the message that continued or repeated violations, during or after the probation period, may

result in additional discipline, including but not limited to, suspension or dismissal from the university. As allowed by privacy laws, parents/guardians may be notified of this decision, for example when students under the age of 21 violate the university alcohol policy.

**Loss of Privilege:** A student may be restricted from participating in university-sponsored activities, including but not limited to social clubs, other student organizations, student productions, Spring Break Campaigns, intramurals, leadership positions, and/or award nominations. A student involved in a social club or other organization may be restricted from participating in club or organization meetings, running for office, voting within a club or organization, socials and formals, and any other club or organization sponsored events. For detailed information, refer to the Student Organization Handbook as well as the specific policies related to university-sponsored activities.

**Suspension:** A student placed on suspension is given an official written notice of termination of their status as a student. Suspensions may be for a specified period of time (usually one semester or for the balance of the current semester), or for an indefinite period. Notification of suspensions may be sent to parents or guardians (as allowed by privacy laws) and to appropriate university officials. A student who has been suspended will be informed by written notice of the time within which the student is expected to leave the campus.

Conduct suspensions are not documented on a student's transcript. The Office of Student Life initiates the withdrawal process for suspended students. However, once a student is informed that the withdrawal process has been initiated, it is the student's responsibility to complete the formal withdrawal process including but not limited to, completion of the exit process for financial aid/loans. In conduct suspension cases, tuition and fee waiver requests within the university's refund policy schedule may not be approved.

If the student chooses to appeal a suspension (see the Appeal Process section of the Student Conduct section of this Handbook or refer to [www.acu.edu/campusoffices/studentlife/judicial/Appeals.html](http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/studentlife/judicial/Appeals.html)), and the appeal is denied, the official date of suspension may be changed to the date the student receives notification of the denial for financial aid and university withdrawal purposes.

Students seeking readmission following a suspension should consult <http://www.acu.edu/registrar> for instruction on the formal process and appropriate deadlines. In addition, the following items should be included in the readmission paperwork submitted to the Registrar's office: a written discussion of action steps completed to comply with specific requirements of the suspension and a statement of intent to comply with the attitudes and behaviors expected of ACU students, three letters of reference (usually from a parent; a minister, pastor, elder or church leader; a counselor/therapist; or a personal friend). These letters should indicate the relationship with the student and an assessment of the student's progress toward change and completion of readmission requirements.

**Summary Suspension:** A suspension may be enforced before the appeal process is completed. This sanction may be enforced if the Dean of Students determines that the student's continued presence on campus presents unreasonable risk of danger to himself or herself or the campus community as a whole. In these cases, a student must leave the campus immediately and remain off campus while the appeal is pending. The student may be permitted to return to campus in order to participate in the university's appeal process by special arrangement with the Dean of Students or designee.

**Dismissal:** Dismissal from the university is a permanent termination of student status. Notification of dismissals may be sent to parents or guardians (as allowed by privacy laws) and to appropriate university officials. A student who has been dismissed will be informed by written notice of the time within which the student is expected to leave the campus.

**Additional Requirements and Conditions:** The University reserves the right to impose additional requirements and conditions in the disciplinary process as determined by the Dean of Students or, upon appeal, by the Disciplinary Review Board. Medical or psychological counseling/treatment and/or assessment by ACU or off-campus professionals, including drug and alcohol testing and/or assessment may be required.

## **DISCIPLINARY PROCESS**

### **Reporting a Violation**

Incident reports alleging violations of the Student Conduct Policy will be forwarded to the Office of Student Life from university officials and other members of the university community (including students, staff and faculty). If the university receives reports, complaints or other information possibly involving violations of the Student Conduct Policy from local, state and federal agencies, they will be forwarded to the Office of Student Life for investigation. Most reports are initially referred to the Director of Judicial Affairs for further investigation.

### **Conducting a Student Conduct Investigation and Summoning a Student**

A preliminary review of the facts of the case will be conducted to determine whether sufficient evidence exists to warrant a meeting with the student(s) involved. If it is determined that further explanation is warranted, students will be summoned by email to a meeting where allegations will be reviewed.

It is the student's responsibility to open, read and act on all emails related to an investigation. Failure to comply with an email summons and other attempts to contact the student may result in the student forfeiting his/her right to the disciplinary process outlined in the Student Handbook. In most cases, failure to comply will result in the student being found in violation of the original student conduct violation as well as an additional violation of 'Failure to Comply with a Directive of a University Official acting in the performance of his or her duties,' which also results in further disciplinary action. A registration hold may also be placed on the student's account.

During the meeting with the appropriate Student Life representative(s), students will be given an opportunity to provide their account of the events. The Student Life representative(s) will meet with only the student. No one else may represent the student during the investigation process. Further investigation may be conducted, if necessary, and a disciplinary response may be determined.

### **Deliberation/Standard of Proof**

In deliberating disciplinary responses, the Dean of Students or his or her designee will make a decision based on what he or she considers reasonable evidence, including, but not limited to, testimony from witnesses, written statements and other relevant information. In evaluating conflicting testimony or statements, the Dean of Students or designee will determine in good faith which version of events is more credible.

### **Sanctioning a Student**

Authority for determining disciplinary responses, requirements or conditions ultimately rests with the Dean of Students, although other university officials may make decisions in particular cases. Repeated or aggravated violations of student conduct may result in additional disciplinary responses, especially in cases where the infractions occur during conduct probation. Any disciplinary response will become part of the student's official disciplinary file. A student's entire disciplinary record will be considered when decisions related to disciplinary responses are made.

### **Non-disciplinary Process/Administrative Agreements**

In keeping with the redemptive nature of ACU's disciplinary philosophy, students who come forward voluntarily confessing a violation of the university policies or an addictive lifestyle associated with a violation (such as illegal drugs and controlled substances, alcohol, sexual immorality, pornography, Internet abuse or eating disorders) to the Dean of Students, Director of Judicial Affairs, or other Student Life staff may be afforded an opportunity to submit to a range of possibilities outside the disciplinary process. The university maintains the right to require the student to enter into professional counseling and/or medical treatment as a condition of continued enrollment if, in the judgment of the Dean of Students, the behavior in question warrants such a response. The following conditions must be met in order for students to take advantage of this non-disciplinary policy:

1. The student must take the first step by discussing his or her situation with the Director of Judicial Affairs or the Dean of Students or other Student Life staff in order to develop an appropriate response. If a violation is identified or reported before the student voluntarily comes forward, the normal disciplinary process will ensue, and the student will no longer have the option of a non-disciplinary response.
2. The student must be willing to submit to any intervention deemed appropriate.
3. The student must understand that in cases where the behavior is repetitive, self-destructive or endangering to others or involves legal issues, the university has the responsibility to take appropriate action, including suspension or dismissal from the university.

### **Procedures for Violations by Student Groups**

Student groups may be found in violation of university policies, and the group may be held responsible, either individually or collectively, for violations by those associated with the group. Alleged violations will be referred to the Dean of Students or designee for investigation and processing under the provisions of the Student Organizations Handbook. Disciplinary responses for a student group may include revocation of the group's right to exist at the university, as well as other appropriate measures. Student groups will be afforded the same hearing and appeal procedures provided for individual students.

### **Graduation Eligibility**

Students are not eligible for graduation or release of transcripts until the completion of disciplinary proceedings and the performance of all disciplinary requirements. Graduation, release of transcripts, and/or participation in commencement activities may be impacted until all requirements are fulfilled.

### **Disciplinary Records Retention and Requests**

The Dean of Students retains responsibility for the maintenance, storage and release of student records related to disciplinary proceedings in keeping with FERPA. Students may request copies of their discipline files by completing a Disciplinary Records Request form available in the Office of Judicial Affairs. In most cases, student disciplinary records may be kept for a period of six years, at which time minimal statistics may be retained and the full document may be destroyed.

## **APPEAL PROCESS**

Under normal circumstances, enforcement of disciplinary responses will be deferred pending the review of the appeal. Disciplinary decisions will be made at the lowest level possible. Following formal discipline for conduct subject to sanction, students are guaranteed the right to a **single appeal** to the next highest level. However, if a student refuses to sign the written notice within 2 business days of notification, he/she has forfeited the possibility of appealing the decision. Decisions made by a residence hall director may be appealed to the Assistant Dean for Residence Life Education. Decisions made by the Director of Judicial Affairs or the Assistant Dean for Residence Life Education may be appealed to the Dean of Students. Disciplinary decisions made by the Dean of Students may be appealed to the Disciplinary Review Board.

Appeals will only be granted on the following grounds:

1. The disciplinary response is unreasonably disproportionate to the misconduct (including consideration of the student's prior offenses or willingness to cooperate in the disciplinary process).
2. The disciplinary process as outlined in the Student Handbook was not followed, and this failure significantly affected the student's opportunity to receive a fair hearing.
3. The disciplinary decision was not supported by reasonable evidence.
4. New evidence has become available since the initial hearing that would have significantly altered its results.

## **Appeal to the Dean of Students**

The procedure for an appeal to the Dean of Students on a decision from a Student Life representative is as follows:

1. Within two working days from the date of the decision, the student will file a written notice of appeal with the Dean. Appropriate paperwork is available from the Assistant to the Dean of Students (McKinzie Hall Room 135). A student involved in a disciplinary process will be notified of his or her right to appeal by Student Life at the time the disciplinary decision is conveyed to the student. A deadline to appeal will also be assigned at that time.
2. Within two working days from the date the notice is received, the Dean of Students or designee will review the appeal notice and may decide to meet with the student to further discuss his or her grounds for appeal. The Dean will meet with only the student. No one else may represent the student during the appeal process.
3. If based on the written notice of appeal, the Dean of Students determines there is not substantial cause for appeal, he or she may choose to provide a written summary of the decision to the student. A copy will be kept for Student Life documentation purposes.
4. If the Dean of Students decides to meet with the student, the Dean will consider the appeal and uphold, reverse or otherwise modify the previous decision. The appeal decision of the Dean of Students may not be appealed as students are provided one single appeal. The Dean of Students will communicate the decision to the student in writing.

