



# **HPU Student Handbook**

**2025-2026**



## **Student Handbook 2025 - 2026**

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1000 Fisk Street  
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(325) 649-8017 - office  
[studentexperience@hputx.edu](mailto:studentexperience@hputx.edu)  
[www.hputx.edu](http://www.hputx.edu)

*The online version of the Student Handbook will be the official version.*

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## CAMPUS PHONE NUMBERS

*For all campus departments, dial (325) 649 followed by the extension.*

Academic Advising (Center for Student Success, Walker Memorial Library, 2nd floor).....	Ext. 8200
Admissions (Newbury Family Welcome Center).....	Ext. 8020
Athletics (McCullough Athletic Center).....	Ext. 8100
Baptist Student Ministry (The Hub at the Quinn House).....	Ext. 8319
Cashier/Student Accounts (Business Office, Packer Admin. Bldg.-2 <sup>nd</sup> floor).....	Ext. 8013
Calendar of Events (University Services, Mabee University Center-2 <sup>nd</sup> floor).....	Ext. 8054
Chapel (Student Experience, Mabee University Center-2 <sup>nd</sup> floor).....	Ext. 8017
Career Services (Mabee University Center, 2nd floor).....	Ext. 8818
Christian Service/Vocation (Christian Studies, Faith and Life Leadership Center).....	Ext. 8403
Copy Center & Mailroom (Mabee University Center).....	Ext. 8050
Counseling (Health Services Office, Jennings B Pod).....	Ext. 8193
Department of Public Safety.....	Ext. 8609
Financial Aid (Packer Admin. Bldg.-1 <sup>st</sup> floor).....	Ext. 8015
Graduation (Registrar’s Office, Packer Admin. Bldg.-2 <sup>nd</sup> floor).....	Ext. 8011
Housing/Residence Life (Student Experience, Mabee University Center-2 <sup>nd</sup> floor).....	Ext. 8017
Identification Cards (Student Experience, Mabee University Center, 2nd Floor).....	Ext. 8017
Information Technology Services (Packer Admin. Bldg.—1st floor).....	Ext. 8040
International Students (Newbury Welcome Center).....	Ext. 8027
Library (Walker Memorial Library).....	Ext. 8602
Maintenance (Facilities Administrative Offices).....	Ext. 8607
Maintenance (After-Hours Emergency).....	Ext. 8609
Publications (Marketing/Communication, Office of Advancement).....	Ext. 8009
Scholarships (Financial Aid Office, Packer Admin Bldg.-1 <sup>st</sup> floor).....	Ext. 8015
Student Activities (Student Experience, Mabee University Center, 2nd Floor).....	Ext. 8305
Student Conduct (Student Experience, Mabee University Center-2 <sup>nd</sup> floor).....	Ext. 8017
Student Organizations (Student Experience, Mabee University Center, 2nd Floor).....	Ext. 8305
Student Experience (Mabee University Center, 2nd Floor).....	Ext. 8017
Testing, Academic (Center for Student Success, Walker Memorial Library, 2nd floor).....	Ext. 8620
Transcripts (Registrar’s Office, Packer Admin. Bldg.-2 <sup>nd</sup> floor).....	Ext. 8011
Tutoring (Center for Student Success, Walker Memorial Library, 2nd floor).....	Ext. 8200
University Nurse (Health Services Office, Jennings Pod B).....	Ext. 8601
School of Business.....	Ext. 8704
School of Christian Studies.....	Ext. 8403
School of Education.....	Ext. 8203
School of Humanities.....	Ext. 8702
School of Music and Fine Arts.....	Ext. 8500
School of Nursing.....	Ext. 8182
School of Science and Mathematics.....	Ext. 8400
El Paso Center.....	915-533-8500
New Braunfels Center.....	830-629-2366

# HOWARD PAYNE UNIVERSITY

Welcome to the Howard Payne family! We value your presence on campus and desire your experience at HPU to be intellectually challenging, provide personal and spiritual growth through fellowship and worship, and develop strong servant leadership qualities. We are truly glad you are here.

## MISSION, VISION, & CORE VALUES

### Mission Statement

Howard Payne University is a Christ-centered academic community dedicated to excellence by developing and equipping the whole person for intellectual inquiry, personal and professional integrity, and service to God and humanity. (Approved by the Howard Payne University Board of Trustees, July 27, 2010)

### Vision Statement

Howard Payne University aspires to be a premier Christian university, intentionally engaging the life of the mind and the life of the spirit.

### Core Values

- **Centered on Christ**  
*cf. Col. 3:17; Matt. 7:2*
- **Focused on Community**  
*cf. Eph. 4:4–6; 1 Pet. 3:8*
- **Called to Service**  
*cf. Mark 10:45; Phil. 2:3–5*
- **Committed to Excellence**  
*cf. Gen. 1:31; 1 Cor. 9:24*
- **Dedicated to Stewardship**  
*cf. Gen. 2:15; 1 Pet. 4:10*

### Introduction

The **Student Handbook** serves as your guide to understanding the standards, policies, and expectations that govern life within the Howard Payne University (HPU) community. This handbook applies to all students enrolled in courses through HPU, including undergraduate, graduate, online, and dual credit students at all locations. It also outlines policies for students representing HPU off campus and applies to individuals visiting or working on any HPU campus.

By enrolling at Howard Payne University, students agree to abide by all policies and procedures outlined in this handbook and the HPU catalog. It is the responsibility of each student to become familiar with these expectations and to uphold the standards set forth.

As a Christ-centered institution affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT), HPU's policies and practices are grounded in our faith. These policies are informed by Scripture and BGCT-affirmed documents, ensuring that our shared beliefs guide the life and operations of the university community.

While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this handbook, it is not intended to serve as a binding contract. This is a living document, subject to updates as needed to reflect the evolving needs of our campus community. The university communicates changes through various channels. Students are expected to check their HPU email and myGateway regularly, as important updates and deadlines—some of which may require action—will be shared through these tools.

**Special Note:** Howard Payne University reserves the right to modify policies, processes, and operations in response to health and safety concerns that affect HPU campuses or the surrounding communities. These adjustments may include, but are not limited to, changes to the academic calendar, instructional delivery methods, and housing arrangements. Notifications regarding such changes will be communicated through HPU email and/or myGateway.

HPU has implemented specific health and safety policies, procedures, and protocols that apply to all students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors. Compliance with these guidelines is expected; failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

## ***Curriculum***

The university's educational programs are presented to residential, commuting, and online students at Brownwood's main campus, as well as to commuting students in New Braunfels and El Paso, Texas. Instructional programs are offered through traditional face-to-face lectures, laboratory experiences, and electronically. The university offers distance learning programs in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) and the Master of Education – Sports, Wellness, and Leadership (M.Ed.).

Various academic programs at Howard Payne University incorporate service learning, which often includes a public outreach component tailored to individual programs. The university is not a research institution and does not include research in its Mission Statement.

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## ***Student Body***

HPU strives to have a diverse student body. While the university primarily recruits students from Texas and the Southwest, the student body comprises men and women from many states and other countries. The university welcomes students from diverse socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds, including traditional and non-traditional students with varied academic interests and abilities.

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## ***Faculty***

In its pursuit of excellence in academic endeavors, the university employs faculty who exemplify a commitment to Christian ideals and are dedicated to seeking and disseminating truth. HPU seeks gifted teachers from throughout the United States and the world who are dedicated to teaching, advising in a professional context, serving the university's communities and its local area, and continuing to grow as scholars and teachers.

Howard Payne University is a Christian liberal arts institution that prides itself on fostering a close-knit community where personal connections are valued. The faculty and staff truly invest in students' success through teaching, learning, and service.

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## ***Governance***

The university is affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT), which elects a portion of the university's Trustees. The university and the BGCT collaborate in a spirit of voluntary cooperation. Historically, the BGCT has supported, enhanced, and facilitated the university's work and mission, while the

university's governance remains under the authority of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees employs the president, who is responsible for the university's operation.

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## ***History***

Howard Payne College was founded by the Pecan Valley Baptist Association at Indian Creek, Texas, on June 20, 1889. The two men considered the college's founders are John D. Robnett, pastor of First Baptist Church in Brownwood, and Noah T. Byars, whose blacksmith shop was the location where Texas declared her independence on March 2, 1836. Both men were memorialized in 1998 when Texas State Historical Markers were placed in Old Main Park.

Robnett served as president of the first Board of Trustees. During the summer of 1889, he worked diligently to raise funds for the school. While visiting Missouri in August, he secured a generous gift from his brother-in-law, Edward Howard Payne. Prior to November 1, 1889, the Board of Trustees resolved to name the school Howard Payne College in his honor.

The first session began on September 16, 1890, with A. J. Emerson as president and a faculty of twelve. A separate preparatory department provided instruction below the freshman level. The school granted its first academic degree in 1895 and continued as a degree-conferring institution until 1900. From 1900 to 1914, it operated with junior college status as a member of the Baptist correlated system of schools. In 1914, it returned to senior college status.

In 1953, Daniel Baker College—originally a Presbyterian institution that became the Episcopal College of the Southwest in 1950—was consolidated with Howard Payne. The Guy D. Newman Honors Academy, the Dr. Guy D. Newman Hall of American Ideals, and the Bettie and Robert Girling Center for Social Justice now stand on the original Daniel Baker campus.

In 1974, Howard Payne College became Howard Payne University upon approval by the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

© Dr. Robert G. Mangrum  
HPU University Historian

### *History – El Paso Center*

The history of HPU’s El Paso Center began with a partnership between Howard Payne University in Brownwood and the International Baptist Bible Institute (IBBI). IBBI was founded in El Paso in January 1973 to offer introductory Bible training courses at the certificate and diploma levels. It was established to meet the need for theological education in the region and was sponsored by several Christian men in the city, along with Immanuel Baptist Church.

Years later, the IBBI Board of Trustees recognized that accredited higher education was the next step in preparing individuals called to ministry. After brief partnerships with other universities, a pivotal collaboration was formed in 1991 when IBBI partnered with Howard Payne University in Brownwood. By July 1992, Dr. Glenn Saul was appointed as the first director of the HPU El Paso Center. Dr. Saul brought years of experience from both pastoral ministry and teaching, primarily at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.

As part of the partnership, HPU agreed to accept transfer credits from IBBI for select Bible courses, allowing students to pursue a degree through HPU while building on their previous theological training.

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### *History – New Braunfels Center*

The New Braunfels Center was established through a partnership between Howard Payne University and the Veramendi Development in 2011. Craig Hall of Veramendi contacted Dr. Brad Johnson to explore HPU’s interest in establishing a presence within the large-scale Veramendi project. HPU President Dr. Bill Ellis and Dr. Johnson viewed the opportunity as an innovative way to bring HPU’s Christ-centered education to the Austin-San Antonio corridor.

In 2012, Dr. Dale Meinecke and his wife, Christy, relocated to New Braunfels and helped launch the center. The first classes were offered in the fall of 2012 at the New Braunfels High School library. After a period of growth, HPU alumnus and local business owner Mr. Bob Knoll invited the center to relocate to a building he owned. Following extensive renovations, the New Braunfels Center relocated to its new, more spacious facility, which now houses both classrooms and administrative offices.

Fulfilling its original vision, HPU opened a new facility in the Veramendi Development. Dr. Cynthia Ferguson joined the university in the fall of 2023 and currently serves as Assistant Vice President, leading the center’s ongoing efforts.

The New Braunfels Center offers dual credit courses to area high schools, as well as undergraduate degrees in health science, business, criminal justice, Christian studies, general studies, and psychology. Additionally, the center offers graduate degrees in Business Administration, Sport Wellness Leadership, and Ministry.

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### *University Colors*

Navy Blue and Old Gold

### *Alma Mater*

High above old bayou’s waters, out on Center’s heights,  
Stands our noble Alma Mater, towering in her might.  
Keep her colors ever floating, sing her praises due.  
Hail to thee, our Alma Mater; hail the gold and blue.  
Keep her colors ever floating, sing her praises due.  
Hail to thee, our Alma Mater; hail the gold and blue.

### *Fight Song*

Simmons’ got some Cowboys we are going to beat —  
Howard Payne’s got some Jackets who’ve never met defeat.  
And when we get together, there’s gonna be a scrap —  
We’ll wipe those Cowboys right off the map!  
We’re gonna ramble, ramble —  
Ramble up and down and all around the town.  
We’re gonna ramble, ramble —  
Ramble ’til those Jackets get ’em down!

### *Traditions*

Howard Payne University is blessed with a rich heritage and many cherished traditions. These traditions help define the university’s distinct personality and foster a strong sense of community and school spirit. Notable traditions include:

- The University community faces Old Main Park whenever the Alma Mater is played or sung.
- Friendliness on campus is so widespread and spontaneous that it is widely recognized as one of Howard Payne’s most memorable traditions.
- **Chime In** is a ceremony held during Jacket Journey, just before the start of the fall semester, in which new students are prayerfully welcomed into the University family.
- **Chime Out** is a ceremony in which seniors pass a garland representing responsibility to junior class members. It takes place on Friday night before the spring semester begins.
- **Homecoming** (Fall)

- **President's Reception for New Students**
- **Campus Revival/Encounter Week** (Fall)
- **Spring Sing** (Spring)
- **Jacket Journey** (Fall & Spring)

## **THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords eligible students certain rights with respect to their education records. An "eligible student" under FERPA is a student who is 18 years of age or older or who attends a postsecondary institution. These rights include:

- *The right to inspect and review their education records within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access.*

Students should submit written requests to the Office of the Registrar, clearly identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. The office staff will arrange access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be reviewed. If the Office of the Registrar does not maintain the records, the student will be informed of the correct university official to whom the request should be directed.

- *The right to request the amendment of education records the student believes are inaccurate or misleading.*

Students who wish to request an amendment should write to the Office of the Registrar, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed and explaining why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the University decides not to amend the record as requested, it will notify the student in writing and inform them of their right to a hearing regarding the request. Additional information about the hearing procedures will be provided at that time.

- *The right to provide written consent before the University discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except where FERPA allows disclosure without consent.*

One such exception is disclosure to school officials with a legitimate educational interest. A school official is:

- a person employed by the university in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff role (including law enforcement and health personnel);

- a person or company contracted by the university (e.g., an attorney, auditor, or collection agent);
- a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or
- a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another official in performing their duties.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if they need to review an education record to fulfill their professional responsibilities.

The University may also disclose education records to officials at another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. FERPA requires the university to make a reasonable attempt to notify students of such disclosures unless stated otherwise in the annual FERPA notice.