## **Appeal to the Disciplinary Review Board**

The procedure for an appeal to the Disciplinary Review Board from a decision of the Dean of Students is as follows:

1. Within two working days from the date of the decision, the student will file a written notice of appeal with the chair\* of the Disciplinary Review Board (in the Legal Services Offices in Hardin Administration Building, Room 111). Appeal forms are available from the Assistant to the Dean of Students (McKinzie Hall Room 135). A student involved in a disciplinary process will be notified of his or her right to appeal by Student Life at the time the disciplinary decision is conveyed to the student. A deadline to appeal will also be assigned at that time.
2. The Student Life Office will be promptly provided with a copy of the notice. Within two working days after receiving the notice of appeal from the Legal Services Office, the Dean of Students or designee will file with the chair a written statement of the facts and summary of the appealed decision and applicable policy. A copy will be provided to the student by the Legal Services Office.
3. Within two working days of receiving a copy of the dean's statement, the student may choose to file with the chair a response, including his or her statement of the facts, reasons for the appeal and such other statements and documents he or she believes relevant to the appeal. A copy will be provided to the Student Life Office.
4. The chair may request or obtain from any party or source further information and statements he or she deems appropriate to the reasonable completion of the record.
5. The chair will schedule a hearing before the Disciplinary Review Board if he or she determines from the record that the appeal involves a substantial dispute of material facts and/or a substantial issue with the existence, publication and/or implementation of applicable policy. If the chair does not find substantial cause for appeal, he or she shall issue a final written decision to the student and Dean of Students or designee.
6. If a hearing of the Disciplinary Review Board is convened, it will undertake such inquiry as the chair may direct and after considering the appeal, will uphold, reverse or otherwise modify the previous decision. The chair of the Disciplinary Review Board will then issue a final written decision to the student and the Dean of Students or designee. The decision of the Disciplinary Review Board may not be appealed

\* The role of chair of the Disciplinary Review Board may be filled by more than one person appointed as co-chairs, and all references to the chair will include any one or more persons then serving as co-chair.

# GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES

ACU Police Department  
Address Changes  
Administrative Entry, Search and Seizure  
Alcohol Policy  
Assault Policy (Physical or Sexual)  
Chapel Policy  
Computer Use Policy  
Dancing Policy  
Demonstrations  
Directory Information  
Dress Code Policy  
Drug Policy  
Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)  
Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy  
Hazing Policy  
Identification Card Policy  
Internet Information Policy  
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Solicitation  
Stalking  
Student Complaint Policy  
Student Organizations and Activities  
Student Role in ACU Decision-making  
Student Safety  
Theft or Loss of Personal Property  
Weapons  
Withdrawal from the University

## GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES

### ACU POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Abilene Christian University Police Department (ACUPD) is a certified Texas law enforcement agency that operates 24 hours per day. The ACUPD employs licensed Texas Peace Officers who, in addition to having full police powers and jurisdiction on all ACU owned properties, are also certified by and serve in conjunction with the City of Abilene Police Department within a designated geographic area surrounding the ACU campus. Within this designated area, ACUPD officers are authorized by Texas law to operate as City of Abilene Police Department officers. This additional off-campus jurisdiction applies to all police related calls, criminal incidents and traffic offenses. For more information, please visit [www.acu.edu/acupolice](http://www.acu.edu/acupolice).

## ADDRESS CHANGES

Students are responsible for maintaining current and accurate local and permanent addresses. Any changes of address should be communicated to The Depot.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ENTRY, SEARCH AND SEIZURE

While the university respects each student's privacy, it reserves the right to enter residence hall rooms/apartments to check general conditions, to perform custodial service, to make repairs, to handle emergencies, or if there is reason to believe a health or fire hazard exists.

Entry under the above conditions will not be used as an excuse to search a room for prohibited items. However, where there is legitimate reason, including suspected student conduct violations, designated university officials including Student Life and Residence Life/Housing staff with authorization from the Dean of Students or designee, may enter and search a student's room with or without the consent of the occupying student. When possible, it is desirable for the student to be present when a search is made.

## ALCOHOL POLICY

Abilene Christian University is committed to maintaining an **alcohol-free campus**. The ACU community cares deeply about the health and safety of our students, and is committed to educating students about the physical and spiritual dangers of alcohol abuse. Furthermore, ACU realizes the heightened dangers in some social settings off campus and thus discourages students from attending establishments such as dance clubs, bars, and private parties where the principal purpose is known to be the sale and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages. The history of activities associated with these establishments (such as alcohol abuse, underage drinking, and drunkenness) is counter to our Christian values and lifestyle. The life choices and decisions that students make extend far beyond the college experience, and ACU is committed to challenging students to make decisions that ultimately glorify God.

In accordance with our educational mission, and for the well-being of our students and the ACU community, the University has established the following policies related to alcohol:

1. **The possession, consumption, or distribution of alcoholic beverages on campus (including all ACU residence halls and University Park Apartments) is strictly prohibited.** Moreover, any student present where alcohol is found on campus (including but not limited to residence halls or apartment rooms, vehicles, or in personal belongings) may be subject to sanctions.
2. Alcohol is prohibited at all **University-sponsored events** (including off-campus events).
3. Any **officially recognized student club or organization** (regardless of legal drinking age of its members) is prohibited from hosting or participating in any formal group event (on or off-campus) that involves alcohol. Such groups include, but are not limited to: special interest groups, social clubs, athletic and intramural teams, and Spring Break Campaigns, etc.
4. **Intoxicated students on campus or at a University-sponsored event** will be sanctioned. For the purposes of ACU's student conduct policy and process, intoxication will be defined as any disruptive, destructive, hazardous, vulgar, or uncontrolled behavior during or following the consumption of alcoholic beverages.
5. **Alcohol paraphernalia** (such as glassware commonly used to serve alcoholic beverages; empty beer bottles or cans; posters, clothing, or signs promoting alcohol, etc.) is not permitted on campus.
6. **Local neighborhood disturbances of the peace** caused by ACU students may result in disciplinary action. (See also the Student Conduct section of this Handbook). **Where alcohol is involved, additional or further sanctions may apply.** For the purposes of ACU's student conduct policy and process, a disturbance involving alcohol will be defined as an event in which alcohol is present and one or more of the following occur: the student(s) fail(s) to maintain control of the event, complaints are reported, and/or police respond to the scene.

7. All students must abide by **Texas law** related to the possession, consumption, and distribution of alcohol. Specifically, Texas law prohibits:
  - a. The purchase, possession, or consumption of alcoholic beverages by a person under 21 years of age (Texas Alcohol Beverage Code Sec. 106.02, 106.04-106.05, 106.071);
  - b. Being intoxicated in public to the degree that one poses a danger to him/herself or to others (Texas Penal Code Sec. 49.02);
  - c. Furnishing alcohol to a minor (Texas Alcohol Beverage Code Sec. 106.06). For the purposes of this policy, ACU defines furnishing as purchasing for, giving to, or making alcoholic beverages available to a minor. This includes, but is not limited to, creating a situation where there is a risk a minor may be provided with or obtain alcohol.
  - d. Driving while intoxicated (Texas Penal Code Sec. 49.04).
  - e. Driving under the influence of alcohol by a minor (TABC Code 106.041). Per Texas law, any detectable amount of alcohol in the minor's system (such as alcohol emitting from the person's breath) is defined as driving under the influence.

### **Sanctions:**

Students who are found guilty of violating the University policy concerning the possession, consumption, or distribution of alcohol or related disturbances will be subject to a range and/or combination of the following sanctions: (1) fines ranging from \$100 to \$250; (2) completion of an alcohol education program, which involves a \$75 fee to students; (3) counseling; (4) disciplinary probation; (5) indefinite suspension; and (6) dismissal from the University. **Violations of under-age drinking, serving, or making alcohol available to those who are under the legal drinking age will result in strict sanctions (up to and including dismissal), and will be turned over to the appropriate legal authorities.**

This information is intended to give students a range of expected outcomes or consequences regarding violations of the University's alcohol policy. Depending on the level of severity involved per violation, and at the discretion of the Vice President for Student Life or his/her designee, sanctions may vary from what is outlined above. Subject to privacy laws, parents or legal guardians may be contacted where deemed appropriate.

### **ASSAULT POLICY (PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL)**

**Definition of Physical Assault:** The Texas Penal Code (Sec. 22.01) defines assault as intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing bodily injury to another or intentionally or knowingly causing physical contact with another when the person knows or should reasonably believe that the other will regard the contact as offensive or provocative. This includes Assault-Dating Violence.

A criminal conviction of Class A Misdemeanor Assault is punishable by a fine up to \$4,000 and/or up to one year in jail.

**Definition of Sexual Assault:** Sexual assault involves sexual activity without the person's consent. According to the Texas Penal Code (Sec. 22.011), this includes, but is not limited to, when the alleged offender:

- 1) Uses physical force or violence against the other person to submit or participate;
- 2) Knows the other person is unconscious or physically unable to resist; or
- 3) Intentionally impairs the other person's power to appraise or control the other person's conduct by administering any substance without the other person's knowledge.

A criminal conviction of sexual assault is a Second Degree Felony, punishable by 2 to 20 years in prison and/or a fine up to \$10,000.

### **Reporting an Assault**

A victim of assault should immediately report the incident to the ACU Police Department (if the incident occurred within the ACUPD jurisdiction) or to the Abilene Police Department (when outside of the ACUPD jurisdiction). When in doubt, contact the ACU Police Department (325-674-2305), and they will assist with the appropriate reporting procedures.

Victims of sexual assault should immediately call 911. To avoid destroying critical forensic evidence, victims should not shower, bathe or change clothes. Victims of sexual assault or assault (dating violence) who report to the police may choose to use a 'pseudonym' in an effort to maintain confidentiality.

The victim will be interviewed by the appropriate law enforcement personnel, and will be provided options, including the possibility of filing criminal charges. Ultimately, it is the victim's decision to file criminal charges. If the victim believes there is credible and/or imminent risk of harm, he or she may also choose to file a restraining/protective order with the appropriate police department.

If the accused student is an ACU student, the victim, in addition to reporting to ACUPD, should report the incident to the Dean of Students. Whether the student files a report, if the university becomes aware of any assaultive conduct, the university has a duty to investigate the incident and determine appropriate administrative sanctions for the accused student.

### **Investigating an Assault Incident**

The process for administrative investigations of an assault is covered under the disciplinary process of the Student Conduct section of the Student Handbook. Additionally, the Dean of Students and/or designee may request to meet with the alleged victim prior to notifying the accused student of the investigation. Any student conduct violations that the victim may have been involved in during the assault incident may be considered under the Non-Disciplinary Process of the Student Handbook.

Upon further administrative investigation, the Dean of Students may: 1) sanction the accused student per the student conduct policy, or 2) document the incident as 'informational' in the event there is not enough evidence to pursue administrative sanctions.

Upon written request, the alleged victim will be provided with the results of the final disciplinary response against the accused student.

Personal counseling is available at the University Counseling Center ([www.acu.edu/counseling](http://www.acu.edu/counseling)) to any student involved in an assault regardless of whether the incident occurred on or off campus or whether the accused is a student.

The Regional Crime Victim Crisis Center ([www.regionalcrime.org](http://www.regionalcrime.org)) is an off campus resource available in the Abilene area. The Center provides many services, including a 24/7 Local Rape Crisis Hotline (325-677-7895).

## **CHAPEL POLICY**

### **Chapel Attendance Policy**

The university desires that students engage Chapel as a significant experience in their educational and spiritual formation while attending ACU. "In keeping with the mission of the university, daily Chapel will be held as a part of the curriculum. Regular attendance by undergraduates is required." (ACU Board of Trustees Policy Manual, Policy Number 2.7.4)

### **Chapel Attendance Procedures**

Chapel meets daily, Monday through Friday, from 11:00 to 11:30 a.m. during the fall and spring semesters, except on university-approved holidays (Fall Break, Thanksgiving Break, Christmas Break, Martin Luther King Day, Spring Break, and Good Friday). Chapel on the first day of classes during the fall semester is the official Opening Assembly for the university.

### **Attendance Requirements**

Undergraduate students under the age of twenty-five are required to attend Chapel each semester of fulltime enrollment (12 or more hours), except when exempt from Chapel for one or more days during a given semester for student teaching, full-time enrollment in the Patty Hanks Shelton School of Nursing, or for some work related reasons. BAS students are not required to attend Chapel.

Students are required to attend fifty-five (55) of the seventy+ (70+) Chapel programs scheduled each semester, unless otherwise exempt for one or more days per week for the above mentioned reasons. Each regularly scheduled Chapel counts toward the fifty-five (55) Chapel credits

required each semester. Additional Chapel credits are offered to students who attend approved programs at alternative times (Chapel Forums, Summit, etc.). These programs are approved by the Office of Spiritual Life and are listed on the Chapel web site ([www.acu.edu/chapel](http://www.acu.edu/chapel)), including the number of credits offered for each program.

**Many students choose to attend Chapel five days per week. A student who accumulates just four Chapel credits per week will easily meet the fifty-five (55) credit requirement each semester.**

### **Attendance Requirement Exemptions**

Students approved to be exempt one or more days per week for some work related reasons have their required number of Chapel credits per semester adjusted according to the following scale:

<u>Number of Days Exempt</u>	<u>Required Credits</u>
0-1 days per week	55 of 70+
2 day per week	48 of 70+
3 days per week	36 of 70+
4 days per week	24 of 70+
5 days per week	12 of 70+

Please note that students who receive a “5 days per week exemption” still have to earn a minimum of 12 Chapel Credits each semester. Twenty+ (20+) Chapel Forum Credits are offered each semester outside of the 11:00am Chapel time, so the minimum number of credits can be earned even if a student is required to work during the 11:00am hour each day of the week.

Students are required to apply for exemptions each semester, and exemptions must be processed within the first two weeks of any semester, or within two weeks from the beginning date of any reason given for the exemption (new employment, diagnosed chronic illness, etc.). Students must submit evidence of the reason for the exemption, e.g. letter from new employer on company letterhead, doctor’s note, etc. The process and required forms for exemptions are available on the Chapel web site (<http://www.acu.edu/chapel>), and in the Chapel Office. Students failing to submit an exemption by the appropriate deadline may fail to earn Chapel credit and be subject to further disciplinary action.

### **Attendance Registration**

Attendance for Chapel in Moody Coliseum is registered by sliding a student ID through one of the card readers between 10:45 and 11:00 a.m. and again within 10 minutes after Chapel is dismissed. A student must slide his or her card at the beginning and again at the end of Chapel in order to be counted present. Attendance is not registered for any student sliding in late or sliding out early. An official from the Chapel Office slides an administrative ID card through a card reader after the closing prayer. Any student who slides his or her card before this official time stamp will not receive attendance credit.

Attendance for approved Tuesday Campus Conversations, Departmental Chapels, Class Chapels, Small Group Chapels and Chapel Forums that meet outside of Moody Coliseum is registered by portable card readers or by signing in with the approved advisor. Sign in sheets are processed within three class days after receiving them from the advisor of any small group or breakout Chapel. Credits from portable card readers post within two class days.

### **Consequences for Failure to Fulfill Chapel Attendance Requirements**

Students are responsible for monitoring their own Chapel credits online in the myACU portal. The Chapel Office strongly recommends that students check their Chapel credit balance on a weekly basis. Students who have a question or concern about their credit balance are encouraged to contact the Chapel Office: come by the Center for Christian Service & Leadership office in room 29 of the lower level of the Campus Center, call (325) 674-2867, or e-mail [chapel@acu.edu](mailto:chapel@acu.edu). Upon the completion of any semester, students who did not attain sufficient Chapel credits will be placed on Chapel probation and notified by email to their ACU email account during the week following the last day of finals. Students placed on Chapel probation may contact the Chapel Office with questions. This process is outlined in the email and also on the Chapel web site ([www.acu.edu/chapel](http://www.acu.edu/chapel)).

## **Chapel Attendance Probation**

Chapel probation is in effect for the following full semester. During the semester of probation a student will be restricted from participation in certain extracurricular activities, including but not limited to all student productions, intramurals, leadership positions, and/or award nominations. Students who ignore this loss of privilege by participating in extracurricular activities while on Chapel probation will be subject to stricter sanctions up to and including suspension from the university. Graduating seniors who do not earn the required credits during their final semester will be subject to appropriate sanctions.

## **Chapel Integrity Violations**

Students are not permitted to slide someone else's card to indicate Chapel attendance, slide their own card and not attend all of Chapel; or in the case of Small Group and breakout Chapels, sign their name and not attend or sign in for someone else who is not there. A "slide and glide" first offense will result in a mandatory meeting with the Chapel Office and may result in being placed on conduct probation. Upon a second occurrence a student will be placed on conduct probation and required to meet with the Office of Judicial Affairs. Subsequent "slide and glide" offenses may result in further sanctions up to and including suspension from the university.

## **COMPUTER USE POLICY**

See "Responsible Use for Information and Technology Resources" at [www.acu.edu/technology/policy](http://www.acu.edu/technology/policy)

## **DANCING**

Dancing is prohibited at ACU sponsored events or events hosted by official student organizations; however, organizations that exhibit cultural expression through dance as part of their organizational purpose may have performances by organization members as approved by advisors and the Director of Student Activities and Productions.

## **DEMONSTRATIONS**

ACU recognizes the right of students to dissent as long as such behavior does not limit the freedom of others, damage university property or delay the opportunity of the student body, faculty or staff to proceed regularly with their work, school or scheduled activities. Students may use public areas approved in advance by the university for assembly as long as they do not restrict the movement of traffic. When a rally or other such gathering requires building space or public areas, clearance must be obtained in advance from the Dean of Students. Such clearance must be obtained at least 48 hours prior to the event, and the university reserves the right to make reasonable restrictions of location, time or format for such events, using the following guidelines:

1. to alleviate potential problems with safety or potential disruption of university activities
2. to facilitate a free exchange of ideas consistent with the academic environment and the university's mission; and
3. to comply with local, state and federal laws or ordinances.

The university reserves the right to review, alter or otherwise restrict events, demonstrations, speakers or groups whose nature or presentation is contrary to or inconsistent with the university's mission and Christ-centered character. This determination shall be at the sole discretion of the president or his or her designee.

## **DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

Please consult the current university catalog ([www.acu.edu/catalog](http://www.acu.edu/catalog)) for information about a student's rights concerning directory information. Directory information includes name, local and permanent telephone listing and address, official school email address, ID card photo, major field of study, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, most recent previous schools attended, and participation in officially recognized activities and sports. Directory and other public information may be released unless a student requests that this information be withheld. Requests to withhold directory information from the Hello Book (the university phone book) can only be made during the first 12 days of the fall semester. Any requests to withhold directory and other public information can be made in the Student Life office.