- *The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education regarding alleged failures by the University to comply with FERPA.*

### **Contact Information:**

Student Privacy Policy Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

### **Directory Information**

FERPA allows institutions to disclose information classified as "directory information" without a student's written consent. At Howard Payne University, directory information includes:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Parent's or guardian's name
- Spouse's name
- Marital status
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Current enrollment status (full-time/part-time)
- Classification
- Receipt or non-receipt of a degree
- Academic honors (e.g., Dean's List, honor roll)
- Participation in officially recognized sports and activities
- Physical characteristics (height, weight for athletes)

- Date and place of birth

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### ***Permitted Disclosures Without Consent***

FERPA allows disclosure of PII without student consent in the following situations:

- To school officials with a legitimate educational interest
- To federal, state, or local authorities conducting audits or evaluations of compliance
- In connection with financial aid (including Veterans' benefits)
- To organizations conducting educational studies on behalf of the institution
- To accrediting organizations
- To parents of a dependent student, as defined by IRS guidelines
- To comply with judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas
- In health or safety emergencies
- When the information is classified as directory information
- To an alleged victim regarding the final results of disciplinary proceedings involving certain crimes
- To the general public, if the student is an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or non-forcible sex offense and has violated institutional policies
- To parents regarding violations of laws or policies on alcohol or controlled substances, if the student is under 21

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### ***Additional FERPA Guidelines***

FERPA protections apply to currently or formerly enrolled students, regardless of age or parental dependency status. Applicants who have not yet enrolled and deceased students are not covered under FERPA.

Parents may access records of a student deemed a dependent for tax purposes by submitting a copy of their most recent federal tax return to the Office of the Registrar.

Education records are broadly defined as any record maintained by the university that contains information personally identifiable to a student. This includes records in any form or medium (e.g., handwritten, printed, digital, audiovisual) and includes transcripts or records from previously attended schools.

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### ***Records Not Defined as Education Records***

The following records are not considered education records under FERPA:

- Private notes maintained by school officials not accessible to others
- Campus security or law enforcement records used exclusively for law enforcement purposes
- Employment records (unless contingent on student status)
- Medical or psychological treatment records used solely for treatment purposes
- Alumni records that pertain to information collected after a student is no longer enrolled

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### ***Transcript Requests***

Students may request official transcripts through HPU's authorized vendor, Parchment, or by submitting a signed request to the Office of the Registrar. The Transcript Request Form is available in the Registrar's Office or on the HPU website. Email requests without a signature are not accepted; however, scanned, signed forms sent via email are acceptable.

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The same confidentiality principles apply to both paper and electronic education records.

For more information on FERPA, visit the U.S. Department of Education's FERPA website: <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/>

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### **Contact the Office of the Registrar:**

Howard Payne University  
Office of the Registrar  
1000 Fisk Street  
Brownwood, TX 76801  
Phone: 325-649-8011  
Fax: 325-649-8909

# **POLICY AGAINST DISCRIMINATION & HARASSMENT**

Howard Payne University is committed to providing a work and educational environment free of Discrimination and Harassment. Howard Payne University is committed to equal opportunity in education and employment. The University does not illegally discriminate or tolerate Discrimination or Harassment against individuals based on race, color, sex/gender (except where gender is a bona fide occupational qualification), ethnic or national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or (collectively, "Protected Status") in its employment, admissions, and/or education programs and activities.

## **I. Statement of Values**

The University affirms all members of the University's Community are created in the image of God and, therefore, should be treated with dignity and respect. The University does not unlawfully discriminate based on any status or condition protected by applicable federal or state law. Further, the University respects the inherent worth of each member of the University community and does not tolerate conduct that fosters any form of harassment. With a Biblical foundation of human dignity and worth, the University approaches discrimination issues as acts that may be potential violations of the law and policy and as conduct contrary to Christian scripture. Thus, discrimination is harmful not only to the individuals involved but also undermines the University's mission statement and core values.

Per the University's mission and core values, the U.S. Department of Education has granted the University exemptions from specific provisions of Title IX based on the religious tenets of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. The university may act under these tenets to resolve complaints under this policy. The University may discriminate based on religion in employment to fulfill its mission, and preference may be given to Baptists.

## **II. Scope**

A. Generally, this Policy applies to prohibited conduct in all University education programs and activities and to all participants in such education programs and activities, including administrators, faculty, staff, students, volunteers, contractors, and guests. This policy covers prohibited conduct that occurs on campus, in connection with an official University program or activity (regardless

of location), and off-campus conduct when the conduct could deny or limit a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the University's programs and activities or when the University, in its sole discretion, has an identifiable interest in the off-campus conduct.

## **B. Interaction with University Title IX**

All allegations of sex discrimination that rise to the level of sexual harassment occurring within the University's education programs and activities as defined by the University's Title IX Policy are handled exclusively according to the procedures outlined. All other acts of discrimination, including sexual discrimination that do not rise to the level of sexual harassment occurring within the University's education programs and activities as defined by the University's Title IX Policy, are handled according to the Policy Against Discrimination and Harassment.

## **III. Definitions of Prohibited Conduct**

The following are categories of conduct prohibited by this policy ("Prohibited Conduct") and may result in disciplinary action when committed by University employees or students.

- A. "Discrimination" is conduct directed at a specific individual or a group of identifiable individuals that subjects the individual or group to treatment that adversely affects their education or employment because of their Protected Status.
- B. "Harassment" as used in this policy is verbal and/or physical conduct (i) that is severe or pervasive, (ii) that is based on an individual's protected status, and (iii) that unreasonably interferes with the individual's work or academic activities, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive University environment.
- C. "Other Sexual Harassment" as used in this policy means unwelcome, sex-based verbal or physical conduct that:
  - 1. in the employment context, unreasonably interferes with a person's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment; or,
  - 2. in the education context, is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct interferes with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the University's educational programs or activities. Other

sexual harassment does not include allegations of sex discrimination, which rise to the level of sexual harassment occurring within the University's education programs and activities as defined by the University's Title IX Policy.

- D. "Sexual Exploitation" occurs when a person takes non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for his/her benefit or to benefit anyone other than the affected individual, and that behavior does not otherwise constitute other prohibited conduct.

Examples of Sexual Exploitation include, but are not limited to:

1. causing or attempting to cause the incapacitation of another individual for sexual purposes;
  2. electronically recording, videoing, photographing, or transmitting sexual sounds or images of another individual without their consent;
  3. allowing a third party to observe sexual acts without all parties' consent;
  4. engaging in voyeurism (e.g., watching private sexual activity without the Consent of the participants or viewing another person's intimate parts (including genitalia, breasts, or buttocks) in a place where that person would have a reasonable expectation of privacy); or
  5. knowingly exposing another individual to a sexually transmitted disease and/or infection or HIV.
- E. "Other Unprofessional or Inappropriate Conduct" is behavior or conduct of a sexual nature that is unprofessional and/or inappropriate for the educational and/or working environment but does not rise to the level of Sexual Harassment or other forms of Prohibited Conduct outlined above.
- F. "Retaliation" is any attempt to seek retribution against an individual or group of individuals involved in filing a complaint or report under this Policy, filing an external complaint, participating in a disciplinary process, or opposing in a reasonable manner an action believed to constitute a violation of this Policy. Retaliation can take many forms, including abuse or violence,

threats, and intimidation. Actions in response to a good faith report or response under this Policy are considered retaliatory if they have a materially adverse effect on an individual's working, academic, or University-controlled living environment or hinder or prevent the individual from effectively carrying out their University responsibilities. Any individual or group who retaliates will be held accountable under this Policy.

- G. "Complainant" means an individual alleged to be the victim of Prohibited Conduct.
- H. "Respondent" means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of Prohibited Conduct.

#### **IV. Reporting Complaints of Prohibited Conduct**

Community members who experience or witness Prohibited Conduct should submit a complaint to the appropriate University administrator. The following offices have been designated to handle complaints of a violation of this Policy:

##### **Student Complaints**

Tammy Arreola  
Dean of Students & Title IX Coordinator  
Howard Payne University  
1000 Fisk Street  
Mabee University Center  
Office of Student Experience, 206C  
Brownwood, TX 76801  
325-649-8630 [tarreola@hputx.edu](mailto:tarreola@hputx.edu)

##### **Employee Complaints**

Katrina Lynn  
Director of Human Resources  
Howard Payne University  
1000 Fisk Street  
Packer Administration Building, 210  
Brownwood, TX 76801  
325-649-8012 [klynn@hputx.edu](mailto:klynn@hputx.edu)

Verbal reports of Prohibited Conduct will be received and responded to as appropriate, considering the wishes of the reporting. Considering the individual(s) and circumstances of each case, the University strongly recommends submitting reports of violations of this Policy in writing. The written complaint should identify the parties involved, describe the Policy violation, including when and where it occurred, and identify any witnesses and/or evidence by name or description. Written complaints will be treated as

confidentially as possible and shared only on a need-to-know basis.

## V. Supportive Measures

Regardless of the complaint resolution process utilized in response to a complaint of Prohibited Conduct, the University will, to the extent practicable based on the University's resources, provide the Complainant with support and resources to restore or preserve equal access to the University's education programs and activities and/or employment. Such measures are designed to protect the safety of all parties implicated by a report or to deter Prohibited Conduct. Supportive measures may include, but are not limited to, counseling, extensions of academic or other deadlines, course-related adjustments, modifications to work or class schedules, campus escort services, changes in work or housing locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of campus, and other similar measures. Supportive Measures may also include mutual restrictions on contact between the parties implicated by a report.

## VI. Complaint-Resolution Process

### A. Receipt of a Complaint and Preliminary Assessment

Upon receipt of a complaint, either the Vice President for Student Experience, Dean of Students, or the Director of Human Resources (or their designee) (hereinafter the "Administrator") will conduct a preliminary inquiry designed to assess:

1. the institutional policy or policies potentially invoked by the alleged conduct,
2. the appropriate University official to respond to the complaint, and
3. the best path of resolution for the complaint.

The complaint will be closed if the Administrator determines there are no reasonable grounds for believing the conduct violates this Policy.

### B. Informal Resolution

The Administrator will determine whether informal resolution is an appropriate mechanism of resolution based on the information provided about the incident. Options for informal resolution include, but are not limited to, mediation, restorative justice, or other form of alternative resolution. If an informal resolution is appropriate, the Administrator or their designee will meet separately with both parties to discuss an informal resolution based on available information. If the proposed resolution satisfies the University's obligation to provide a safe and non-

discriminatory environment for the University Community, the resolution will be implemented, and the matter will be closed. The Human Resources and/or Student Experience offices will maintain records of all reports and conduct referrals for informal resolution.

### C. Formal Resolution Procedures

If the Administrator determines that a formal investigation is warranted to resolve a complaint, the University will determine whether an employee or student is responsible for a violation of this Policy and what, if any, corrective action is appropriate in accordance with the procedures described below.

#### 1. *Assignment of Investigator*

The Administrator will appoint an investigator or investigative team with experience investigating allegations of discrimination and harassment. The investigator(s) may be an employee of the University or an external investigator engaged to assist the University in fact-gathering.

#### 2. *The Investigation*

The investigation will be conducted in a manner appropriate to the circumstances of the case. The investigation may include, but is not limited to, conducting interviews of the complainant(s), the respondent(s), and any witnesses (witnesses must have observed the acts in question or have information relevant to the incident); reviewing law enforcement investigation documents, if applicable; reviewing personnel files; and gathering, examining, and preserving other relevant documents and physical, written, and electronic evidence (including text messages and other phone records, social media posts, security camera footage, etc.). The parties will be given an opportunity to identify and present relevant witnesses and evidence to the investigator, as well as identify witnesses who may have relevant information.

#### 3. *The Investigator's Report and Conclusions*

The investigator will conclude whether the respondent violated any provision of this Policy. The standard of proof shall be a preponderance of the evidence. Investigator findings and conclusions may be shared with the Administrator in a written report.

##### *a. Determination of No Policy Violation*

If the investigator determines that the respondent did not violate any policy provision, the Administrator will determine and document the appropriate resolution of

the complaint and notify the parties of that determination. Appropriate resolutions may include but are not limited to dismissal of the complaint, conferences with one or more parties, and introduction of remedial and community-based efforts such as educational initiatives and/or training.

*b. Determination of a Policy Violation*

If the investigator determines sufficient information to find, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the respondent violated this Policy, the matter will be referred for corrective action.

**D. Corrective Action**

If the Respondent is found responsible, corrective action will be addressed as follows:

1. For Policy violations by employees (including staff, faculty, and students acting in their capacity as student employees), the Director of Human Resources will consult with the individual supervisor and department head to determine appropriate corrective action, including, but not limited to:

*a. Warning:*

Written notice to the employee indicating the employee is violating or has violated the Administrative Policies of Howard Payne University and that continuing or repeating misconduct may result in a more severe sanction.

*b. Mandatory Sanctions:*

Mandatory counseling arranged by the University, drug or alcohol assessment and/or treatment, seminar attendance, or other discretionary sanctions as deemed appropriate (all at the employee's expense).

*c. Termination:*

Employees who engage in severe or persistent misconduct will have their employment terminated. At-will employees may be terminated at any time, with or without reason. Faculty employees may be terminated as described in Section III, Faculty Matters, in the Administrative Policies of Howard Payne University.

All actions above will be documented and placed in the employee's personnel file.

2. For Policy violations by contractors, vendors,

and others doing business with the University, the Director of Human Resources will consult with the contracting department to determine the appropriate resolution, up to and including termination of a contractual relationship.

3. For Policy violations by students, the Vice President for Student Experience or Dean of Students will take corrective action, including, but not limited to, the following sanctions:

*a. Warning*

Oral or written notice to the student indicating the student is violating or has violated the Code of Conduct and continuing or repeating misconduct may result in a more severe sanction.

*b. Disciplinary Probation*

Probation indicates a student's relationship with the university is tenuous. It is for a designated period and includes the probability of more severe disciplinary sanctions if the student violates any university regulations. Probation may also result in the loss of privileges, depending on the policies of various university departments and organizations. For example, when placed on probation, a student becomes ineligible to hold some leadership positions.

*c. Loss of Privileges*

Such loss may include, but is not limited to, financial assistance, eligibility to represent the university officially on athletic teams or performing groups, or use of specific university facilities, computer systems, equipment, or services.

*d. Educational Sanctions*

Mandatory work hours, reading/writing assignments, drug or alcohol assessment and/or treatment (at the student's expense), seminar attendance, or other discretionary sanctions as deemed appropriate.

*e. Dismissal from University Housing*

Loss of privilege to live in university housing. Students in a contract or required to live on campus who are dismissed from university housing will be responsible for any remaining monetary charges for their contract term.

*f. Suspension*

Depending on the circumstances, a student is removed from the university environment for

a designated period, usually one or two semesters. A student suspended from the university may not attend classes, university events, or organizational meetings, may not visit the campus, and may not reside in university housing. A student who has successfully served his/her suspension period may apply for re-admission through the regular re-admission procedures.

*g. Expulsion*

Students who engage in severe or persistent misconduct may be expelled. Students who are expelled are not eligible for re-admission to the university.

## **VII. Mandatory Transcript Notations**

Texas law requires a notation on the transcript of any student who is ineligible to re-enroll in the University for a reason other than an academic or financial reason. Therefore, this requirement applies to violations of Policy that result in ineligibility to enroll in the University for any time, such as suspension and expulsion. In addition, if a student withdraws while there are pending disciplinary potentially resulting in the student becoming ineligible to re-enroll in the University for a reason other than an academic or financial reason, the University will not end the disciplinary process until a final determination of responsibility has been made. A disciplinary charge becomes a pending matter upon the complaint's initial receipt, whether oral or written.

### **A. Appeals**

Appeals of findings of responsibility against Student-Respondents will be handled pursuant to the Student Conduct Appeals process detailed in the University's Student Handbook.

Appeals of findings of responsibility against Employee-Respondents will be handled pursuant to the University's applicable administrative policies.

### **B. Knowingly Filing a False Complaint**

Knowingly filing a false complaint is a violation of this Policy. Such conduct may result in corrective action up to and including separation from the University.

## **VIII. Academic Freedom**

This Policy is not intended to inhibit or restrict academic freedom and shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the University's academic freedom policies.

# **ACADEMIC POLICIES & RESOURCES**

## **Academic Testing Services**

Howard Payne University offers a variety of academic testing services to support student success. One of the primary options available is the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), a nationally recognized, subject-specific exam that enables students to earn college-level credit for their coursework. A complete list of CLEP exams accepted for credit at HPU can be found in the University Catalog.

CLEP testing is available by appointment. To schedule an exam, students may call 325-649-8620.

HPU Testing Services also serves as an official testing center for the ACT, SAT, TExES, and Pearson VUE exams.

For assistance or additional information regarding academic testing, students may contact 325-649-8620.

## **Academic Advising**

Howard Payne University understands that navigating degree requirements can be challenging. To support students, the university offers an academic advising program designed to help students create and implement educational plans that align with their academic, personal, and career goals.

For more information about academic advising, students may contact 325-649-8620.

El Paso Center students may call 915-533-8500.  
New Braunfels Center students may call 830-629-2366.

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## **Chapel**

Chapel is an important part of the student experience at Howard Payne University. The mission of Chapel is to provide a community worship experience that promotes a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Services may include a variety of formats such as guest speakers, music, and special programs that present the gospel, encourage spiritual growth, promote cultural awareness, explore global events, and recognize academic achievement, service, and leadership—all within a context that deepens understanding of the Christian faith.

Chapel services are typically held on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. in Mims Auditorium during the fall and spring semesters, unless otherwise announced. Students are encouraged to attend all Chapel services.

### **Chapel Attendance and Credit**

Students receive Chapel credit by logging into the myGateway app and scanning the QR code upon entry. Students who arrive late or leave before the service is dismissed will not receive credit. Repeated offenses may result in failure to meet Chapel requirements for the semester. It is the student's responsibility to ensure their attendance is accurately recorded.

Questions regarding Chapel credits should be directed to the Office of Student Experience.

### **Chapel Requirements**

- Each student must pass six (6) semesters of Chapel attendance.
- Students must earn 14 attendance credits per semester to receive a passing grade.
- Chapel is graded on a Pass/Fail basis. This grade does not affect the student's GPA.
- There are no pre-scheduled opportunities for extra Chapel credit.

### **Exemptions and Transfer Credit**

All full-time students attending classes on the Brownwood campus are required to attend Chapel unless they are 24 years of age or older. Students who turn 24 after the first day of class in the fall or spring semester must complete that semester's Chapel requirements.

Transfer students will receive one semester of Chapel credit for every 15 hours of accepted transfer credit.

Students who do not complete the required Chapel credits will not be eligible to graduate.

### **Contact Information**

Questions about Chapel policies or records may be directed to:

#### **Office of Student Experience**

Mabee University Center, 2nd Floor  
Phone: (325) 649-8017  
Email: studentexperience@hputx.edu

## **Class Attendance**

### ***In-Residence Attendance Policy***

There is no system of free absences at Howard Payne University. Students are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions, as consistent attendance is essential for academic success and ensures they do not miss crucial instructional content.

Students are responsible for communicating with their instructor regarding any absences. Absences are counted beginning with the first day the class meets, not from the date the student registers. To receive credit for a course, a student must attend at least 75% of the total class sessions. Students who fall below this threshold may be assigned a grade of F. However, in cases of extenuating circumstances, a student may request an opportunity to make up missed work. In such cases, the instructor has the discretion to approve a plan for completing missed assignments.

Each instructor is required to outline their attendance policy in the course syllabus. Students should familiarize themselves with this policy at the start of each course. Instructors may implement a more stringent attendance policy, provided it is clearly stated in the syllabus.

All absences—whether excused or unexcused—are counted toward the total number of classes missed. While students may make up work for excused absences, the absences still count toward the attendance total. Students are expected to arrive on time for class. At the instructor's discretion, habitual tardiness may negatively impact a student's attendance record.

When the total number of absences (excused or unexcused) causes a student to fall below the 75% attendance requirement, the student may receive a grade of WF (Withdrawn Failing) for the course. Instructors also have the authority to withdraw students who exceed the University's attendance threshold or violate a more restrictive policy outlined in the course syllabus.

When students participate in official, university-sponsored events that require travel or time away from campus, the group sponsor will submit a list of participating students to the Vice President for Academic Affairs at least one week prior to the activity. The list should include departure and return dates. If approved, the absences will be considered excused.

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### ***Online Attendance Policy***

Online courses follow the same attendance expectations as in-person classes. Attendance is typically tracked through course engagement, such as timely assignment submissions, discussion board participation, quiz or homework completion, and other academic activities.

Instructors define the attendance expectations and requirements in the course syllabus. Students are expected to log into their course regularly—at least once per week for 16-week courses, and more frequently for shorter, accelerated courses—and complete assignments by their due dates.

The last date of attendance for an online student is determined by their most recent participation in course activities. Instructors using Blackboard can access Course Reports through the Control Panel to determine student activity. Blackboard technical support recommends using the "Access/Date" field in the "Overall Summary Report" to identify the last day of attendance for census reporting, withdrawal purposes, and other official documentation.

### **Early Alert Program**

Howard Payne University uses the **Connections** early alert program to promote effective study habits and help students reach their full academic potential. When an instructor notices that a student may benefit from academic support, improved study skills, or assistance with other challenges that could impact success in a course, they may submit an alert through the Connections system.

Once an alert is submitted, members of the student's Circle of Care will reach out to offer support and connect the student with appropriate campus resources. The goal of the Early Alert Program is to intervene early and provide guidance that fosters academic growth and student success.

### **Tutoring Services**

Tutoring is available to all Howard Payne University students through the Center for Student Success. Schedules may vary and are posted at the Tutoring Center, located on the second floor of the Walker Memorial Library.

In addition to in-person peer tutoring, students also have access to online support. To schedule a tutoring appointment or learn more about available services, please contact Dr. Wendy McNeeley at [wmcneeley@hputx.edu](mailto:wmcneeley@hputx.edu).

### **Learning Assistance Services**

Howard Payne University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations in accordance with applicable laws for students with disabilities, including those with learning disabilities, health impairments, and other conditions that substantially limit one or more major life activities.

Information about available services and required forms can be found on the **Center for Student Success** page of the HPU website. Upon admission to the university, students seeking accommodations should submit all relevant information and current documentation (from within the past three years) to:

#### **Office of Learning Assistance**

Howard Payne University  
1000 Fisk Avenue  
Thompson Academic Complex, Room 310  
Brownwood, TX 76801  
(325) 649-8620

Per Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the Office of Learning Assistance ensures equal access to educational programs. It protects qualified students with disabilities from discrimination. Admission requirements for students with disabilities are the same as for all students. University programs and activities are conducted in a manner that ensures no otherwise qualified individual shall be excluded from participation, denied benefits, or subjected to discrimination solely due to a disability.

Students are encouraged to contact the Office of Learning Assistance with any questions or concerns about services and support.

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#### ***Documentation Requirements***

Submitted documentation must include the following elements:

- Be administered or completed by a licensed or credentialed examiner
- Include a clear diagnostic statement identifying the disability
- Describe the diagnostic methodology used
- Explain current functional limitations
- Outline the expected duration and progression of the condition
- Provide a rationale and justification for all requested accommodations

Accommodations are determined on an individual basis by the Office of Learning Assistance in

consultation with qualified professionals. If documentation is deemed insufficient, the university reserves the right to request additional information to determine appropriate and effective accommodations at the college level.

Accommodations are designed to level the academic playing field while preserving the university's academic integrity and standards. While accommodations can enhance access, they do not guarantee academic success. Therefore, students are encouraged to utilize other support services available through the university and develop strong self-advocacy skills. The Office of Learning Assistance can also serve as a liaison between students and university faculty or staff.

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### ***Requesting Accommodations***

After submitting the required documentation and completing the Learning Assistance Request Form, the student must schedule an appointment with the Learning Assistance Coordinator.

If the student qualifies, accommodations will be discussed and, once approved, an accommodation letter will be issued each semester for the student to share with their professors. Students should allow 6 to 10 business days for the completion of accommodation requests. It is strongly recommended that appointments be scheduled within the first two weeks of the semester.

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### ***Appeals Process***

If a student believes that the approved accommodations are insufficient, they may pursue an appeal as outlined below:

#### **Informal Process**

Before initiating a formal appeal, the student should:

- Discuss concerns with the instructor; and
- Contact the Learning Assistance Coordinator.

If the matter is not resolved, the student must meet with the Assistant Vice President for Student Success to explore further resolution.

#### **Formal Process**

If the student remains unsatisfied, they may submit a written appeal to the **Vice President for Academic Affairs**. The appeal must state the basis for the request. The Vice President will determine if the appeal meets policy requirements and will

communicate a final decision in writing. This decision is final.

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### ***Responsibilities and Limitations***

The student is responsible for providing documentation from a qualified professional as outlined above. HPU does not provide the following:

- Diagnostic evaluations for disabilities
- Reduced academic performance standards
- Exemptions from essential graduation requirements
- Credit based on effort in place of demonstrated academic competence

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### ***Confidentiality***

The Office of Learning Assistance maintains strict confidentiality regarding student evaluations and records. No documentation will be released without the student's informed written consent, except in cases of legal compulsion.

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### ***Financial Aid***

Students with physical disabilities are encouraged to contact the **Texas Workforce Commission– Vocational Rehabilitation Services** regarding available financial aid. The **Office of Financial Aid** will also consider eligible students for other financial assistance, provided all necessary forms are completed.

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### ***Temporary Disabilities***

Students with temporary conditions that impact their academic performance may contact the Office of Learning Assistance to discuss possible short-term accommodations.

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## **STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

### **Philosophy**

Howard Payne University is committed to providing students with meaningful learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom. Through residence halls, student organizations, campus activities, athletics, and social experiences, students are encouraged to grow in areas such as practical Christianity, democratic engagement, personal health

and wellness, leadership, self-esteem, current events, and the development of a Christian worldview.

Rooted in the belief that informed and engaged students are better equipped to make wise and responsible choices, the University dedicates its resources to promoting the holistic development of its students. These efforts aim to support students' social, spiritual, emotional, and physical growth alongside their academic and intellectual training.

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## Parent & Family Engagement

In alignment with the university's mission and vision, we are committed to fostering meaningful relationships with parents and families by facilitating open and ongoing communication among the university, students, and their families. There will be ongoing outreach by email throughout the academic year, providing timely information, updates, and resources. This area also functions as a primary point of contact to address inquiries, provide information, and offer support to parents and families. The Parent and Family Engagement strives to have an active role in key campus initiatives such as Jacket Journey, Parent Weekend, and Preview events, with a focus on enriching the overall experience of families.

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## Student Activities & Organizations

Student activities are designed to enhance student development by addressing the physical, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and social needs and interests of the student body.

Student activities, organizations, and intramurals are an important part of campus life and provide a variety of opportunities to build relationships, develop social and leadership skills, grow in relationship to Christ, exhibit personal responsibility, participate in service to the campus and community, engage in recreation, work with others, gain an enhanced understanding of the world and of one's self, and have fun.

## Intramural Sports

The University's intramural program offers organized sports competitions and recreational activities for students, faculty, and staff. HPU Intramurals offers a variety of team and individual recreational sports and activity competitions, including flag football, volleyball, sand volleyball, basketball, ultimate frisbee, pickleball, and soccer. Special activities are offered based on student interest. All students are welcome and encouraged to participate.

## Student Events

Howard Payne University offers a diverse range of activities and programs for its students. The University approves annual activities which include, but are not limited to:

Chime In  
Chime Out  
Daze of Payne  
Homecoming  
HPU Fest  
Jacket Journey

The [University Calendar of Events](#) is available online.

The university does not allow some activities because of their illegal nature, potential for harming other individuals or University property, and/or purposes and functions contrary to the university's religious or ethical convictions.

## Student Publications

[\*THE YELLOW JACKET\*](#) is the University newspaper published each fall and spring semester. It can be found on the HPU website through the link above and on Instagram @hputxyjnews. All student publications are subject to approval by a faculty/staff advisor.

## Student organizations

The university must approve any club, organization, or group operating in a formal and organized manner, and the organization must adhere to the university's policies and procedures, and respect the university's values and mission. The Office of Student Experience oversees student activities and organizations. Certain student organization oversight functions are delegated to the Student Government Association.

## Organization Structure

At HPU, organizations are classified into one of three categories: Departmental/National-Affiliated, Open, and Local Greek.

The Departmental/National-Affiliated category includes organizations affiliated with the university (e.g., receive a budget from the university, supervised by faculty, etc.), affiliated with a national entity, or whose members must meet specialized requirements such as a major field of study. There is no minimum membership requirement for organizations in this category. However, it should be noted that healthy, vibrant groups will more capably fulfill their respective missions with a sizeable group of dedicated members.

The Open category includes non-Greek student organizations not affiliated with a major, university department, or national entity. Organizations in this category must maintain at least ten members. First-year students in their first semester of college at HPU are eligible to join open organizations.

The Local Greek category includes all socially oriented fraternities and sororities open to the entire student body (of their respective gender). Organizations in this category must maintain at least 10 members. Once a student has been initiated into one of the Local Greek organizations, s/he cannot join and/or establish another Local Greek organization within one year of officially resigning from the first organization.

## **Official HPU Organizations**

### *STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION*

The Student Government Association (SGA) comprises all students enrolled in a degree program at HPU. Meetings are held weekly at a published time and location and are open to all students. The group of officers and senators, elected by the student body, functions as the official voice of the student body and acts as a liaison between the students and the university's administration.

Certain members of the Student Government Association may hear cases pertaining to elections, organizational complaints, and student discipline forwarded by the Dean of Students or his/her designee.

The SGA conducts campus elections seasonally to fill various offices. Students who wish to run for office must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 and be in good standing with the University. Please see the Student Government Association Constitution for more information about the SGA. The Student Government Association constitution is available on the HPU website.

### **Inter-organizational council**

The Inter-Organizational Council is comprised of all organization presidents and organization advisors. This body meets once a semester to plan organizational cooperation with campus activities and is directed by the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement.

## **Departmental and National-Affiliated Organizations**

*ALPHA PSI OMEGA* – Honorary dramatic fraternity to promote an honor society for those working in theater/arts.

*BETA BETA* – An honor society for the life sciences.