## **DRESS CODE POLICY**

Students are encouraged to demonstrate by their dress and appearance a mature Christian attitude and the ability to discern propriety. The university also seeks to prepare students for professional careers where certain standards of dress are required for employment. Part of the educational process, then, is learning to dress appropriately. The following standards and guidelines will assist students in making decisions about their dress and appearance on campus, in class, in Chapel and at all university-sponsored activities, including athletics events. Please note that the ACU Student Recreation and Wellness Center may impose specific dress code policies pertaining to pool and workout facility use.

1. All students, staff and faculty are expected to dress with Christian appropriateness. Dress should be modest. Some extremes are not acceptable, including halter-tops, crop tops/open midriffs, and short and/or revealing skirts and shorts.
2. Body piercing is a growing concern among healthcare professionals and in some cases is considered by the university as outside the bounds of Christian appropriateness. Extreme, or otherwise distracting or harmful body piercing is discouraged and will be addressed by Student Life officials.
3. During work periods, student workers are expected to conform to the dress code set by the department in which they work.
4. Shorts may be worn on campus, during classes and in Chapel. However, shorts (and skirts) must be modest and conform to a standard of mid-thigh or longer.
5. Athletic clothing appropriate to the sport or recreation may be worn while participating in classes/activities in designated athletic or recreational areas. The ACU Student Recreation and Wellness Center may impose specific dress code policies pertaining to pool and workout facility use.
6. Clothing with inappropriate advertising, pictures and/or sayings that are contrary to the mission and Christian standards of ACU is prohibited.
7. Each faculty member will announce whether caps may be worn during class. Students are asked to remove their caps during times of prayer.
8. Individual faculty members may have additional dress requirements or preferences concerning appropriate student attire in his or her classroom.

Implementation and enforcement of the dress code are the responsibility of the entire university community. Questions about the interpretation and enforcement of these standards should be directed to the Dean of Students.

## **DRUG POLICY**

In keeping with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, ACU has implemented a “zero-tolerance” policy prohibiting the unlawful possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs and controlled substances, including prescription medications or steroids. Also prohibited is the possession, use or distribution of any simulated or synthetic psychoactive substance, including synthetic marijuana/cannabinoids, which are designed, intended, possessed or used for the purposes of producing an intoxicating, hallucinogenic or psychoactive effect on the user. These substances may include, but are not limited to, salvia, “spice”, “K2” or any other substance categorized as such.

The university upholds local, state and federal laws about the possession, use and distribution of illegal drugs and/or drug paraphernalia. Offenses involving on-campus possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs and controlled substances may be referred to the ACU Police Department for investigation and possible filing of applicable criminal charges. Violations of this policy will be assessed the full range of disciplinary responses, including the possibility of immediate dismissal from the university.

Students suspected of or reported to have been using illegal drugs or controlled substances, on or off campus, may be required to submit to drug testing. Failure to comply may result in further disciplinary action. Any student testing positive for any illegal drug or controlled substance, including steroids, or found in violation of the university drug policy, may be suspended or dismissed from the university.

Under the Higher Education Opportunities Act of 2008, federal law requires the university to notify students that a criminal conviction for any drug offense may result in the student losing his/her financial assistance related to any Title IV, HEA grant, loan, or work-study programs. Therefore, a student's ability to obtain financial assistance upon returning to the university after completion of a suspension may be impacted.

## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford students certain rights to their educational records.

A full description of the FERPA policy may be viewed at [www.acu.edu/catalog](http://www.acu.edu/catalog)

## **HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

Harassment will not be tolerated at Abilene Christian University. As a Christian community, Abilene Christian University has committed itself, unequivocally, to ensuring a working and learning environment in which the dignity of every individual is respected. Therefore it is the purpose of this policy to maintain a work and academic environment that is free of harassment, sexual or otherwise. This policy applies to all members of the ACU community, including trustees, faculty, staff, students, and volunteers at Abilene Christian University.

Harassment is defined as unwelcomed behavior or conduct based on sex, religion, race, age, color, national origin, veteran's status, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, education, or participation in University programs or activities, (2) submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for a decision affecting an individual's employment, education, or participation in University programs of activities, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for work, education, or participation in a University program or activity.

Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to:

- Threats or insinuations that a person's status or other condition of employment or academic status may be adversely affected because of one's sex, religion, race, age, color, national origin, veteran's status, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- Unwelcome verbal expressions, derogatory comments, epithets, degrading jokes, or innuendos regarding one's gender, religion, race, age, color, national origin, veteran's status, disability or any other characteristic protected by law.
- Posting objects, pictures, videotapes, audio recordings or literature that may embarrass or offend an individual because of one's gender, religion, race, age, color, national origin, veteran's status, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- Leering, staring, stalking.
- Offensive posters, letters, emails, text messages, Internet images and transmissions, or voicemail messages.

A full description of the university's anti-harassment policy, full definition of harassment, and procedure for reporting may be viewed at:

[http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/hr/handbook/400\\_conduct.html#412](http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/hr/handbook/400_conduct.html#412)

## **HAZING POLICY**

In keeping with our Christian mission, ACU embraces community standards that reflect biblical principles and encourages its students, faculty, and staff to live lives of holiness, honesty, decency, and civility. We deeply respect the personal worth and dignity of our students, and genuinely care about their physical and emotional safety. As such, any form of hazing is unacceptable and is counter to our institutional values and mission. All students have the right to seek membership to student clubs and organizations without risk of danger or humiliation. A student's consent to hazing is not a defense to a violation of this policy.

New or prospective members of groups can expect to participate in activities that foster camaraderie and unity among all members of the group, and that encourage growth and build up each individual. Hazing in any form is a serious offense and may receive the full range of disciplinary response, including suspension from the university. Students are advised that “hazing” as and to the extent defined in the Texas statute on hazing is a crime in Texas. Under the Texas statute “hazing” means intentionally, knowingly or recklessly endangering the mental or physical health or safety of a student in connection with that student’s participation or membership in any social, service or similar club, group or organization, including pledging, initiation, holding office or maintaining membership. The law applies whether the hazing occurs on or off campus. The university reserves the right, for its private disciplinary purposes, to define conduct as “hazing” whether or not it would constitute hazing under the Texas law.

Anyone is guilty of the crime who engages in hazing; encourages, directs, aids or attempts to aid another in hazing; intentionally, knowingly or recklessly permits hazing to occur; or has firsthand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident or has firsthand knowledge that hazing has occurred and fails to report the incident in writing to the Dean of Students or another appropriate official of the university. An organization may also be guilty of hazing if it condones or encourages hazing, or if an officer or any group of members, pledges or alumni commits or assists in an act of hazing.

For more information about the Hazing Policy, including how to report a hazing violation, please see the Student Organization Handbook or visit [www.acu.edu/hazing](http://www.acu.edu/hazing)

## **ID CARD POLICY**

Students are issued an official ACU identification card at the beginning of their academic enrollment with the university. Students are required to carry their card with them at all times and to present the card to any university official upon request. Students failing to render an ID card upon request, using an ID card of another student, allowing an ID card to be used by another student, or falsifying information used for identification purposes will be subject to disciplinary response. The ACU identification card issued to each student remains the property of the university and must be returned to Student Life when a student withdraws or is suspended from the university. Any lost or stolen identification card must be reported to The Depot immediately.

## **INTERNET INFORMATION**

While ACU will not proactively monitor personal web sites, social networking sites, blogs, online video hosting sites, and other such Internet information repositories for student conduct violations, the university will address student conduct violations that are reported to the Student Life office. If, in the course of the investigation, violations of law or policy are identified, the student(s) will face a disciplinary response as outlined in the Student Conduct section of this handbook.

## **MEDICAL INSURANCE**

Students participating in intramural sports and other university activities do so at their own risk. The university is not liable for accidents incurred during these activities and does not provide insurance covering student medical care or treatment. A student may elect to purchase medical insurance through an outside provider.

## **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

### **Purpose**

To preserve a learning environment that is free from unlawful discrimination Abilene Christian University’s policy is to ensure that persons who apply for admission and persons who are enrolled are treated in a nondiscriminatory manner in matters of race, color, nationality or ethnic origin, gender, age, or disability, including qualified disabled veterans and qualified veterans of the Vietnam Era, in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all students of the university. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of enrollment, including, but not limited to, admission standards and processes, and the guidelines by which enrollment may be denied or terminated, based on the standards outlined in the Student Handbook.

## **Policy**

Abilene Christian University complies with all applicable federal and state non-discrimination laws and does not engage in prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, nationality or ethnic origin, gender, age, or disability, including qualified disabled veterans and qualified veterans of the Vietnam Era. ACU is affiliated with the fellowship of the Church of Christ. The university is governed by a Board of Trustees, all of whom are members of the Church of Christ, and is operated within the Christian-oriented aims, ideals and religious tenets of the Church of Christ. As a religiously controlled institution of higher education, ACU is exempt from compliance with some provisions of certain civil rights laws, including some provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

- A. It is the responsibility of each student to obtain, read and comprehend the purpose, policies and procedures of the Student Handbook, including the policy for non-discrimination.
- B. As stated in the Application for Admission, the signing of the application constitutes acceptance of and an agreement to abide the policies and regulations of Abilene Christian University.
- C. The university reserves the right to make changes to the Student Handbook at any time. Such changes will be communicated with students by means of email, Chapel announcements and the Optimist and will be updated on the Student Life Web site, which serves as the official Student Handbook.
- D. The university reserves the right to deny the enrollment, or terminate the admission, of any student whose attitudes and actions do not represent the Christian mission of the university as set forth by the Student Handbook. Such decisions will be made according to the principles and guidelines described in the Student Handbook, with careful consideration of the fair and reasonable processes provided for appeal.
- E. ACU encourages students with disabilities to request any appropriate academic and other accommodations to Student Disability Services. The Director of Student Disability Services (325-674-2667 or [www.acu.edu/academics/trio/alpha/contact.html](http://www.acu.edu/academics/trio/alpha/contact.html)) serves as the compliance coordinator for ADA/Section 504.
- F. ACU encourages applicants for enrollment or enrolled students with a complaint regarding discrimination to report the offense to the Dean of Students or the general counsel of the university. If a faculty or staff member should receive a complaint of discrimination, he or she shall first consult the Dean of Students or the general counsel of the university.
- G. The Dean of Students and the general counsel of the university will investigate all complaints of discrimination and make recommendations to the president for appropriate action.