*GAMMA BETA PHI* – A national educational service organization dedicated to the encouragement of scholastic effort, reward of academic merit, and promotion of worthy character and leadership.

*HEALTH OCCUPATIONS STUDENTS OF AMERICA (HOSA)* – An organization that strengthens the Health Science Education (HSE) - HOSA partnership through programs and activities, individual well-being, leadership, character, citizenship, and ethical practices, and respect for the dignity of work.

*KAPPA DELTA PI* – An honor society for junior and senior students in education.

*KAPPA KAPPA PSI* – A national service fraternity for band students.

*MINISTERIAL ALLIANCE* – Engaged in deepening the spiritual being of men and women preparing for the Gospel ministry.

*PI GAMMA MU* – A national honorary organization for junior and senior students in the social sciences.

*STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORK* – An honorary organization for social work majors.

*STUDENT ACTIVITIES COUNCIL* - The Student Activities Council is the University's student-operated campus programming organization. It plans, coordinates, and produces numerous events to provide the Howard Payne student body with quality entertainment and stimulating cultural programs.

*TAU BETA SIGMA* – A national service sorority for band students.

*BAPTIST STUDENT MINISTRY* – A student-led ministry under the guidance of the BSM director. This ministry seeks to follow the vision of I Thessalonians 2:8, summed up in saying that we will share the Gospel and our lives with those around us. The BSM is divided into three main areas of focus: Missions/Evangelism, Prayer/Discipleship, and Worship/Church Life.

### *Missions & Evangelism*

Serving the least of these in our world and community

through various creative student-led initiatives and exploring how we might make a difference for those in need. Students are also given the opportunity to apply and serve through Go Now Missions, a collegiate mission-sending agency of the Texas Baptists (see [gonowmissions.com](http://gonowmissions.com)). Providing students the opportunity to know Christ's love and make that love known on our campus, in our community, and throughout Texas through evangelism training, ministry to children, youth, and the elderly, outreach events, and more.

### ***Prayer & Discipleship***

We seek to help students grow deeply in their relationship with God and others as they know God better. Opportunities are available for students to read and study the Bible with their peers, worship, and pray as they live out their faith at Howard Payne.

### ***Worship & Church Life***

The BSM at HPU exists because churches exist. We are always seeking ways to connect our students to local churches by getting them involved. Students can participate in a campus worship experience but are encouraged to find a local church home. Students can also serve as Disciple Now leaders in area churches, lead Fifth Quarters, and help us give back to our local churches in service.

## **Open Organizations**

*FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN ATHLETES* – A program to confront students, student-athletes, and coaches--and through them, the nation's youth--with the challenge and adventure of following Christ through the church's fellowship.

*AMIGOS UNIDOS* – An organization to promote peace through understanding among all people of different ethnicities, to celebrate Hispanic culture, to endorse interest in the study of Spanish, to engage in cultural activities, and to participate in services to our community.

*HPU PICKLEBALL* – Promoting health and wellness, teamwork, and sportsmanship through the inclusive and fast-growing sport of Pickleball.

*THE HOBBY HIVE* – A student-led organization passionate about art and creativity.

## **Local Greek Organizations**

*CHI ALPHA OMEGA* – A sorority emphasizing school spirit, Christian fellowship, and lasting sisterhood.

*DELTA CHI RHO* – A social service organization dedicated to serving the school and community.

*DELTA EPSILON OMEGA* – A men's social organization dedicated to serving Christ and the school, holding one another accountable, and being Christ-like examples.

*PI THETA CHI* – A sorority that promotes service, good character, and the Christian faith.

## **University Expectations of Organizations**

Organizations of the University are to abide by all of the University's policies. Organization members behave as integrity-filled leaders and adhere to all University policies. Violations committed by the organization as a distinct campus group or by individual members may result in disciplinary actions for the organization. Illegal discrimination by student organizations is prohibited. The University requires that student organizations be organized, admitted to membership and participation, and, in all respects, function without regard to a student's race, national origin, age, or disability. Only when the law permits discrimination by student organizations on the basis of gender will the University allow sex discrimination in student organizations (for example, in membership of sororities and fraternities). The following are a few of the expectations for student organizations.

### ***IOC Involvement***

Organizations are required to send a representative to Inter-Organizational Council (IOC) meetings held at the beginning of each semester. Organizations should make prior arrangements with the Director of Student Leadership & Engagement if a representative cannot attend. All event, financial, and marketing requests cannot be approved until the organization has met with the Director of Student Leadership & Engagement.

### ***Rosters***

Organization rosters are due by the second Friday of the semester, and new member rosters are due at the beginning of each new member's education period. All event, financial, and marketing requests cannot be approved until rosters have been submitted. After the specified roster due date, additions to an organization's roster must be submitted to and approved by the Director of Student Leadership & Engagement.

Minimum membership requirements based on organizational classification are set forth to remain an active university-recognized student organization (see the subsequent section, "Organization Structure," for details). All members must meet and maintain membership requirements during the academic year.

### ***Officers***

Officer rosters are due at the beginning of each semester. Organizations should submit an updated executive roster if there are changes during the semester.

### ***T-shirts***

Before placing the order, all designs must be approved via the T-shirt approval form. Please allow at least three business days for approval. University Communications must approve your design if it includes any official HPU logos or artwork.

### ***Risk Management Training***

A risk management training program is required for designated student organization leaders and advisors. A subsequent section of this handbook provides additional details regarding this requirement.

### ***Organization Disciplinary Sanctions***

Possible sanctions for an organization found to violate University policy include:

#### ***Probation***

Probation of an organization is a formal censure by the Office of Student Experience. During probation, an organization must adhere to all University policies pertaining to the organization and its members. Any non-compliance with these regulations will be viewed seriously and may lead to the organization's suspension.

#### ***Suspension***

A university organization's suspension due to flagrant policy violations may last from one semester to a permanent suspension. Suspension will remove the organization from all University listings, prevent meetings and activities, and freeze University financial accounts. If the suspension is permanent, the organization will be disbanded.

### ***Organization Policies***

To be recognized as an official student organization, students seeking to charter an organization must be aware of and abide by the following policies:

- Any club or organization determined by the Office of Student Experience to fit the criteria of

a student organization must apply for recognition with the University.

To receive University recognition, a new organization must submit a copy of its proposed constitution and a list of charter members (minimum roster requirements must be met) and advisors to the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement. The request will be processed as follows:

A. Director of Student Leadership and Engagement Approval following a review of the proposed constitution, membership roster, and advisor forms.

B. Student Government Association Approval following a one-week study of the proposed constitution and by-laws.

C. Vice President of Student Experience approval: The Office of Student Experience will notify student organizations of their approval. Student organizations that are not approved must wait until the next academic year to reapply for recognition.

All organizations must maintain an up-to-date copy of the constitution and by-laws in the Office of Student Experience with the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement. Constitutional amendments must be reported to the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement for approval.

Only recognized student organizations may use University facilities, be listed in HPU publications, and/or use the University name in any of its activities. All organizations must abide by and conform to University policies and administrative direction as instructed by the Office of Student Experience.

Failure to comply with all policies or University directives will result in disciplinary sanctions, probation, suspension, and/or revocation of an organization's charter.

Students who hold elected office must not have disciplinary violations before or during their terms.

### ***Membership***

Only full-time undergraduate students (minimum of 12 credit hours or three credit hours at El Paso or New Braunfels) currently enrolled at HPU may participate in organizations (except in unusual circumstances) and a cumulative grade point average (G.P.A.) of at least a 2.0 must be maintained. Organizations may require a higher G.P.A. standard. Students on academic or disciplinary probation may not participate in campus organizations. Students not making satisfactory

progress toward their degrees (as determined by the Registrar's Office) are not eligible to participate in student organizations for the duration of the time they are listed on the "non-satisfactory progress" roster. Exceptions to the academic probation and non-satisfactory progress participation rules may be granted for students enrolled and actively participating in the University's academic recovery program.

Students who drop below 12 credit hours (three credit hours for El Paso or New Braunfels campuses) during the academic semester may not participate in athletics, student organizations, or intramural sports. Graduate and nontraditional students taking less than 12 credit hours must appeal to the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement for approval to participate in student organizations; approval will be granted on a case-by-case basis. Students may participate in Baptist Student Ministry non-leadership capacities regardless of G.P.A. or satisfactory progress. They may be allowed or required to participate in certain departmental organizations based on academic major without regard to these criteria.

All local Greek organizations are allowed four honorary members. Any member holding a male or female honorary status must be a senior (as determined by the Registrar's Office) and may only serve for one academic year. The Director of Student Leadership and Engagement must approve all honorary members.

Organization membership and officer rosters must be updated each semester and submitted to the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement, and advisor/officer changes must be immediately reported for approval by the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement.

#### ***Activity Approval***

All organizational activities, including meeting times, parties, trips, and other related events, on or off campus, must be approved and placed on the University calendar. Event request forms must be completed at least ten working days before the event. Subsequent changes must be approved in the same manner.

#### ***Student Government Association Attendance***

Local Greek and Open organizations must be represented at Student Government Association (SGA) meetings. It is advisable for "Departmental/National-Affiliated" organizations to attend SGA meetings, though not required; however, to be granted voting rights for the semester or to be eligible for SGA funding (for those organizations that qualify under SGA funding guidelines), "Departmental/ National-

Affiliated" organizations must indicate their intent to participate in SGA at each semester's Inter-Organizational Council meeting. Once a departmental or national-affiliated organization has opted in for SGA attendance, it will be subject to that semester's standard SGA attendance requirements.

#### ***Policy for Organizations Falling Below Membership Requirements***

If a "Local Greek" organization falls below 15 members or an "Open" organization falls below 10 members, the following policies will take effect:

- To petition for provisional active status, student organizations whose membership has fallen below the required threshold must submit a written appeal to SGA and be prepared to appear before the assembly if requested.
- For the written appeal to be considered, it must contain the following information as a condition of receiving provisional active status for one academic year:

- 1) a recruiting strategy that details a recruitment timeline and goals;
- 2) a calendar of proposed events for the academic year; and
- 3) a list of fundraisers the organization will accomplish during the provisional period.

Student Government can only waive the membership requirement for one academic year, after which those organizations not meeting the requirement will automatically be recommended for charter revocation to the Office of Student Experience without further consideration by the SGA.

Contact the respective campus director for information about organizations at the El Paso or New Braunfels campuses.

#### ***Greek Life New Member Education Regulations***

Students wishing to participate in the new member process must have a 2.0 cumulative grade point average (G.P.A.), may not be on academic or disciplinary probation, and must be making satisfactory progress toward their degrees as defined by the Registrar's Office.

Members may not hold office until at least 12 academic credit hours are completed at HPU.

Provisional students who wish to join a Greek organization must receive written permission from the Director of the Center for Student Success before participating in any new member education activities.

Organizations are required to certify all new members meet qualifications. They are to submit a New Member Roster Form to the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement for final certification of eligibility, along with a signed Greek Life New Member Form for each prospective new member. Improper certification of a new member may result in sanctions against the organization.

New member education will be restricted to 8:00 a.m. to midnight, Monday through Saturday.

New member education activities, either group or individual, are not allowed in classes, chapel, or the cafeteria.

New member education activities should not exceed six (6) weeks in length.

Organization presidents, new member educators, and advisors must collaboratively complete and submit a New Member Education Proposal explaining the organization's events and policies to the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement.

Before participating in the new member education process, prospective new members must attend a mandatory meeting coordinated by the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement, where these guidelines will be explained.

New Members who do not complete the new member education process must meet with the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement and have their names removed from the chapter's roster.

Students may not begin the new member process with multiple organizations within the same semester.

Students who discontinue new membership education at any point during the process may not pursue it with another organization for one full calendar year.

New members initiated into one Local Greek organization may not join another Local Greek organization at HPU.

### ***Organization Financial Accounting***

Each organization is responsible for its financial obligations and must fulfill all financial commitments. The University is in no way responsible for the financial obligations of the organizations. The University Business Office must be the depository for all funds of those organizations that receive a budget from HPU or desire to utilize the University's tax-

exempt status. For off-campus banking, checking accounts must be set up to require the advisor's and treasurer's signatures. Monthly statements must be submitted to the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement. An organization may maintain an on-campus and off-campus account at the beginning of the semester. Still, it must complete all the proper paperwork with the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement. To maintain compliance with state fundraising and occasional sales laws, all monies generated through fundraising efforts must be deposited and kept in an on-campus account. Organizations may deposit non-fundraised monies (e.g., dues) in an off-campus bank account if desired.

### ***Fundraising/Solicitation of Donations***

There are several reasons for organization fundraising and/or solicitation of donations. These include fundraising to support:

- approved school-related travel involving the representation of university-approved mission trips
- approved activities benefitting non-profit organizations
- approved activities that promote campus community and student involvement

To solicit funds and donations on or off campus, the following steps are required:

- Submit a Student Organization Fundraising Approval Form at least two weeks before the proposed fundraising activity.

The Director of Student Leadership and Engagement and the Chief Development Officer will review the request. The decision to approve or deny the request will be communicated to the primary contact person. If approval is granted, the organization must follow all university policies.

Before submitting a request, student organizations should be aware of the following resources and guidelines:

- SGA funding is available for student organization events. Student organizations should review the SGA policies and request funds from the SGA **before** requesting fundraising/solicitation approval.

The Director of Student Leadership and Engagement is available to assist organizations with budgeting and planning to reduce fundraising needs.

Raffles are not permitted.

Potential donors must not be contacted before fundraising approval is granted.

Following an approved fundraising event, the following steps are required:

- Donations, goods, money, and/or services must be reported to the Development Office.
- Received funds must be deposited into the student organization's account on campus. (Deposits should be made at the Cashier's office.)
- The student organization must send donors thank you notes or letters. This should be done in coordination with the Development Office.

### ***Risk Management***

At least once per academic year, the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement will coordinate a risk management training program for student organization leaders and new advisors. The training is required for up to four officers (e.g., president, vice president, social/events chair, new member educator) and advisors. All must sign a statement of acknowledgment confirming that training has been provided and the group will take adequate steps to minimize risks. The trained officers and advisors must report on the training program's contents at a meeting of the full membership of their student organization. Failure to meet the training attendance requirements will result in losing recognition as a student organization. The risk management training may include any topic deemed appropriate by HPU but must address the following issues:

- Alcohol and illegal drugs – possession, use, and penalties
- Hazing
- Sexual abuse and harassment
- Fire and other safety issues, including possession or use of firearms, weapons, or explosives
- Group travel outside the surrounding area
- Behavior at parties and other organization-sponsored events
- Adoption by student organizations of a risk management policy

This policy is derived from the *Texas Education Code, SECTION 1.0Z, Chapter 51, Section 51.9361.*

### ***Prohibition of Hazing***

Under state law, individuals and/or organizations engaging in hazing could be subject to fines and charged with a criminal offense. Under HPU policy, individuals and/or organizations engaging in hazing

may be subject to disciplinary sanctions, including expulsion.

### ***Important Definitions from Texas Law, Education Code Sec. 37.151 (2), (3), (4), (5), (6)***

"Pledge" means any person who has been accepted by, is considering an offer of membership from, or is in the process of qualifying for membership in an organization.

"Pledging" means any action or activity related to becoming a member of an organization.

"Student" means any person who:

- is registered in or in attendance at an educational institution;
- has been accepted for admission at the educational institution where the hazing incident occurred; or
- intends to attend an educational institution during any of its regular sessions after a period of scheduled vacation.

"Organization" means a fraternity, sorority, association, corporation, order, society, corps, club, or student government, a band or musical group, or an academic, athletic, cheerleading, or dance team, including any group or team that participates in National Collegiate Athletic Association competition, or a service, social, or similar group, whose members are primarily students.

"Hazing" means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization if the act:

A) is any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, placing a harmful substance on the body, or similar activity;

B) involves sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, calisthenics, or other similar activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student;

C) involves consumption of a food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug, or other substance, other than as described by Paragraph

(E), that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student;

D) is any activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that involves a violation of the Penal Code or

E) involves coercing, as defined by Section 1.07, Penal Code, the student to consume a drug or an alcoholic beverage or liquor in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student is intoxicated, as defined by Section 49.01, Penal Code.

According to the law, a person can commit a hazing offense not only by engaging in a hazing activity but also by soliciting, directing, encouraging, aiding, or attempting to aid another in hazing by intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly allowing hazing to occur or by failing to report in writing to the Dean of Students that a hazing incident is planned or has occurred (see Sec. 37.152).

An organization commits a hazing offense if the organization condones or encourages hazing or if an officer or any combination of members, pledges, or alumni of the organization commits or assists in the commission of hazing (see Sec. 37.153).

A person's consent to a hazing activity does not legalize or legitimize it (see Sec. 37.154).

#### ***Important Note on Immunity from Prosecution or Civil Liability***

- A) the prosecution of an offense under this subchapter, the court may grant immunity from prosecution for the offense to each person subpoenaed to testify for the prosecution and who does testify for the prosecution.
- B) a person who voluntarily reports a specific hazing incident involving a student in an educational institution to the Dean of Students or other appropriate official of the institution is immune from civil or criminal liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed as a result of the reported hazing incident if the person: reports the incident before being contacted by the institution concerning the incident or otherwise being included in the institution's investigation of the incident; and as determined by the dean of students or other appropriate official of the institution designated by the institution,

cooperates in good faith throughout any institutional process regarding the incident.

- C) under Subsection (b) extends to participation in any judicial proceeding resulting from the report.
- D) a person is not immune under Subsection (b) if the person reports the person's own act of hazing or reports an incident of hazing in bad faith or with malice.

*The law does not affect or in any way restrict the right of the University to enforce its own rules and/or penalties against hazing.*

*Howard Payne provides an anonymous hazing form on the website for students to report hazing incidents to the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement.*

Copies of the entire hazing bill enacted by the Texas legislature are available from the Office of Student Experience, or the hazing bill may be viewed in its entirety at the "Texas Legislature Online" website at <http://www.legis.state.tx.us/>

The hazing bill is in the Texas Education Code, Chapter 37, sections 37.151 through 37.158.

#### ***Advisor Responsibilities***

Each organization is required to have at least two faculty or staff advisors registered and approved by the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement by the conclusion of the first meeting. Organization advisors must be employed by the university at least half-time and may not concurrently serve more than one social fraternity/sorority. The advisor's role is as follows:

- To act as a consultant in setting goals, problem-solving, policy-making, and upholding guidelines and purposes.
- Attend organization and officer meetings as determined appropriate.
- To attend, as the University representative, all off-campus and overnight activities, providing guidance and support, and assuming leadership in an emergency. In cases where an event is not for the entire membership (such as small service projects, group Bible studies, group cook-outs, etc.), the advisor may use discretion about whether or not advisor attendance is required. The University strongly encourages each advisor to occasionally check on various events to ensure transparency between chapter leaders and advisors.
- To review and approve all activity requests.

- To provide continuity for the organization from year to year.
- To provide guidance for understanding and adhering to University policies, including those regarding new member processes and membership.
- Supervise financial arrangements, ensuring a purchase order is obtained and made available before signing the requisition. Invoices should be submitted to the Business Office promptly.
- To attend an initial risk management training coordinated by the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement and help ensure the advised organization complies with sound risk management protocols. Advisors are encouraged to attend annually for updates.
- At least one advisor per organization attends the Student Organization Advisor meetings when scheduled with the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement.
- Float Building and Spring Sing Practices: When organizations utilize the provided build site, advisors are not expected to be present for float building. It is encouraged to go to the location occasionally to check progress and provide encouragement to the members. Advisors must also ensure that the building where the float is constructed is used respectfully. All spring sing rehearsals must be approved and agreed upon by the advisors and the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement. Advisors should be present at any approved off-campus rehearsals. Advisors are expected to watch and approve the final Spring Sing production to ensure appropriate conduct.

#### ***Organization Responsibilities to Advisors***

Student Organizations must give the following considerations to their advisors:

- The organization's leaders must consult the advisors well before all activities and obtain approval before plans are finalized. Advisors may refuse to approve any activity they believe is not consistent with the university's mission, policies, or procedures or is not in the best interest of the organization and/or its members.
- The organization is expected to keep the advisor informed of all the organization's business. It is an expectation that advisors are welcome to attend any meeting (committee, new member, or executive council included) at any time.
- The organization is expected to pay babysitting fees for advisors who need this service in order for them to attend an activity for the organization; food, travel, and lodging must also be paid for

advisors and spouses when attending required events off-campus or out-of-town.

- Students are expected to recognize an advisor's major responsibilities and show appreciation throughout the year.

#### ***Campus Chalking***

The Director of Student Leadership and Development must approve campus chalking. Guidelines for chalking will be provided upon approval.

#### ***Music Policy for University-Sponsored Events***

Music selected for play at University-sponsored events, including but not limited to athletic events, cheerleading/drill team performances, and Spring Sing, should reflect the institution's character and its dedication to honoring Christ. As such, the music selected should not contain lyrics or messages containing sexual content, foul language, or racist connotations.

#### ***Posting Policy***

The Office of Student Experience must approve flyers and posters before they are posted. If the advertising is for an event, the event must be approved before flyers and posters are posted.

The posting organization should remove advertisements within 24 hours after the event. Do not cover up existing flyers or remove others unless they are expired. Additional guidelines for posting flyers, banners, handbills, or posters include:

- No glitter will be used on any flyer, banner, handbill, or poster.
- All flyers, banners, handbills, or posters must include the date, time, place, and the sponsoring organization's name.
- Approval stamp on advertising must be clearly identified on the front of the poster.
- Post on designated bulletin boards only – not on doors, windows, light posts, walls, trees, outdoor furniture, etc.
- Flyers for off-campus organizations, businesses, churches, etc., must be approved and stamped in the Office of Student Experience.
- University departments are not required to obtain approval stamps for postings.

## **STUDENT SERVICES & RESOURCES**

The eCampus Virtual Bookstore powers the HPU Bookstore and can be accessed through the university website or by visiting [www.ecampus.com/hputx](http://www.ecampus.com/hputx).

### ***Return Policy***

The bookstore accepts returns for a full refund within 30 days from the course start date, under the following conditions:

- Items must be returned in the condition in which they were received.
- Shrink-wrapped items may not be returned unless the wrap is broken due to a defect or shipping error.
- Items with access codes or digital content that have been opened, scratched, or activated are non-refundable.

Please visit the eCampus website for specific return instructions.

### ***Book Buyback***

Students may sell their textbooks back to the eCampus Virtual Bookstore through the website at any time during or after the semester.

Buyback guidelines include:

- The price offered for used books is based on their projected future use. Up to 50% of the purchase price may be provided for books that will be reused in upcoming semesters.
- Although students may sell books back at any time, the best prices are typically offered at the end of each term.
- Books may include highlighting, writing, or margin notes, as long as the markings are not excessive. Items should be clean, with no torn pages, and the cover and spine must be intact.
- Package editions listed for buyback must include all original materials. Incomplete packages will not be accepted.
- Instructor, teacher, and international editions are not eligible for buyback.
- Students returning rentals or selling books online will receive a free shipping label.
- Students may choose to receive payment by check, direct deposit, or in-store credit. Those who select in-store credit will receive a 20% bonus on the buyback amount. Store credit can be used for future orders through the bookstore website and does not expire.

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### **Check Cashing**

Students may cash checks of \$50.00 or less at the Business Office, located on the second floor of the Packer Administration Building. Limit one check per student per day.

A fee of \$25.00 will be charged for each returned check. Repeated returned checks may result in the loss of check-cashing privileges. Knowingly issuing a bad check is a serious matter and may result in legal action.

Please note: Only checks made payable to Howard Payne University will be accepted for cashing.

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### **Copy Center & Mailroom**

#### ***Mail Service***

The HPU Copy Center & Mailroom is located in the Mabee University Center. Window hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Copy Center & Mailroom is closed on weekends, federal holidays, and university holidays.

The Mailroom receives mail and packages from all major couriers. Please note that deliveries are not made to residence halls. If a student receives a package, an email notification will be sent to their HPU email address.

#### ***Mailboxes***

Howard Payne University provides mailboxes for all on-campus residents. Students are required to maintain and regularly check their assigned mailboxes.

Mail addressed to an HPU box number that includes a name not on record with the Mailroom will be returned to the sender. To avoid this, students should notify the Mailroom of any name changes, additions, or commonly used nicknames.

All mail should be addressed as follows:

Student's Full Name  
1000 Center Ave. #\_\_\_\_ (student's mailbox number)  
Brownwood, TX 76801

#### ***Change of Address***

Students moving off campus must complete an HPU change-of-address form to have their mail forwarded. Only First-Class mail can be forwarded. Packages from UPS, FedEx, or other couriers cannot be forwarded and will be returned to the sender.

### ***Mailbox and Package Access***

Mail from a student's box will only be released to the student assigned to that box. Students must present a valid HPU Student ID card to receive packages or open their mailboxes.

Mailboxes are assigned individually. Students may not share a mailbox unless the number of residents exceeds the number of available boxes. In such cases, the Mailroom staff will arrange shared mailbox assignments as needed.

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### **Counseling Services**

Counselors at Howard Payne University offer **Solution-Focused Brief Therapy**, which emphasizes finding present-day solutions and exploring hope for the future to support timely, practical resolutions. Our counselors—including Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC), Licensed Professional Counselor Associates (LPC-Associates), LPC Interns (LPC-I), LPC Supervisors (LPC-S), Licensed Psychological Associates (LPA), and Licensed Specialists in School Psychology (LSSP)—are available to support students in achieving educational and personal success.

Counseling interns pursuing LPC licensure work under the supervision of the University Counselor and/or a licensed LPC Supervisor from the local community.

All counseling sessions are confidential, except in situations where legal reporting requirements apply or when there is a risk of harm to oneself or others.

While the HPU Counseling Center does not provide medical diagnoses or medication management, students in need of long-term therapy or psychiatric care may be referred to appropriate off-campus providers.

Common issues addressed in counseling sessions include:

- Goal setting
- Relationship concerns (roommates, dating/marriage, parenting, etc.)
- Self-esteem
- Grief
- Sadness, anxiety, and depression
- Spirituality and faith-related matters
- Sexuality
- Abuse and trauma
- Alcohol and drug use

All sessions are held in a professional counseling environment and are offered from a Christian perspective. Seminars and workshops may also be provided throughout the year to encourage personal and spiritual growth.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact:

#### **Counseling Services**

Jennings Hall – B Pod

Phone: 325-649-8195

Email: [counseling@hputx.edu](mailto:counseling@hputx.edu)

#### **Kaye Cummings, LPA**

Phone: 325-649-8193

Email: [kcummings@hputx.edu](mailto:kcummings@hputx.edu)

#### **Amanda Stuard, Counseling Intern**

Supervised by Ciera Ray, LCSW

Phone: 325-649-8194

Email: [astuard@hputx.edu](mailto:astuard@hputx.edu)

In an emergency, students should contact the HPU Department of Public Safety at 325-649-8609 or call 911 for assistance.

### **Dining Services**

Howard Payne University contracts with Sodexo Campus Services to provide all dining services on campus. All residence hall students are automatically charged for room and board during registration. Off-campus students are also welcome to purchase a meal plan.

Weekly meal plans (19, 15, or 12 meals per week) reset every Monday morning. Unused meals do not carry over from week to week and are non-refundable.

Unused Jacket Bucks from the fall semester will roll over to the spring semester. However, any remaining Jacket Bucks at the end of the spring semester will be forfeited.

Dining hours for each campus dining facility are posted near the entrance and are subject to change.

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### **Dining Service Policies**

#### ***Cafeteria***

- A valid student ID card must be presented and scanned at the cafeteria entrance. Meal cards are non-transferable and may only be used by the student to whom they are issued.

- Only individuals with a valid meal plan or those paying cash for a meal are permitted to enter and dine in the cafeteria.
- The cafeteria is an all-you-care-to-eat facility; therefore, food may not be taken out, except in certain pre-approved cases.
- Outside food and beverages are not allowed to be brought into the cafeteria.

If a student's class schedule conflicts with standard meal times, they may pre-arrange a to-go meal. This service is available seven days a week and deducts one meal from the student's weekly balance. Requests must be submitted at least 24 hours in advance.

Students with special dietary needs should provide documentation from a licensed medical professional and may work directly with the cafeteria manager to develop a suitable meal plan.

Students are encouraged to use the comment cards provided to offer feedback and help improve dining services.

Guests are welcome in the cafeteria. Meal prices for guests are posted at the cashier's stand.

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### ***Fambrough's Café***

Fambrough's accepts Jacket Bucks and Stinger Bucks. To make a purchase using either, students must present a valid student ID card. ID cards are non-transferable and must not be used by anyone other than the cardholder.

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### ***Stinger Bucks***

Stinger Bucks can be used at several participating local restaurants, including:

- Buffalo Wild Wings
- Chili's
- Common Grounds Coffee House
- Domino's Pizza
- Fambrough's
- Golden Chick
- Taco Casa
- Tea2Go
- Underwood's Cafeteria
- Wingstop

A valid student ID card must be presented at the time of purchase at participating locations. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

Stinger Bucks become active after registration is completed. Funds can be added online via credit/debit card or in person at the HPU Cashier's Office.

Stinger Bucks roll over from semester to semester and year to year, provided the student remains enrolled in consecutive academic semesters.

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## **Financial Aid Services**

The primary purpose of the student financial aid program at Howard Payne University is to assist qualified students who might not otherwise be able to attend without financial support.

Financial aid may include grants, scholarships, student employment, and loans. Students are encouraged to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine eligibility for federal, state, and certain institutional aid programs. Aid recipients are selected based on demonstrated financial need, academic achievement, and potential for future success.

To remain eligible for financial aid, students must maintain satisfactory academic progress, as outlined in the University catalog. This includes eligibility for participation in federal, state, or institutional work-study programs.