## **NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS**

When a dependent student receives a disciplinary response of suspension or dismissal, the parents of the dependent student may be notified by mail. Furthermore, parents of any student under the age of 21 may be notified should their student be placed on conduct probation for violating the ACU alcohol policy. The university also reserves the right to contact parents when the administration believes that parental contact is in the best interest of the student and/or the university, to the extent allowed by law. As stated in the current university catalog, a student's dependency status is determined according to the Internal Revenue Code 1986, Section 152. (Also available at [www.acu.edu/catalog](http://www.acu.edu/catalog)).

## **PARKING**

Parking is available for students living on-campus and off-campus, as well as for staff and faculty. Parking permits should be purchased from the ACU Police Department or at THE DEPOT in the Campus Center. For current policies and procedures for parking and motor vehicle registration, please consult the Regulations for Parking and Operation of Motor Vehicles on the ACU Police Department website ([www.acu.edu/acupolice](http://www.acu.edu/acupolice)).

## **POLITICAL CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY**

Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code prohibits tax-exempt organizations, such as ACU, from participating or intervening in political campaigns on behalf or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Where applicable, this policy also applies to all students and student organizations. Violations of these prohibitions could result in loss of the university's tax-exempt status, imposition of taxes on the institution and its responsible managers, federal or state government lawsuits, audits, investigations or other penalties.

For detailed information related to this policy, refer to:

[http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/hr/handbook/400\\_conduct.html#440](http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/hr/handbook/400_conduct.html#440)

## **PORNOGRAPHY**

All materials of a pornographic nature, including magazines, videos and the Internet, are considered immoral and therefore not conducive to the mission of ACU. Students who struggle with addictions to pornography should seek confidential counseling from the Counseling Center.

## **RACISM**

ACU deplors racism and will not tolerate behaviors associated with expressions of hatred or intimidation. Scripture teaches that all people are created in the image of God and have been purchased by the sacrifice of His only Son, Jesus Christ. Attitudes and behaviors acting against these truths are unacceptable and will be subject to the full range of disciplinary action, including dismissal from the university.

## **SMOKING AND SMOKELESS TOBACCO**

Students should be aware of the many physical dangers associated with the use of tobacco products. To maintain a healthy environment and to encourage healthy lifestyles for all students, staff and faculty, use of all tobacco products (including smokeless tobacco) is strictly prohibited on the ACU campus and other university property and at all university-sponsored activities, including sporting events. As part of the university disciplinary response, fines will automatically be assessed for all violations of this policy. Smoking in the residence halls and in University Park is a serious violation of this Handbook. The safety of all residents requires that students and their guests respect this policy. Students should be aware they may be held responsible for the actions of any of their visitors or guests.

## **SOLICITATION**

Privately owned business enterprises may not be operated on campus. The Dean of Students must approve solicitation by any individual student, student group or outside entity, including advertisements, donations, patrons or any other type of financial support for any ACU or outside activity.

## **STALKING**

Stalking is a Category Three violation and will receive the full range of disciplinary response, including dismissal from the university. The university upholds the definition and the law for stalking as found in the Texas Penal Code, Section 42.071. Victims of stalking are highly encouraged to report any concerns to the ACU Police Department. Violations reported to Student Life may result in referral to the ACU Police Department for criminal investigation. Ultimately, it is the victim's decision whether to pursue criminal charges.

## **STUDENT COMPLAINT POLICY**

The university has established formal policies and processes to handle written student complaints and appeals. Information on these policies and the processes for filing a complaint related to academic grades and policies, accuracy of the educational record and appeal of loss of financial aid due to lack of satisfactory academic progress may be found in the catalog ([www.acu.edu/catalog](http://www.acu.edu/catalog)). Information related to appeal of disciplinary decisions, harassment, discrimination, residence hall assignments, the residence hall living/learning experience and parking citations may be found in the Student Handbook and Planner ([www.acu.edu/studentlife](http://www.acu.edu/studentlife)). Information on appeal of nonrenewal of a student athlete's financial aid award is available in the ACU Student Athlete Handbook.

Written student complaints which do not fall in one of the above listed categories are generally forwarded to the Provost's office or the office the Vice President for Student Life for investigation and resolution in conversation between the complainant and the university office or official involved in the complaint. Written complaints that fall in one of the above areas but which are received by the President's office, the Provost's office or the office of the Vice President for Student Life are forwarded to the appropriate university office for investigation and resolution.

## **STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES**

Students are encouraged to participate in the University community through various student organizations and activities. Guidelines for all student organizations and their participants are laid out in the Student Organization Handbook, found online at [www.acu.edu/studentorganizations](http://www.acu.edu/studentorganizations).

## **STUDENT ROLE IN ACU DECISION-MAKING**

ACU students are encouraged to seek involvement in campus committees and organizations, and to participate in the process of helping to continually improve ACU and her efforts to fulfill the mission of educating students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.

Generally, committees formed by the Office of the President, the Office of the Provost, the Office of Alumni Relations, the Office of Student Life, and the college deans have student representatives who serve to offer the voice of the student in institutional decision-making. Moreover, the Students' Association, the Graduate Students' Association and a number of campus organizations offer excellent opportunities for students to be involved in activities and conversation which help to shape the ACU campus culture.

If you are interested in being considered as a member of a specific committee, or you would like to become more significantly involved in student focus groups and other areas of the university that provide on-going feedback for improvement, inquire in the Office of Student Life in McKinzie Hall or the Graduate School.

## **STUDENT SAFETY**

The safety and security of students and of the campus is a priority of ACU. The ACU Police Department is on duty 24 hours a day to help keep you and your property safe. However, as with anywhere, individuals must take reasonable steps to help maintain the overall safety and security of themselves and their property.

The ACU Police Department can be reached anytime at 325-674-2305 or 325-674-2911.

The following tips should be considered to ensure your safety both on and off campus:

- Always be alert and aware of your surroundings.
- For jogging/walking/biking, use the lighted ACU Lunsford Foundation Trail.
- Always avoid jogging or walking alone, particularly after dark.
- Avoid shortcuts, deserted areas, poorly lit streets or alleys.
- Carry your cell phone with you at all times.
- Use a campus Emergency Blue Phone if you need help.
- If you need a campus escort due to safety concerns, call ACU Police at 325-674-2305.

## **THEFT OR LOSS OF PERSONAL PROPERTY**

The university is not liable for the theft or loss of personal items housed in campus facilities or taken on university property. Students are encouraged to take every precaution against theft, such as locking their doors, identifying personal property and carrying private property insurance. Many students are covered for loss or theft by their parents' homeowner's insurance policy. If this is not the case, students are strongly encouraged to consider a renter's insurance policy for protection. Valuable property should be secured before leaving campus for holidays. All reports of lost or stolen property should be initiated with the ACU Police Department.

## WEAPONS

Any firearms, illegal knives, and other prohibited weapons are strictly prohibited on university property, including parking lots, or at any university activity off campus. In addition, city ordinance prohibits the firing of any air gun, including pellet guns and BB guns. Other dangerous weapons not listed may be subject to sanction. If a student is found in violation of this university policy, he or she may also be subject to the university student conduct policy and may be suspended or dismissed.

Under current Texas law, it is a felony to possess or carry a firearm of any kind, an illegal knife, or any other prohibited weapon in any university owned or controlled building, facility, or athletic venue on university property, regardless of whether or not the person has been issued a Texas Concealed Handgun License (CHL). Anyone other than duly licensed peace officers found in any university owned or controlled building, facility, or athletic venue on university property in possession of a firearm or other prohibited weapon may be subject to arrest under current Texas law.

Anyone who is a Concealed Handgun License (CHL) holder should contact the ACU Police Department (325-674-2305 or [www.acu.edu/acupolice](http://www.acu.edu/acupolice)) with any questions to ensure compliance with current Texas laws.

## WITHDRAWAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY

Students deciding to withdraw from the university will initiate this process with the Dean of Students. Appropriate paperwork is located in McKinzie Hall (Room 135). For more information about medical withdrawals, please see below. To withdraw from specific classes, but not from the university, students should consult the Academic Policy section of this Handbook or the University Catalog. Policy regarding refunds of tuition and fees may be found in the FAQ section at [www.acu.edu/registrar](http://www.acu.edu/registrar)

**Voluntary Withdrawal:** Students who experience life situations or serious medical or mental health conditions while enrolled at the university may request a voluntary withdrawal from the university by contacting the Dean of Students. In determining if such is appropriate, the Dean or designee may: (a) consult with appropriate university personnel and/or the student's physician or psychologist; (b) counsel the student regarding the voluntary withdrawal, (c) consult with Provost Office and/or student's advisor or other academic representatives as appropriate; (d) discuss the circumstances with the student's family, as appropriate; and (e) refer the student to appropriate resources for evaluation or treatment. If the Dean or designee determines the voluntary withdrawal is appropriate, he or she will grant the withdrawal and specify any conditions related thereto, including but not limited to any conditions for readmission as described below.