For more information, students should refer to the University catalog or contact the Office of Financial Aid.

### ***Financial Information***

All information regarding student financial matters, including billing, payment plans, and account policies, is available in the University catalog.

### ***Refunds***

Tuition refunds are available in cases where students withdraw from the University or drop a course prior to the end of the fifth class day of a long semester. Additional details and the official refund schedule are provided in the University catalog.

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## **Health Services and Insurance**

Howard Payne University employs a campus nurse who is available for consultation regarding minor illnesses and first aid. The nurse may also evaluate a student's health readiness to return to campus following an illness. However, each student is

ultimately responsible for their own healthcare, including medical expenses and any necessary treatment. Over-the-counter medications are available to students at no cost through the nurse's office.

Students are free to choose their own physician and hospital if they require medical services. The university does not provide health insurance; students are responsible for securing their own accident and health insurance policies. Students covered under a family health insurance plan should contact their provider to confirm coverage in the local area, identify in-network physicians, and understand procedures for filing claims.

The University Health Center is located in B Pod near Jennings Hall. Office hours for the fall and spring semesters are posted on the door. Summer hours are limited.

**To make an appointment or for more information, contact:**

*Martha Brunette, R.N.*  
(325) 649-8601  
(325) 649-8819 Fax  
nurse@hputx.edu

**Local Medical Facilities**

Students in need of off-campus medical attention may contact the following facilities or a local provider of their choice:

**Hendrick Medical Center, Brownwood**  
1501 Burnet Drive, Brownwood, TX 76801  
(325) 646-8541

**Hendrick Clinic Early**  
2005 Hwy 183 North, Early, TX 76802  
(325) 643-3010

**Hendrick Urgent Care**  
400 East Commerce Street, Brownwood, TX 76801  
(325) 510-5418

*Please note: HPU does not provide transportation to medical facilities. In the event of an on-campus emergency, emergency medical services will be contacted to provide immediate assistance from qualified professionals.*

**Health Forms**

All students must submit a completed HPU Student Health Form and immunization records to the university nurse. Students are responsible for notifying

the nurse of any changes in medical status to ensure records remain up to date.

**Vaccination Requirements**

In accordance with Texas state law, all first-time students, including transfer students, are required to provide documentation verifying receipt of the bacterial meningitis vaccine. Documentation must comply with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) regulations.

A student may request an exemption if they:

- Submit a physician's certificate stating the vaccine would pose a health risk; or
- Submit a notarized affidavit declining the vaccine for reasons of conscience, including religious belief.

*Note: The affidavit exemption is not valid during a public health emergency, terrorist attack, hostile military or paramilitary action, or extraordinary law enforcement emergency.*

To request an exemption affidavit, visit <https://co-request.dshs.texas.gov/>. The form must be ordered electronically and will be mailed to the student. Please allow up to three weeks for delivery. Once received, the completed and notarized affidavit must be submitted to the university nurse no later than ten days before the first day of the semester. The nurse will retain the original affidavit.

Under state law, a "new student" includes:

- First-time students at a public or private institution of higher education;
- Transfer students; and
- Students re-enrolling after a break of at least one fall or spring semester.

Students who are enrolled exclusively in online or distance education courses or who are age 22 or older are exempt from this requirement.

**Compliance Required:**

New and returning students subject to this requirement will not be permitted to register for classes until appropriate documentation (shot record, affidavit, or physician's certificate) is submitted. The vaccination or booster must have been received within five years of the student's first day of classes. A booster is required if the initial dose was received before the

student's 16th birthday to ensure continued protection during college.

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## **Identification Cards**

A student's ID card serves as their official Howard Payne University identification and should be carried at all times while on campus. If a student loses their ID card, it should be reported promptly to the Office of Student Experience. A replacement card may be issued for a fee of \$15.00.

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## **Information Technology Policies**

Howard Payne University Information Systems includes, but is not limited to, all university-owned computers, printers, network hardware, cabling, internet access, web pages, software and applications, video, telephone equipment, long-distance service, and voice mail. Accounts for these systems are provided to students and employees to support university programs. It is the responsibility of each student and employee to use the information systems professionally and ethically, consistent with the overall policies of the university. Use of the information systems is a privilege, and any misuse can result in a student or employee being denied access to the information systems. The same policies on conduct stated in the Student Handbook and Employee Policies and Procedures Manual apply to any use of the information systems. By connecting to the university network, all users agree to abide by the Information Systems Policies.

All university systems and actions performed by or on devices connected to the university network are subject to monitoring.

All computers, including student-owned computers, attached to the university network must have antivirus software with a current subscription. The computer name must identify the owner or user by containing their username. Computers that do not comply will be removed from the network.

Individuals are responsible for the proper use of any information system account issued to them and should never provide their credentials to others. Individuals who give someone else access to their account are responsible for the other person's actions. All users are expected to use password protection and multi-factor authentication to prevent unauthorized account access. When accounts expire, any files or messages associated with that account are deleted. Student accounts expire on the last day of the semester when the student graduates or leaves school. Employee accounts expire on the last day of employment.

Some information transmitted on the system is private and confidential. Each authorized user is responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of such information.

The system is not to be used to promote political or other campaigns.

Use of the system to display antagonism toward the Christian faith, the university, or its personnel will not be permitted.

Threatening, sexist, racist, obscene, pornographic, or harassing materials or messages may not be accessed, sent from, or stored on a university computer system. Any action that would cause damage to hardware or software or disrupt the operation of any information system is prohibited.

All computer software on any computer connected to the network must be installed in compliance with the licensing agreement accompanying the software. The user of a university-owned computer is responsible for all software on that computer.

Software programs are protected by Section 117 of the 1976 Copyright Act unless their owners place them in the public domain.

Educational institutions and their constituencies are not exempt from the law. It is illegal to duplicate, copy, or distribute software, its documentation, or anything else considered intellectual property without the copyright owner's permission.

Since the Internet enhances the educational process, it is a resource that should be utilized in accordance with and support Howard Payne University's mission statement.

Violations of these policies will be handled by the standard disciplinary procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual and the Student Handbook. Some offenses may result in penalties under the Texas Computer Crime Law (Texas Penal Code, Title 7, Chapter 33) or federal laws that govern computer crime.

### ***University E-mail Policies Official Use and University E-mail Accounts Required***

E-mail is an official means of communication used by the Howard Payne University community. As such, all students and employees are required to access their HPU e-mail accounts for university business. The

University expects recipients of university e-mail to retrieve and read the communication in a timely fashion. As an official communications tool, the HPU e-mail system should be used primarily to facilitate the academic and administrative needs of the University. Personal use is allowed but should be kept to a minimum.

### ***E-mail User Names***

Student addresses are standardized in the form of `firstname.lastname@hputx.edu`. The names used are the student's official first and last names as registered and may not contain middle names or nicknames. Faculty/staff addresses utilize the first letter of the first name and the entire last name (e.g., [jsmith@hputx.edu](mailto:jsmith@hputx.edu)).

### ***University Oversight of the HPU E-mail System***

The University's Information Technology Services is responsible for implementing, directing, and supervising the HPU e-mail system. Users are required to abide by all e-mail policies and procedures issued by the University and the Information Systems Department. While the University strives to respect the privacy of individuals, the HPU e-mail system and communications transmitted through it are the property of the University. As such, the University reserves the right to monitor all communications and activity involving the HPU E-mail system.

### ***Inappropriate Usage***

As a Christian university, HPU expects all users to be responsible for using the e-mail system appropriately. The HPU e-mail system may not be used for illegal purposes, harassment or offensive communications, vulgar or lewd materials, slander, or transmittal of any materials, images, or messages inconsistent with our Christian mission. The HPU e-mail system may not be used to solicit business or fundraising endeavors unrelated to the academic or administrative needs of the University. Users should not advertise items for sale or rent or communicate information not applicable to the general campus community. Misuse or abuse of the HPU e-mail system may result in disciplinary action. Illegal usage may result in criminal prosecution.

### ***Expectations Regarding Regular Use of E-mail***

Students and employees are expected to check their official HPU e-mail accounts frequently and consistently to stay current with university-related communications. Failure to read and properly manage one's HPU e-mail account is not an acceptable excuse for not receiving official university communications via e-mail. Students should not share their HPU e-mail passwords with any other individuals. Official e-mail

addresses will be included in directory information unless a student requests otherwise.

## **Library**

The Walker Memorial Library provides students with access to both print and electronic resources through its website. Students may log in to online library resources using their HPU username and password. Some services may require the use of the library barcode number, which is located on the back of the student ID.

Library-owned online resources are available from any computer, both on and off campus, providing convenient access to research materials wherever students may be studying. The library also offers a variety of spaces for quiet study as well as areas designated for group work and collaboration.

Wireless internet access is available throughout the library for students using personal laptops or other devices.

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## **Lost and Found**

Items that are found should be turned in to the Office of Student Experience. Every effort will be made to return lost items to their rightful owners. Unclaimed items will be held for 60 days before being disposed of. Please note that the University is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal property.

Students at the El Paso and New Braunfels Centers should contact their respective center directors regarding lost and found items.

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## **Pregnant Students**

Howard Payne University is committed to supporting all students in their educational journey. The University provides access to academic programs and services for students during pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions.

Students are encouraged to meet with the Title IX Coordinator to learn more about the available supportive resources. Depending on individual circumstances and healthcare provider recommendations, reasonable adjustments may be made—such as excused absences, academic accommodations, or a leave of absence—to help students continue their education without interruption.

Pregnant and parenting students who anticipate needing support are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator and collaborate with their faculty

members. The Title IX Office will work with each student to create an individualized education plan that ensures access to academic programs and promotes successful degree completion.

**Contact:**

Tammy Arreola  
Dean of Students & Title IX Coordinator  
Mabee University Center, Suite 206C  
325-649-8630  
tarreola@hputx.edu

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**Shuttle Service**

Howard Payne University provides shuttle service between the main campus and east campus locations in Brownwood. Shuttle routes, schedules, and stop locations are available on the University website.

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**Social Media Use**

As members of the Howard Payne University community, students and employees represent the University both on and off campus, in person and online. Others may associate personal actions and content with the University, making it essential to thoughtfully consider what is posted, shared, or liked on personal social media accounts.

Although the University does not actively monitor personal social media accounts, these platforms are often publicly visible and may be subject to review. Content that conflicts with the University’s Mission Statement or Core Values may lead to action under the University’s Employee Standards of Conduct or the Student Code of Conduct.

To preserve the integrity of HPU’s identity:

- Personal social media accounts should not use official University logos, artwork, or branding elements.
- Content shared on personal accounts should not be presented as representing the official views or positions of the University.
- Personal accounts should not be used to conduct University business.
- Images of University employees or members of the Board of Trustees may not be posted without written permission from the Office of University Marketing and Communications.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion or termination of employment.

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**Student Complaint Process**

Howard Payne University is committed to providing high-quality education and services to students while ensuring fairness and harmony in the application of policies and procedures. When a student has a complaint that does not involve sexual violence, assault, or harassment, the University encourages resolution to be sought through informal communication before submitting a formal complaint.

***Informal Complaint Procedures***

Students are encouraged to address concerns by speaking directly with the appropriate instructor, school dean, staff member, or administrative officer who may be able to help clarify or resolve the situation prior to initiating a written complaint.

***Formal Complaint Procedures***

This policy does not supersede specific procedures established for exceptional cases such as grade appeals, allegations of illegal discrimination, sexual violence or assault, sexual harassment, due process, or other matters handled under separate protocols.

***Lodging a Formal Student Complaint***

Students who wish to submit a formal complaint must complete the official *Formal Student Complaint Form*, available on the HPU website, and submit it to the appropriate cabinet-level officer.

**Link to the form:** <https://www.hputx.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Formal-Complaint-Form.pdf>

***Administrative Complaint Acknowledgment***

Once received, the complaint will be forwarded to the administrator responsible for the area related to the concern. The administrator will provide written acknowledgment to the student within five (5) working days, confirming receipt of the complaint and outlining its nature. A written response to the complaint will be issued within fifteen (15) working days following deliberation. Copies of the written complaint and acknowledgment letter will be sent to the cabinet-level officer overseeing the area.

***Administrative Deliberation and Response***

If the administrator receiving the complaint determines it falls outside of their area of supervision or expertise, the matter may be referred to the appropriate next-level administrator. The administrative process typically involves an

investigation into the source of the complaint, prior efforts to resolve it, and relevant contextual information to assist in resolution. The administrator will then issue a written response to the student, with a copy sent to the applicable cabinet-level officer. Once resolved, the cabinet officer will forward the documentation to the President's Office, where a log of formal student complaints will be maintained.

### ***Student Appeal Process***

If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of a formal complaint, they may submit a written appeal to the senior administrator over the area in which the complaint was lodged. Appeals must be made within five (5) working days of receiving the initial administrative response. An acknowledgment of the appeal will be provided within five (5) working days, and a written response will be issued within fifteen (15) working days of the acknowledgment.

If the cabinet-level officer was the original respondent, the appeal should be submitted to the **Student Experience Appeals Committee**, following the same timeline. The committee's decision is final.

### ***Administrative Levels for Student Complaints***

Student complaints should be directed to the appropriate cabinet-level officer based on the nature of the concern:

- **Vice President for Academic Affairs:**  
Academic programs, accreditation, information technology, institutional research, library, registrar, retention
- **Chief Financial Officer/Vice President for Finance and Administration:**  
Auxiliary services (bookstore, dining hall), facilities, financial aid, human resources, student accounts
- **Vice President for Advancement:**  
Alumni, development, fundraising, extension campuses, media, publications, public relations
- **Vice President for Student Experience:**  
Athletics, public safety, residence life, spiritual life, student activities, student organizations, student conduct
- **Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management:**  
Admissions

### ***External Complaint Processes Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)***

If a current, former, or prospective student is dissatisfied after completing the HPU complaint process, they may submit a complaint to the **Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)**. Complaints may be submitted via:

- **Email:**  
StudentComplaints@theeb.state.tx.us
- **Mail:**  
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
Office of General Counsel  
P.O. Box 12788  
Austin, TX 78711-2788

**For additional information**, visit:  
<http://www.theeb.state.tx.us/index.cfm?objectid=051F93F5-03D4-9CCE-40FA9F46F2CD3C9D>

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### ***Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)***

To file a complaint with HPU's accrediting agency, the **Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)**:

- Complaints must relate to alleged, significant, documented non-compliance with accreditation standards, policies, or procedures.
- Complainants are expected to first exhaust institutional complaint procedures before contacting SACSCOC.
- The SACSCOC complaint process is not intended to mediate individual disputes or act as an appeals board.
- Complaints must reference specific standards from *The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement*.

To submit a complaint:

1. Complete the official SACSCOC Complaint Form.
2. Mail two printed copies to:  
**President**  
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges

1866 Southern Lane  
Decatur, GA 30033-4097

For the policy and complete details, visit:  
<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/complaintpolicy.pdf>

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## VETERAN'S AFFAIRS

### Veteran's Education Benefit Program

Students eligible for Military educational benefits may contact the HPU School Certifying Official in the Center for Student Success located in the Walker Memorial Library, Room 201C, or at 325-649-8620.