**Interim Emergency Separation:** If a student's behavior poses an immediate and direct threat of harm to themselves or others or seriously disrupts the lawful purposes of the University or a member of the University community, the Dean of Students or designee may restrict the student's access to the university campus, housing, services, or activities, as appropriate, for an interim period. As time permits, the Dean of Students or designee will gather information necessary to determine if an involuntary medical withdrawal is appropriate. Prior to making that decision, every effort will be made by the Dean of Students or designee to meet with the student. Additionally, this interim decision will be communicated to the student in writing. If this is not possible because of a student's absence or the Dean or designee is not able to locate and/or correspond with the student, the Dean or designee may place a Student Life hold on the student's account. The emergency separation will remain in effect until a final decision has been made pursuant to the procedures set out below, unless, before a final decision is made, the Dean of Students or designee determines that the reasons for imposing the interim emergency separation no longer exist or a voluntary medical withdrawal is granted.

**Involuntary Medical Withdrawal:** The Office of Student Life strives to foster an environment that promotes learning, service, and the growth and safety of all members of the ACU community. From time to time, Student Life becomes aware of a student who (1) is seriously disrupting or interfering with this purpose and/or (2) poses an immediate and direct threat of

harm to self or others because of a mental, emotional, or psychological health condition. In those situations, University officials may consider the appropriateness of utilizing the regular student conduct policies and/or handling the matter as a potential medical withdrawal.

Involuntary medical withdrawal is not a substitute for appropriate disciplinary action. A student suffering from a mental disorder who is accused of a disciplinary violation should not be diverted from the disciplinary process unless, as a result of the mental disorder, the student either lacks the capacity to respond to the charges, or did not know the nature and quality of the act in question. Involuntarily medical withdrawal should be reserved for those cases where interim measures are deemed inappropriate or cannot be agreed upon by the student and the University.

When involuntary medical withdrawal is deemed necessary, the case will be referred to the Dean of Students or designee who may arrange for an appropriate review process including: (a) a meeting with the student to provide notice that the process is being initiated and allow the student to share any relevant information, and (b) consultation with an evaluation team to review the case and make appropriate recommendations to the Dean of Students. If this is not possible because of a student's absence or the Dean or designee is not able to locate and/or correspond with the student, the Dean or designee may place a Student Life hold on the student's account and/or move for interim emergency separation as described above.

The evaluation team will normally consist of the university's Students of Concern (SOC) Committee, which includes the Director of the University Counseling Center; the Director of Judicial Affairs; the SOS (Support Our Students) coordinator; the ACU Chief of Police; the Assistant Dean of Residence Life Education and Housing; and the Associate General Counsel. The team may also include faculty members or staff designated by the Dean of Students or designee. In conducting an evaluation, the team will: (a) have access to all records concerning the student, including the results of the professional medical or psychological assessments as permitted by law or by the student's consent; (b) have the right to interview any person who can supply additional information relevant to their analysis; and (c) conduct all of its proceedings in strict confidence and in compliance with state and federal privacy and non-discrimination laws.

All evidence presented to the team will be given due consideration in the decision-making process following the review of all relevant information. The Dean of Students or designee will then make a written determination as to whether the student should be withdrawn or remain at the university, and if so, under what conditions. In the event the student is withdrawn, the Dean of Students or designee may also elect to impose conditions for the student's readmission. A student who fails to cooperate with either the review process or with the conditions set for his or her continuance at the university may be immediately withdrawn, suspended or dismissed.

**Re-enrollment/Readmission Following Withdrawal:** A student who is involuntarily withdrawn, or obtains a voluntary medical withdrawal, may not reenroll or be readmitted to the University before the start of the next semester. In most cases, a Student Life hold may be placed barring the student from registering for future semesters until approval is obtained. The Dean of Students or designee, in collaboration with the University Readmission Committee, must approve the student's re-enrollment or readmission. Approval may be granted only if the Dean, after consulting appropriate university staff and/or the student's physician or mental health professional, determines in his/her professional judgment that the conditions that caused the withdrawal do not pose a direct threat of harm to themselves or others and will not significantly disrupts the ability of other students, faculty or staff to participate in university activities, academic programs, or employment. The Dean may require any documentation or evaluation that he/she deems necessary in making this determination. The student must also meet all the admission and enrollment requirements of the University and of the school or college in which he/se wishes to enroll.

# RESIDENCE LIFE POLICIES

## RESIDENCE LIFE EDUCATION AND HOUSING

Community is the heart and life-blood of Abilene Christian University. Here, community exists in many forms: a diverse community of faith, an extraordinary academic community, and a vibrant residential community. ACU is committed to a residential, co-curricular environment that enhances and deepens the academic and faith communities and overall student experience. In short, residential living is an integral part of the ACU undergraduate experience.

The guiding philosophy of the Department of Residence Life Education and Housing asks each member of the residential community to be treated with respect, dignity, integrity, and compassion. It is our mission that students leave their residential community confident in their relationship with God; as autonomous, independent, community minded individuals who understand their leadership call to the world; and who are able to mediate and develop partnerships in a complex and diverse global community.

Students arrive at ACU from every state and from over 60 nations worldwide, thus encountering or providing a culturally diverse and positive, life-altering experience for each individual. At its best, living in residential community encourages the collision of new ideas, student development, dialogues, and personal growth. Each ACU student is challenged daily to balance his or her personal heritage, life stories, experiences, and beliefs with those of other individuals and the greater community. It is here that students are pushed, stretched, moved, and called to the transformative life of following Christ within the context of community. We take residential living and learning seriously: learning to respond to conflict with humility and maturity, being a good neighbor, developing integrity, taking responsibility for one's actions, and balancing the demands of university life with inherent responsibilities to family, friends, and faith communities. As a Residence Life staff, we walk alongside communities and individual students with an eye towards development, and a commitment to an environment rich with happiness, joy, laughter, and hard work.

Throughout an academic year, hall communities *work* together through service projects, study groups, and hall initiatives; *learn* together alongside faculty and staff through student presentations, programs, experiences, and co-curricular offerings inside and outside the residence halls; and *play* together on hall intramural teams and community development experiences. Each residence hall at ACU has its own unique vibe and distinct living and learning experience. From the three-person suites in Morris Hall; the POD communities in Barret Hall; the central location and campus pulse of McKinize Hall; the historical tradition of Smith/Adams, Edwards, Nelson, and Mabee Halls; the architecture and private rooms of McDonald Hall; to the large community of women in Gardner Hall and Sikes Hall, each hall community has its own personality and individual character. We work hard to match new students to the hall community that will best put them on the path to success.

## RESIDENCE LIFE STAFF, SERVICES, COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

### RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

All first and second year students are required to live in traditional on-campus residence halls. Third-year, fourth-year and graduate students have the opportunity to live in on-campus apartments or off-campus.

**The campus residency requirement is determined by the years out of high school, not the number of college credit hours earned. First-year students who have recently graduated from high school will live in first-year halls. Students who have been out of high school one year will live in second-year halls.**

Exceptions to the residency requirement are as follows:

1. A student's parents are Abilene residents and he or she will live with his or her parents in the family's *primary* residence. Students whose parents own property or a home in Abilene are not exempt from the residency requirement.
2. A student is 21 years of age prior to the beginning of the fall semester.
3. A student has graduated from high school more than two years prior to the beginning of the fall semester. (Home schooled students and high school students enrolled in college classes earning dual credit are not exempt from the residency requirement.)
4. A student is married and submits a marriage license to the Office of Residence Life Education and Housing.
5. A student is enrolled in less than 12 hours at ACU.
6. A student has a documented medical/ADA concern submitted and verified through Alpha Academic Services.

## **RESIDENCE LIFE STAFF**

### **Assistant Dean for Residence Life Education**

The Assistant Dean for Residence Life Education is the chief housing and residence life officer. S/he provides overall direction and leadership for the Department of Residence Life Education and Housing.

### **Residential Services Coordinator**

The Residential Services Coordinator manages the Residence Life office, including coordinating room assignments, customer service, student and staff mentoring, and other critical departmental functions.

### **Resident Directors / Assistant Director for Residence Life**

Resident Directors (RD) are qualified, full-time, professional, live-in staff members. They mentor and lead the residence hall staff, oversee 1-2 residence halls, work closely with the residents, and provide overall leadership for a particular residential community. Additionally, Resident Directors are involved in student mentoring, hall crisis response, hall leadership and community development, student success, student retention, and conflict resolution.

### **Resident Assistants and Assistant Directors**

The residence hall staff fills an integral role in the residential community. Resident Assistants (RA) and Assistant Directors (AD) are student staff members and key ACU student leaders. Their primary responsibility is to assist, mentor, and serve their residents in promoting a Christ-centered residential atmosphere of academic inquiry, personal development, community involvement, student engagement, and overall student success.

### **Student Desk Managers**

All halls are supported by student desk managers who serve in a customer service role within each hall and varying hours throughout the day. While desk managers do not function in a student safety capacity, they are available to assist students with a variety of customer service and support needs. ACU Police officers are responsible for the student safety needs of the campus. They regularly patrol campus facilities and are available 24 hours a day.

## **RESIDENCE LIFE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Accommodations**

Students seeking specific and documented medical or disability accommodations must turn in specific and appropriate documentation to ACU's Alpha Services department (325- 674-2667). Alpha Services will make a recommendation of "reasonable accommodation" to the Assistant Dean of Residence Life Education and except in extraordinary situations, the recommendations of Alpha services will be fully followed.

## **Advertising, Solicitation, and Posting**

Solicitation in the halls is restricted. Door-to-door soliciting is prohibited. ACU organizations wishing to post notices or sell items must have prior, written permission from the RD or Residence Life Office.

## **Appliances**

The following appliances are approved for residence hall use:

- Small, mini-fridge no more than 4.3 cubic feet (one per room)
- Microwave (one per room)
- Television / Game devices (may not be mounted)
- Stereos and stereo equipment (may not be mounted)
- Lamps / alternative lighting (no halogen lamps, please!)
- Coffee maker
- Blender
- Toaster (no toaster ovens)
- Fan
- Hair dryers / curling irons / straighteners
- Automatic shut-off iron
- UL approved extension cords ~ used with caution ~ with one appliance plugged into the cord at a time.
- Surge protectors
- Vacuum cleaner

## **Babysitting**

Babysitting is not permitted in the residence halls, including but not limited to, Treadaway Kids, Wildcat Kids, and Big Brothers and Big Sisters. *No one under the age of 16 is permitted in the residence halls* without the consent of the Assistant Dean for Residence Education or designee, except during Summer Leadership Camps, during pre-approved family open house times, or in limited, case-by-case basis situations.

## **Bed Bugs/Pests**

Across the United States, bed bugs and other pests have begin resurfacing at Colleges and Universities and other areas of high occupancy (i.e. hotels, movie theatres, apartment buildings, and so forth). In the event an ACU student suspects he or she may have come into contact with bed bugs, ACU has an established response that involves a close partnership between the Departments of Residence Life Education & Housing, Physical Resources, the Medical Clinic, and WFF Custodial Services. Students who believe they have come into contact with bed bugs or other pests should immediately contact their RA or Resident Director. All students are expected to comply with the pest response plan, including laundering all bedding and clothes, pest control specialists, and possible relocation in serious cases. On behalf of the student and hall community, ACU works very hard to keep suspected pest issues confidential.

## **Bicycles**

Bicycles should be stored in individual rooms or locked in the bicycle racks near the residence halls, and not in hallways, common spaces, lobbies, or storage rooms. To prevent damage or theft, students are encouraged to take bicycles with them or store them in their room during extended student breaks. Students must provide their own bicycle lock. Bicycles left on or near a residential facility will be discarded soon after the spring semester. ACU is not responsible for discarded bicycles. Additionally, bicycles are permitted only to be stored at or on designated bike racks. Bicycles chained to outdoor furniture, walkway railings, and the like may be removed by ACU.

## **Bunk Beds/Loft Kits**

A limited number of loft kits are available at no charge on a first-come, first-serve basis. Some halls do not have loft kits available. Information regarding loft kits will be made available in the hall assignment notifications and will also be posted on the website. All beds are able to be bunked. For safety purposes, no alterations to beds or home-made lift kits (bed raisers, cinderblocks, etc.) are permitted.

## **Campus Emergency Response**

ACU has implemented ACU Alert, a text-messaging notification system that notifies students in the event of a campus emergency. **All students are strongly encouraged to sign up for the ACU Alert service.** To register for ACU Alert, see [http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/acu\\_police/acualert/](http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/acu_police/acualert/). More information is available at the ACU home page.

## **Check-In**

It is important for students to check into the designated areas in their assigned residence hall at the beginning of each year. Students will be presented with several forms (including the Room Condition Inventory and Student Emergency Form), all of which must be completed before they will receive their keys. *Proper check-in procedure is for the benefit of the student!*

## **Check-Out**

In the event of a room change or withdrawal, as well as move out at the end of the year, it is extremely important that each resident check-out with the appropriate residence life staff member. Students should schedule a time to inventory the condition of the room, sign the checkout form, return the keys, and move-out of the room. Students who do not properly follow the check-out procedure will be fined. Additionally, students will be held responsible for any room damages or custodial requirements not reported on the Room Condition Inventory during check-in. *Proper check-out procedure is for the benefit of the student!*

## **Computer Services**

All halls are equipped with wireless capabilities. Some halls also feature spaces with computers for students' use; academic uses will always take priority over personal use. Students are asked to be responsible in their computer use and to respect the Christian community of which they are a part. Students with computer or technology issues should contact Team 55 (ext. 5555). All halls have centralized printers for student use. Students may print from their rooms to the hall printers. More information is provided in the Town Hall meeting at the beginning of the year. Computers are available for student use in academic buildings, the Learning Commons, and the Campus Center.

## **Curfew**

ACU takes a developmental approach to residential curfew. As members of the residential community, all first-year residents will have curfew Sunday through Thursday. Specific times and dates will be posted in each residence hall. Students who violate residential curfew may be subject to fines and/or disciplinary consequences. Second-year residents do not have curfew.

Sophomore residents are expected to live in the residence hall full-time. Students found not living in the residence halls may be subject to fines and other appropriate sanctions, including being dropped to part time student status.

## **Damages and Repairs**

Students are expected to respect their rooms and hall common spaces as their home. For purposes of sanitation and safety, students are encouraged to regularly clean their rooms, linens, and private bathrooms. Students are encouraged to bring their own vacuums, as ACU does not provide them for the halls.

Damage and repair charges to residence halls or ACU property will be charged to individual students, including labor, repair, and/or replacement charges. In the event that large-scale damage occurs, groups of students or the entire residential community may be fined. Additionally, depending on the type and/or extent of the damage, punitive fines may also be applied above and beyond the actual cost of the damage.

Students should not use nails, screws, carpet tape, or any other decorating tool that damages walls or other surfaces. “Plasti-tack” is recommended for light-weight decorations. The use of paint, wallpaper, or fabric to cover walls is not permitted.

### **Entry, Search and Seizure, & Administrative Action**

Refer to the ‘Administrative Entry, Search and Seizure’ section of the General University Policies of this Handbook.

In rare cases, students who leave the residence hall and who do not respond to institutional communication may have their locks changed on their hall door in order to encourage them to meet with the appropriate staff. Changing the locks is generally a last-resort administrative action by the part of the university. Students will be notified via email before locks are changed. ACU is not responsible for items left beyond 30 days (see **STORAGE** section below). Students may be charged a re-key fee in the event their locks are changed.

### **Fire**

Any individual who sets a fire (commits arson) on or near a university building will be subject to immediate disciplinary sanctions, including, but not limited to suspension, and a minimum \$250 fine. Individuals may be charged for repairing any damage caused by the fire, and additionally may be subject to prosecution in criminal court.

### **Fire Evacuation Procedures**

Emergency evacuation procedures are posted in every residence hall and will be discussed in all-hall meetings.

In conjunction with the Department of Physical Resources and The Office of Risk Management, Residence Halls may conduct one fire drill each semester. All fire alarms /drills should be treated as an actual fire and the building must be evacuated immediately. Students who fail to evacuate during a fire alarm sounding or who tamper with fire control measures (such as false alarms, smoke alarms, pull stations, warning lights and horns, fire extinguishers, sprinkler systems) will be subject to disciplinary sanctions and possible referral to civil authorities. After an evacuation, students are not to return to the building until the RD or designee has deemed it safe to do so.

### **Furniture and Equipment**

University furnishings in the resident’s room should not be dismantled or removed. All university provided furnishings must remain in the resident’s rooms at all times, including loft kits. Common space furniture must remain in its area of designated use. Removal or relocation of any of these items can be considered theft and may be handled by a fine and/or replacement charges. Each year, repairing and replacing residence hall furniture and equipment is done at considerable cost to the department of Residence Life and the university. In an effort to keep housing costs as minimal as possible, it is expected that students be good stewards of all furniture and hall equipment.

### **Grievance Policy**

Students with concerns regarding their residence hall living/learning experience should first contact their RA or AD for a solution or remedy to their concerns. If the RA or AD is unable to assist them, students should contact their hall RD. If the RD is unable to assist with their concerns, students are encouraged to contact the Assistant Dean for Residence Education, the Assistant Director of Residence Life, or the Residential Services Coordinator for help and assistance.

### **Guests and Visitors**

For emergency and safety reasons, overnight guests must be registered with the RD. In accordance with the campus visitation policies, guests must be the same gender of the resident. Guests may stay a maximum of *three nights*, including family members, except in situations approved by the Assistant Dean for Residence Life Education or designee. Guests are expected to abide by all campus policies and the host student assumes responsibility for the actions of their guests. Cars of visitors should be registered with ACU Police Department.

## Hall-to-Hall Changes

As hall communities are intentionally developed and space is very limited, **hall-to-hall changes are very, very rarely processed during the academic year.** In extraordinary situations (i.e. medical/ADA accommodations, injury, etc.), students may appeal this policy and submit a written request of appeal to their Resident Director or the Assistant Dean for Residence Life Education.

Abilene Christian University reserves the right to relocate students to a different room or hall assignment as needed. Room and/or hall relocation changes may be made by the RD, senior Residence Life staff, the Director of Judicial Affairs, the Associate Vice-President for Student Life, or the Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students.

## Hall Safety and Security

All halls are locked, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Students must have their student ID in order to gain entrance to their hall. Residence hall guests need to arrange with their host to meet them at the hall entrance. Non-residents must leave the common areas or lobbies of a building at 10:00 p.m. unless they are accompanied by a resident of the hall. All members of the opposite gender must leave the lobbies and common areas at curfew in the freshman halls. All halls are supported at varying hours by student desk managers who serve in a customer service role in each hall. While desk managers do not function in a student safety capacity, they are available to assist students with a variety of customer service needs. In the event a desk manager is not on duty, students are to call the number(s) posted at the desk manager station or contact their RA for assistance. ACU Police officers are responsible for the student safety needs of the campus. They regularly patrol campus facilities and are available 24 hours a day. **All students are strongly encouraged to sign up for the ACU Alert service.** To register for ACU Alert, see [http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/acu\\_police/acualert/](http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/acu_police/acualert/)). More information is available at the ACU home page.