Howard Payne University's programs are approved for individuals who wish to attend and receive benefits under Chapter 30 - Montgomery G.I. Bill - Active Duty, Chapter 31 - Vocational Readiness and Employment, Chapter 33 - Post 9/11 G.I. Bill, Chapter 35 - Survivors/Dependents Education Benefits, Chapter 1606, and Tuition Assistance (Active Duty or Reserves).

Veterans and/or dependents of veterans who are applying for admission to HPU follow the same procedures as other applicants, but should also contact the VA Certifying Official.

### Certification of Enrollment

A VA student may not receive payment for courses previously completed, courses above degree requirements, courses not required for the student's approved degree, or course repeats in which a grade of "D" or better was earned unless a higher grade is required for a particular course of study (example, a "C" required for all courses in a major), or courses from which the student withdraws without mitigating circumstances. The fact that a "D" will not transfer to an upper-level school is NOT a consideration.

The veteran or veteran dependent's official letter of eligibility or Certificate of Eligibility from the Veterans Administration must be submitted to the HPU School Certification Officer before certification of their enrollment may be submitted to the VA or DOD for payment. The enrollment of students receiving VA Education Benefits will be certified when their registration is finalized. Benefits take 4 to 8 weeks after the certification has been submitted to arrive at the student's home or banking institution.

Students must notify the school certifying official of any changes in their status caused by their failure to enroll, any increase or decrease in their training time, or if they stop attending class.

### Progress Policy Guidelines

The academic standards for a student receiving military educational benefits will be governed by the Academic Probation, Academic Suspension, and Satisfactory Progress policies for all students as stated in the University catalog. Students who fail to make satisfactory progress, who are placed on academic suspension, or whose cumulative grade point average does not meet the required level for two consecutive semesters will be reported to the Veterans Affairs Regional Office.

### Information Links

**GI Bill Website:** [www.gibill.va.gov/](http://www.gibill.va.gov/)

### Veterans Administration

Muskogee Regional Office  
Phone: 1-888-442-4551

### VA Certifying Official at HPU

Phone: 325-649-8620

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## STUDENTS' RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Howard Payne University affirms the importance of individual freedom as both a right and a responsibility. By enrolling at HPU, students agree to uphold the University's behavioral standards, academic regulations, and institutional policies.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with local, state, and federal laws, as well as the policies and behavioral expectations set forth by the University. While HPU does not assume the role of civil law enforcement or a judicial body, it reserves the right to act in matters that affect the academic, spiritual, and communal life of the campus. Compliance with civil law is considered the baseline for acceptable behavior for all members of the HPU community.

### Special Note:

Howard Payne University has established comprehensive health and safety policies, procedures, and protocols, which are published on the HPU website under Campus-Wide Health and Safety Policies. All students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors are expected to comply with these guidelines during their time on campus.

Failure to follow or willful disregard of the University's stated health and safety protocols may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to:

- **Visitors:** Permanent removal from all University campuses and events
- **Faculty and Staff:** Written reprimand and further corrective action as outlined in employee policies
- **Students:** Loss of access to on-campus dining services and housing privileges

As a Christ-centered academic community, HPU holds its students to high standards of integrity and accountability. We believe that fostering a safe, respectful, and responsible environment is essential for personal growth and community well-being.

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### Intellectual Property Rights and Ownership

“Intellectual property” refers to any creation that falls within, but is not limited to, the following categories: an invention, an issued patent, a copyrighted work, or any legal right inherent in a patent, copyright, trademark, know-how, or trade secret.

Generally, Howard Payne University employees and students have the right to patent, copyright, publish, or otherwise establish ownership of creative works they develop using their own expertise and labor. They may also market these works and retain any royalties earned, subject to the following conditions:

- If a creative work is produced as an assigned duty—meaning it is created in response to a specific directive—the intellectual property is considered “work for hire.” In such cases, ownership rights belong to Howard Payne University, unless the University explicitly relinquishes those rights to the individual.

*Note: The general expectation to engage in research and scholarship, which may result in publication, is not considered an assigned duty and does not qualify as “work for hire.”*

- If a creative work is developed using significant University resources—such as specialized facilities, equipment, or personnel—ownership rights may be shared between the individual and the University. Determining what constitutes “significant use” must be evaluated based on the specific facts and circumstances of each case. A uniform standard is not appropriate due to varying needs across disciplines.

Typical use of standard resources—such as library materials, administrative support, word processing software, or basic services—does not constitute significant use.

If there is uncertainty regarding ownership or use of resources, the creator should request a written opinion from their school dean. If a disagreement arises, the matter may be appealed to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

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### Political Activity

Howard Payne University is a nonprofit institution of higher education and a charitable organization regulated by Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. As such, the University is strictly prohibited from participating in or intervening in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office. Students are expected to respect this limitation and refrain from engaging in activities that may give the appearance of University endorsement or opposition to political candidates.

Students are free to express their individual and collective political views, provided they clearly state that they are not speaking on behalf of the University and that they abide by all other University policies. However, recognized student organizations are not permitted to endorse or oppose political candidates. Personal expressions of political opinions should always be shared with courtesy and respect for differing views, and should not be intimidating, harassing, or disruptive.

Candidates for public office may appear on campus only for educational purposes, and such appearances require prior approval from the University President. Approval will be granted only if the University is prepared to offer equal opportunities to all viable candidates for the same office. These events must not be campaign rallies, and each must begin and end with a clear statement that the University does not endorse or oppose any candidate.

Campaign literature and materials in support of or opposition to any political candidate may not be posted, displayed, or distributed anywhere on campus, at University-sponsored events, or at events sponsored by University-approved student organizations. Students may keep campaign materials in their personal residence hall rooms, campus apartments, or duplexes, but such materials must not be visible from the outside (e.g., posted in windows). Students may wear small campaign buttons, and both students and

employees may display campaign bumper stickers on their personal vehicles parked on campus.

University facilities and services may not be used by or on behalf of any outside organization or individual seeking to promote a political candidate or party. No political activity in support of or in opposition to a candidate—whether it involves services, materials, or events—may be funded with University resources. Furthermore, fundraising or recruitment of campaign volunteers for political purposes is not permitted in the name of the University, on University property, or at events sponsored by University-approved student organizations.

University-approved student organizations, faculty, and administrators may use campus communication channels to announce political forums or discussions that are educational in nature and officially sponsored by the University or an approved student organization.

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### **Student Participation in Decision-Making**

Howard Payne University values the input of its students and seeks to involve them in the decision-making process where appropriate. Student participation is welcomed through representation on designated University-wide committees. Students may attend Board of Trustees meetings only by invitation.

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### **Student Gatherings**

All public assemblies or organized gatherings on University property must be approved in advance. Students must submit an activity request form to the Director of Leadership and Engagement at least three business days before the planned event. Any student or group found attempting to disrupt the normal operations of the University may be subject to disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

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### **Voter Registration**

Students at Howard Payne University are encouraged to be active and informed citizens, participating in civic life at the federal, state, local, and institutional levels. One of the key responsibilities of citizenship is voting. Students are encouraged to vote in all elections, whether in person or by absentee ballot. Texas voter registration forms are available at the Copy Center & Mailroom, located in the Mabee University Center.

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## **STUDENT CONDUCT**

### **University Policies and Regulations**

Howard Payne University invites students to participate in and nurture an academic community dedicated to Christ-centered learning. As members of this community, students are expected to act with honesty, demonstrate respect for others, support the mission of the University, and abide by all applicable laws and University policies.

The **Code of Conduct** outlines general expectations for student behavior, identifying both acceptable and prohibited actions. While it is not as specific as a criminal statute, it serves as a foundational guide. Students should understand that violations outside this list may still warrant disciplinary action.

### ***Philosophy of Student Conduct***

At Howard Payne University, students are expected to uphold personal integrity, be accountable for their actions, observe federal, state, and local laws, and comply with University regulations. Respect for the rights, property, and dignity of others is essential.

As a Christian institution, HPU affirms the God-given worth and potential of every individual. We are committed to cultivating a campus culture that reflects the love, grace, and truth of Jesus Christ. Our goal is to offer an educational experience that is not only academically enriching but also spiritually and personally transformative.

When student behavior conflicts with University expectations, we view these moments as opportunities for growth and restoration. While appropriate consequences are applied, they are administered within a restorative framework focused on reconciliation and transformation. Discipline is not intended to shame but to encourage students to learn, grow, and realign with the values of our community.

Our ultimate aim is to help students become the individuals God has called them to be. The student conduct process exists to support this development, offering guidance in overcoming challenges and fostering growth in character and faith.

Please note that the University does not allow legal counsel to participate in conduct proceedings. Decisions in behavioral matters are made using the preponderance of the evidence standard, meaning outcomes are based on what is more likely than not to have occurred.

By choosing to enroll at Howard Payne University, students—and by entering into an employment

agreement, employees—agree to uphold and abide by all University policies, including those outlined in this handbook.

### **Student Behavior**

Howard Payne University holds students to high standards of personal conduct beginning at the time of admission. These expectations apply to student behavior both on and off campus, regardless of whether the conduct occurs during University-related activities. As representatives of the HPU community, students are expected to uphold the university's values and mission at all times.

Routine conduct concerns—whether in the classroom, residence halls, chapel, or other campus settings—are typically addressed by the appropriate faculty member, resident director, or supervising staff. When issues escalate or involve more serious misconduct, they will be referred to the Office of Student Experience and handled by the Dean of Students or their designee. This ensures that significant conduct matters, including those involving legal or civil liberty considerations, are managed consistently and in accordance with University policies.

When student behavior potentially violates the law in addition to University policy, the Howard Payne University Department of Public Safety (HPU DPS) may be involved to assess the situation, provide an appropriate response, and pursue legal action when necessary. The University may also proceed with its own conduct processes independent of any legal proceedings.

Behavior that leads to or rises to the level of a felony offense may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion from the University.

### **Breach of Personal and Professional Integrity**

At Howard Payne University, integrity is foundational to our identity as a Christ-centered academic community. We are called to pursue truth, honesty, and responsibility in all areas of life, including academic work. Personal and professional integrity reflects not only the mission of the University but also the character of the individuals who make up our community.

Students are expected to complete all academic assignments with honesty and without unauthorized assistance. Any attempt to misrepresent one's knowledge, understanding, or abilities—or to submit the work of another, including work generated by artificial intelligence (AI), as one's own—is a serious violation of the University's standards.

### ***Cheating***

Cheating is defined as any act that seeks to gain an unfair academic advantage. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance on any assignment or exam;
- Using unauthorized technology to send or receive information;
- Collaborating with others on an individual assignment and submitting it as one's own;
- Exchanging money or other compensation in return for academic work or information about exam materials.

### ***Plagiarism***

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's intellectual property as your own. Examples include:

- Using another person's words, ideas, or work without proper citation;
- Copying and pasting from online or printed sources without attribution;
- Purchasing or borrowing academic work and submitting it under your name;
- Paraphrasing someone else's ideas too closely without credit;
- Failing to acknowledge collaboration when required.
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### ***Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)***

While generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, GrammarlyGO, and others may be useful for learning, using these tools to complete or produce work without an instructor's permission is considered academic dishonesty. Submitting AI-generated content—whether entirely or in part—without authorization or proper acknowledgment is a violation of the University's academic integrity standards.

Faculty may choose to allow the use of AI for certain assignments and will provide guidance on acceptable use. When permitted, students must follow the instructor's expectations and clearly cite any AI-generated contributions. Misuse of AI tools may result in the same disciplinary consequences as other forms of academic misconduct, such as cheating or plagiarism.

### ***Accountability and Consequences***

Because breaches of integrity harm both the student and the University, violations are addressed with seriousness and care. When an incident occurs, the faculty member will assess the situation and consult with the appropriate School Dean. Based on the circumstances, the student may receive a grade of "F" on the assignment or for the entire course. The faculty member will document the violation in writing and

report it to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, where a Personal and Professional Integrity file will be maintained.

Repeated or serious violations of this policy may result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

As with any grade-related matter, students have the right to appeal a decision made by a faculty member regarding a breach of academic integrity. The appeal process is outlined in the University Catalog.

### ***Prohibited Behaviors***

Howard Payne University expects all students to uphold high standards of personal conduct that reflect the University's Christ-centered mission. These expectations apply to student behavior both on and off campus, regardless of whether the student is engaged in University-sponsored activities.

The University's student conduct process is designed to be restorative and transformative, encouraging accountability and personal growth while maintaining the safety and integrity of the campus community. However, violations of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, especially in cases involving harm to others, threats to community safety, or illegal activity.

The following are examples of prohibited behaviors:

- Intentional interference with or infringement upon the rights, safety, dignity, or well-being of any member of the University community.
- Physical or verbal abuse, fighting, domestic violence, threats, intimidation, harassment, coercion, physical or electronic stalking, or any conduct that endangers the health, safety, or welfare of any person.
- The unauthorized use of, damage to, or theft of University or personal property.
- Providing false information to University officials or refusing to present valid identification upon request.
- Forgery, alteration, or unauthorized use of University documents, records, or identification.
- Disruptive behavior that interferes with teaching, learning, worship, or community life.
- Unauthorized access to or use of University facilities, property, or equipment.
- Tampering with building locks or unauthorized possession, use, or duplication of University keys.
- Tampering with or disabling safety and security equipment, including fire alarms and surveillance systems.
- Making false emergency reports or misusing emergency equipment.
- Violating local, state, or federal law.
- Lewd, indecent, or otherwise inappropriate conduct.
- Use or possession of cigarettes, cigars, or electronic smoking devices (e-cigarettes, vapes) on campus.
- Use or possession of illegal drugs, synthetic substances, prescription drugs without a valid prescription, or any substance that may cause harm to oneself or others.
- Possession or use of drug-related paraphernalia (e.g., pipes, roach clips) or tobacco-related devices (e.g., hookah pipes, rolling papers).
- Use or possession of alcohol on campus, at University-sponsored events or trips, or in violation of local, state, or federal law.
- Possession of alcohol-related paraphernalia, including empty containers, shot glasses, drinking funnels, or similar items.
- Participation in drinking games or other activities that promote binge drinking, regardless of whether alcohol is present.
- Possession or display of obscene, sexually explicit, or sexually suggestive materials, devices, or paraphernalia.
- Hazing or any activity that causes mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule.
- Use of profane, obscene, or offensive language in speech, print, or digital communications.
- Viewing, possessing, or distributing obscene or pornographic content in any form,

including literature, media, music, and clothing.

- Violation of University motor vehicle policies and regulations.
- Gambling or academic dishonesty, including cheating or plagiarism.
- Infringement of copyright laws or violation of University copyright policies.

Weapons of any kind are strictly prohibited on campus. This includes, but is not limited to, firearms, handguns, knives, pellet guns, BB guns, electroshock weapons (e.g., tasers), guns that fire plastic or metal projectiles, ammunition, explosives, and fireworks.