## Keys

Residents should carry their room keys and ACU ID cards for their halls when they leave their rooms. ACU ID cards are required for hall access. Residents should not open hall doors for nonresidents wishing to enter the hall. Keys are the responsibility of the resident and rooms should be locked *each time a student leaves their room.* A resident who is locked out of their room should immediately contact their RA or the Desk Manager. Students will receive one free un-lock per semester. Each additional un-lock will cost \$30. A lost key should be immediately reported to the RD. To aid in the security of the hall, a lost key will result in a non-refundable \$35 charge to re-key the lock. Any student found to have duplicate keys or unauthorized keys will be fined to re-key the lock, and subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, suspension.

## Laundry

Commercial washers and dryers are available to hall residents *free of charge.* All problems with laundry equipment or facilities should be reported in accordance with the hall's maintenance request policy. ***The washers are energy-efficient; please follow posted signs for use so as to avoid damage to clothes and equipment.*** Students are prohibited from doing laundry for their off-campus friends or non-residents. Students who do so may be subject to a fine.

## Leases

A signed lease will not be considered in the off-campus petition process. It is strongly recommended that students not commit to an outside housing or apartment lease – including University Park apartments - before being approved to live in off-campus housing by the Office of Residence Life Education and Housing.

## Open House

Visitation to resident rooms by members of the opposite gender is limited to times of recognized hall open house. Open house policies will be posted in each hall and discussed at Town Hall meetings. All visitors must be registered at the front desk and be escorted by a resident. For privacy and safety concerns, it is important that all members of the residential community acknowledge and support these policies.

## **Pets**

While we do love animals, unfortunately pets are not allowed in the residence halls. This includes reptiles, fish, birds, dogs, cats, rodents, insects, or any animal. Bringing pets into a residential facility at any time may result in a \$100 fine for the first offense, plus any additional cleaning fees incurred. Repeat incidents will lead to larger fines, student removal from halls, and other possible disciplinary responses.

## **Prohibited Items/Actions**

The following items/actions are prohibited in ACU residence halls, rooms, and common spaces:

- Alcoholic beverages, containers, and promotional items (including posters or decorative shot glasses)
- Antennas attached to windows or outside of buildings
- Athletic activities (outside of official Residence Life programs) including, but not limited to: aerobics, running, throwing, bouncing, or kicking of objects; and the use of golf clubs, lacrosse sticks, footballs, etc.
- Babysitting or childcare
- Blocking and/or propping open entrance, exit, or fire doors, including stairwells.
- Ceiling or wall alterations such as ceiling fans, mounting light fixtures, decorations, lamps, flat screen TVs, shelving, removal of ceiling tiles, etc.
- Cooking appliances designed for frying or with open heating elements
- Construction of any kind
- Controlled and/or illegal substances, designer/club drugs, prescription drugs written for another individual
- Fabric or flammable material attached to the ceiling
- Fighting; including fisticuffs, having cream fights, powder fights, water balloons, etc.
- Fire-arms, ammunition and other weapons, including BB guns, pellet pistols, air rifles, dart boards and darts, nunchucks, throwing stars, power-bows and arrows, sling shots, blow guns, paint ball guns, knives, and other similar items
- Fireworks, including smoke bombs and firecrackers
- George Forman grills, griddles, or other open element cooking utensils.
- Jumping / climbing out of windows
- Mopeds, motorcycles, flammable fuel, gas engines
- Multi-plugs or power-strips, except for computers
- Open flames such as candles, incense, matches, lighters, etc.
- Other items at RD discretion
- Pets
- Sexually explicit or inappropriate material or behavior, including but not limited to movies, posters, print materials, music, art, displays of profanity, or other potentially offensive, insulting, or provoking materials that are not consistent with the general spirit and Christian message of ACU
- Sleeper sofas or hide-a-beds
- Smoking
- Space heaters
- Street signs of any kind
- Throwing anything out of a roof or window
- Toaster Ovens
- Torch lights/spider lights

## Repairs and Maintenance

Physical Resources will repair electrical and plumbing problems, broken windows, air conditioners, screens, locks, etc. The RD will explain the maintenance request policy at the Town Hall meeting at the beginning of the year. It is the student's responsibility to report all maintenance requests as soon as possible. If a room or building emergency occurs, students should contact the residence hall staff immediately. Physical Resources staff may enter a student's room at any time to address issues of building maintenance or repair. Students may be responsible for damages, unclogging drains (i.e. dumping bowls of noodles or cereal down the sink), and major repairs due to student negligence or accident. It is important to note that only members of our physical resources team are permitted to make repairs in the residence halls. Students, their parents, or others are not able to make hall repairs.

## Room Assignments

The housing office seeks to accommodate requests for housing, but reserves the right to determine and change room and roommate assignments. We work hard to accommodate hall and roommate requests and in matching "potluck" students. Our ability to accommodate housing requests is often contingent on class size and residence hall space. Depending on incoming class sizes, students may be asked to live in three person suites, freshmen in sophomore halls (and vice-versa), in common spaces, and so forth. Consistency and fairness is paramount in the room assignment process. It is also important to note that between semesters we do not grant hall-to-hall changes except in rare and extraordinary situations. The Assistant Dean of Residence Life Education must approve hall-to-hall changes.

Students seeking specific and documented medical or disability accommodations must turn in specific and appropriate documentation to ACU's Alpha Services department (325- 674-2667). Alpha Services will make a recommendation of "reasonable accommodation" to the Assistant Dean of Residence Life Education. Except in extraordinary situations, the recommendations of Alpha services will be fully followed.

## Room and Roommate Changes

It is a primary mission of Residence Life to equip residents with the tools and experiences necessary to live, study, and worship in close community with others. The majority of the residence halls are double or triple occupancy and, as can be expected, roommate conflicts and disagreements do arise on occasion. The Office of Residence Life Education and Housing has very purposeful and developmental procedures for addressing these concerns. Communication is key. It is the *responsibility of the student* to notify the appropriate staff of concerns. Initially students who feel that they are not able to work out roommate disagreements should notify their RA for assistance. If the RA is unable to mediate the conflict, the roommates will meet with the RD for conflict resolution. Except in situations as approved by the RD or the Assistant Dean for Residence Life Education, students will not be permitted to change roommates until the semester break. Students initiating changes on their own will be subject to fines and relocation at the discretion of the RD or Residence Life staff. Additionally, the student initiating the change will likely be required to relocate.

ACU students come from a variety of backgrounds; racial, ethnic, cultural, and national origins, religious heritages, and other diverse life circumstances. Room changes or roommate reassignment requests based upon any of these factors will not be approved.

## Storage

Residence Life allows residents to keep their belongings in the residence hall rooms over long breaks (i.e. Fall Break, Thanksgiving, Christmas Break, Spring Break) but does not offer storage over summer breaks. Items left over the summer break may be given away, donated to local charities, or sold in residence hall garage sales. The university will in no way be held responsible for any property left on the premises by residents who have moved out of the hall.

Students not returning to ACU after the Fall or Spring term will have 30 days after the last day of the semester to move out their belongings. ACU will not pack and mail a student's belongings; students are responsible for their own items. Items left longer than 30 days may be given away or donated to local charities. ACU is not liable for items left in the residence halls.

## **Team 55**

Team 55 serves the ACU community by assisting with technological issues, including telephone, voicemail, personal computer, printers, a computer in a lab or community learning space, iPhones, etc. They can be reached at ext. 5555.

### **Theft**

Theft is one of the most destructive and divisive occurrences among members of a residential community. Communities are based on trust, respect, and mutual responsibility. A thief undermines community living at its very core. Theft of student property is not tolerated in any shape or form and may result in removal from campus housing on a first occurrence, as well as additional disciplinary sanctions.

In order to minimize the possibility of theft, residents should take the following precautions:

- Room doors should be locked any time a resident is not in the room, including those times he/she is to be gone for only a brief time.
- Residents should keep their keys with them at all times. Even if a resident expects his/her roommate to remain in the room, he/she should take their key.
- Resident doors should be locked when residents are asleep.
- Valuables should be locked up and kept out of sight.
- Residents should know their neighbors and report any suspicious activities or people to an RA or their RD.

### **Quiet Hours**

The chief objective of Residence Life is to support and further ACU's academic mission. As such, quiet hours will be strictly enforced. Common spaces are available in each residence hall for students to study, watch TV, or hang out. Quiet hours are discussed in Town Hall meetings and will be posted in residence halls.

### **Tornado and other Weather Emergencies**

During severe weather alerts (watches and warnings), residents should monitor television and radio reports, watch for the ACU Alert (to register for ACU Alert, see [http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/acu\\_police/acualert/](http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/acu_police/acualert/)), and take reasonable precautions. Each resident should have a flashlight. Residence hall staff members are educated for response in certain weather related emergencies. In the event a weather related emergency arises, students are to respond immediately to hall staff safety instructions for their particular hall. These instructions are discussed at all Town Hall meetings and in various drills through out the semester. Residence Life staff are also available for further clarification or discussion.

### **Town Hall and Floor Meetings**

Safety, security, hall announcements, and other important topics are discussed at Town Hall and periodic floor meetings. Residents are required to attend all scheduled meetings and are responsible for the information disseminated. A resident who has a schedule conflict with a floor/hall meeting should inform his/her RA as soon as possible and arrange a time to meet individually with the RD to receive the important information.