In accordance with Texas Senate Bill 11, which allows private institutions to opt out of permitting concealed carry on campus, Howard Payne University has formally opted out. Therefore, it is a criminal offense for a license holder to carry a handgun on HPU property, at University-sponsored activities, or in University-owned or leased vehicles. State law also continues to prohibit the open carry of firearms on any college campus in Texas.

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### ***Animals/Pets***

Animals and pets are not permitted inside University buildings or athletic facilities, with the following exceptions:

- Service animals, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Approved animals used for academic or classroom purposes
- Approved emotional support animals (ESAs) for students with documented disabilities (permitted in residence halls only)
- Approved dogs owned by Resident Directors (in campus housing only)
- Fish in aquariums not exceeding 10 gallons (in campus housing only)

All approved animals must remain under the control of their owner at all times. Owners are responsible for the care, control, and any damage or disturbances caused by their animals.

### **Emotional Support Animals**

Emotional support animals (ESAs) are permitted in University residence halls, subject to completing the

appropriate accommodation request and approval process through the Office of Student Experience. ESAs are not permitted in other types of campus housing.

### **Pets in Duplex Housing**

Pets are permitted in University-owned duplex housing. To maintain this privilege, residents must submit a completed pet application, roommate agreement (if applicable), and pet rental fee every six months, once for the fall term and once for the spring term. Pets may not be brought to campus housing until full approval has been granted for the current term.

For more information or to request accommodations for a service or emotional support animal, contact the Office of Student Experience.

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### ***Dress and Appearance***

All members of the Howard Payne University community are responsible for how they present themselves. As a professional and educational environment, the University is committed to preparing students for success in their chosen careers. The way you present yourself to faculty, staff, visitors, future employers, and fellow students should reflect respect, professionalism, and Christian values.

These expectations apply to all University-sponsored activities, whether on or off campus, including classes, chapel, and athletic events.

- Clothing should fit appropriately and fully cover private areas when sitting, standing, or walking. Extremes in dress are not acceptable, including halter tops, crop tops, or exposed midriffs, and overly short or revealing skirts and shorts.
- Clothing that displays offensive, vulgar, or inappropriate language, images, or slogans—especially those promoting drugs, alcohol, or other behaviors inconsistent with the University's values—is not permitted.

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### ***Hazing***

Under state law, individuals and/or organizations engaging in hazing could be subject to fines and charged with a criminal offense. Under HPU policy, individuals and/or organizations engaging in hazing may be subject to disciplinary sanctions, including expulsion.

For further details regarding hazing, please refer to the Student Organizations section of the Student Handbook.

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## **Railroad Track Safety**

For the safety of our campus community, all students and visitors must use the designated main crossing gate when traveling between the main campus and the athletic complex.

The Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad Police will issue citations to individuals who cross the railroad tracks at any location other than the designated main crossing. Crossing at unauthorized points constitutes a Class C Misdemeanor and may result in a substantial fine, as determined by the local judicial authority. A second offense may be considered criminal trespassing, which is classified as a Class B Misdemeanor.

In addition to legal consequences, crossing the railroad tracks illegally or without caution can result in serious injury or death. Students are strongly urged to use the designated crossing at all times and to remain alert and aware when approaching the tracks.

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## **Sexuality and Gender**

Howard Payne University strives to create a Christ-centered environment where students feel safe, supported, and respected as they develop spiritually, intellectually, and personally. HPU fosters open dialogue on complex issues, including those related to sexuality and gender, and encourages students to approach these topics with humility, compassion, and a commitment to Christian values.

The University affirms a biblical understanding of sexuality and gender as gifts from God. Relying on Scripture and documents affirmed by the Baptist General Convention of Texas, HPU maintains the following positions:

- Marriage is a covenant union between one man and one woman.
- Fidelity is expected within the marriage covenant, and purity/celebrity is expected in singleness.
- God created human beings as male and female, and gender is understood to align with one's biological sex.

HPU students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with these biblical standards of Christian morality. Students who engage in behaviors that

violate these standards may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the University.

As a Christian institution, HPU expects students to refrain from participating in advocacy groups or organizations that promote beliefs or behaviors regarding sexuality or gender identity that are inconsistent with biblical teaching and the University's stated values.

Students who have questions or who are personally navigating these topics are encouraged to seek support through confidential conversations with the University Counselor or other appropriate University personnel. HPU is committed to walking alongside students with compassion and grace.

**Special Note:** A student who reports an incident of sexual assault will not be subject to disciplinary action for student code of conduct violations that occurred in conjunction with the reported incident.

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## ***Sportsmanship***

In alignment with the integrity of higher education and in partnership with the American Southwest Conference and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), Howard Payne University is committed to upholding the highest ideals of sportsmanship among all individuals associated with HPU's athletic programs and events.

All athletic administrators, coaches, student-athletes, spirit groups, and fans are expected to demonstrate respect, fairness, civility, and honesty in support of a positive, Christ-honoring atmosphere for athletic competition, thereby reflecting well on our institution.

HPU students are reminded to embody the Christian values on which the University is founded when attending athletic events, whether at home in Brownwood or at another location.

The following expectations apply at all HPU athletic events:

1. Cheer for HPU teams, not against visiting teams.
2. Refrain from making personal comments about players, coaches, or officials.
3. Profanity, vulgar language, and racist or sexist remarks are strictly prohibited.

Students who violate these standards of conduct at athletic events may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with University policy.

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## Copyright Infringement Policy

Howard Payne University complies with federal regulations requiring institutions to annually provide current and prospective students with information about policies and sanctions related to copyright infringement.

In accordance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) Sec. 488(a)(1)(E), students are hereby informed of the following:

- Unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material, including through peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing, may subject students to civil and criminal liabilities.
- Penalties for violating federal copyright laws may include substantial fines and imprisonment.
- HPU strictly prohibits the unauthorized use, reproduction, or distribution of copyrighted materials using the University's information technology systems, and such activity may result in disciplinary action.

Copyright law, as defined in Title 17 of the United States Code, protects "original works of authorship fixed in a tangible medium of expression," whether in traditional formats (e.g., books, records) or digital formats (e.g., electronic journals, websites). These protections apply to authors, publishers, producers, and content creators.

Copyright infringement occurs when someone exercises one or more of the exclusive rights granted to the copyright owner under Section 106 of the Copyright Act without permission or legal authority. This includes, but is not limited to, the right to reproduce, distribute, perform, or publicly display a copyrighted work. Downloading or uploading substantial portions of copyrighted material without authorization is considered infringement.

Violators of copyright law may face both civil and criminal penalties.

Civil penalties may include actual damages or statutory damages ranging from \$750 to \$30,000 per work infringed. In cases of willful infringement, the statutory damages may increase up to \$150,000 per

work. Courts may also award legal costs and attorneys' fees. (See 17 U.S.C. §§ 504, 505)

Criminal penalties for willful infringement may include fines of up to \$250,000 per offense and imprisonment for up to five years.

For more information, visit the official U.S. Copyright Office at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov).

Students are responsible for complying with all applicable copyright laws and licensing agreements when using University resources. This includes, but is not limited to, software, electronic files, documents, messages, and other digital media.

Students may not:

- Download, copy, forward, or alter copyrighted materials without the explicit written consent of the copyright holder or appropriate license.
- Use HPU's internet services or email system for the unauthorized sharing of copyrighted works.
- Circumvent copyright protections or engage in illegal file sharing.

Students who violate these policies may be subject to disciplinary action by the University, including suspension of network access, academic sanctions, or referral to legal authorities.

For questions about copyright compliance or to report suspected violations, students should contact the Office of Information Technology Services or the Office of Student Experience.

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## Library Policy

The Walker Memorial Library and all libraries within the Walker Building have a unique set of exemptions from liability for copyright infringement when they exercise certain exclusive rights of copyright holders, such as making copies, displaying and performing works publicly, and distributing works to the public (Section 108). Our libraries are also protected by fair use as guided by federal guidelines (Section 107) and advised by the American Library Association.

Library employees educate students on copyright policies and fair use through library instruction and guidance during reference interviews. Copyright policies are posted by the copiers and in other areas of

the library. These policies are also available online in the HPU Student Handbook.

### **Photocopies**

The law of the United States governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Libraries and archives are authorized to provide photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material only under certain conditions, including that the reproduction will be used for private study, scholarship, or research. Signs noting this provision are placed on library copiers and scanners.

### **Fair Use**

The Fair Use Doctrine is arguably the most important limitation on the exclusive rights of the copyright holder. It allows and encourages socially beneficial uses of copyrighted works such as teaching, learning, and scholarship. Without fair use, those beneficial uses—such as quoting from copyrighted works, providing multiple copies to students in class, and creating new knowledge based on previously published knowledge—would be considered infringements. Fair use is the means for assuring a robust and vigorous exchange of copyrighted information.

### **Public Domain**

A public domain work is a creative work that is not protected by copyright and may be freely used by everyone. Reasons a work may not be protected include:

1. The term of copyright for the work has expired.
2. The author failed to satisfy statutory formalities to perfect the copyright.
3. The work is a work of the U.S. Government.

For more information on the public domain, visit: <https://www.teachingcopyright.org/handout/public-domain-faq>.

### **Digital Archives**

Patrons and users have the right to use any online materials for educational fair use from our digital media, databases, and online archives without prior permission. Our libraries ask that proper citation information be provided, as indicated above, in all copies. Students wishing to access original copies of online digital content must schedule an appointment with a librarian.

For additional information on fair use and copyright, patrons are encouraged to visit the following resources:

- The Fair Use Index:  
<http://copyright.gov/fair-use/>
- Copyright Clearance Center Copyright Basics:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uiq42O6rhW4>

### **Faculty**

Faculty are encouraged to understand their rights by visiting the following websites:

- Association for Research Libraries Guide to Copyright:  
<http://www.knowyourcopyrights.org/resources-for-teaching-faculty>
- MPAA: <http://www.mpaa.org/>
- RIAA: <http://www.riaa.com/>
- American Library Association:  
<http://www.districtdispatch.org/policy-issues/copyright/>

### **Technology Deterrents Regarding Copyright Infringement**

The University has a plan to combat the unauthorized distribution of copyrighted materials. This plan includes a variety of technology deterrents, including a method for deterring the downloading of music and movies. Any attempt to circumvent or violate these technology-based deterrents is strictly prohibited.

Current deterrents include:

- Configuring the network firewall to block all known and suspected peer-to-peer/file-sharing websites or IP addresses.
- Configuring the network firewall to throttle other traffic typical of file-sharing downloads.
- Running reports that monitor bandwidth for excessive downloading or uploading or other unusual spikes in activity.
- Configuring network access to prevent multiple file/server connections to a single computer connected to the network.

- Blocking access in the event of repeat offenses.

### **Disciplinary Actions by the University**

All policies regarding disciplinary action for students can be found in the Student Handbook under Student Conduct, Sanctions, and Processes. Policies regarding faculty and staff are included in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Employees.

### **Questions and Contact Information**

- Questions concerning academic copyright infringement may be directed to the Director of Library Services at 325-649-8610 or 325-649-8602.
- Technology-related questions may be directed to the Information Technology Office at 325-649-8075.
- Questions about student violations or disciplinary actions may be directed to the Office of Student Experience at 325-649-8017.
- Questions related to employee violations may be directed to the Office of Human Resources at 325-649-8012.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT SANCTIONS & PROCESSES**

### **Notice, Hearing, and Sanctions**

When a student is found to have violated the HPU Student Code of Conduct, the Dean of Students may collaborate with other University representatives, such as the Athletic Director, University Counselor, or Vice President for Student Experience, as appropriate. Together, they will propose disciplinary sanctions intended to:

1. Address the impact of the student's actions on individuals and the University community;
2. Educate the student on the risks and consequences of their behavior; and
3. Deter future misconduct by fostering accountability, reflection, and growth.

Howard Payne University approaches student conduct with a transformative and restorative philosophy. Disciplinary actions are designed not only to correct behavior but to guide students toward becoming who

God has called them to be. These actions aim to redirect harmful behavior, uphold the dignity and rights of others, teach responsibility, and maintain a Christ-centered community in alignment with the University's mission.

In most cases, students will be informed of the reported violation and offered the opportunity to respond and present evidence before any sanctions are issued. Students are strongly encouraged to participate fully and honestly in this process. **Failure to respond to an official summons** may be treated as a serious breach of conduct and could result in additional consequences.

Legal representation is not permitted during any stage of the student conduct process.

### **Levels of Student Conduct Proceedings**

The University addresses conduct violations through three levels of proceedings based on the nature and severity of the behavior.

#### **Level One**

*Supervised by:*

- Resident Directors for on-campus students
- Dean of Students for off-campus students

*Typical Violations:*

- Use of profanity
- Noise violations
- Viewing or possession of pornography
- Gambling
- Disrespectful behavior

*Possible Sanctions:*

- Loss of privileges
- Restitution
- Fines
- Change in housing assignment
- Assigned educational tasks or community service
- Behavioral contract

#### **Level Two**

*Supervised by:* Dean of Students

*Typical Violations:*

- Repeated Level One violations
- Failure to comply with University officials
- Fighting or verbal altercations
- Harassment or threats
- Overnight guest policy violations
- Academic dishonesty
- Theft or vandalism

- Any violation referred by University personnel

*Possible Sanctions:*

- Any sanctions listed in Level One
- Disciplinary probation
- Suspension or expulsion
- Loss of institutional financial aid

### **Level Three**

*Supervised by:* Dean of Students

*Typical Violations:*

- Repeated Level One or Level Two violations

### **Nicotine and Tobacco Use**

The use, possession, or distribution of nicotine or tobacco products is prohibited on campus and at all University-sponsored events. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Cigarettes
- Cigars
- Electronic smoking devices (e-cigarettes, vapes)
- Smokeless tobacco (dip, chew, snuff)
- Nicotine pouches (e.g., Zyn or similar products)
- Any nicotine delivery system or related paraphernalia
- Illegal activity
- Serious or severe physical altercations
- Hazing
- Sexual misconduct or inappropriate sexual activity
- Possession or use of a firearm or weapon on campus

*Possible Sanctions:*

- Any sanctions listed in Level Two
- Loss of campus housing privileges
- Extended suspension or permanent expulsion

### **Eligibility and Participation Restrictions**

Students who are under active disciplinary sanctions may be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities—including athletics, band, speech and debate, student organizations, and other activities in which they represent the University—until all sanctions have been completed and cleared by the Dean of Students.

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### **Assigned Work**

All assigned work will be coordinated through the Office of Student Experience. Time sheets and related documentation must be submitted to the Dean of Students in the Office of Student Experience.

While completing assigned work hours, a student may participate in practices but is not eligible to compete in intercollegiate athletics, intramurals, or other University-related activities. Additionally, students are expected to attend class regularly and not miss classes to complete assigned work.

If assigned work is issued near the end of a semester, the Dean of Students or their designee will determine whether there is sufficient time to complete it. If not, the student may be given the option to pay a fine equivalent to the remaining uncompleted hours. Assigned work fines must be paid at the Business Office. Work hours assigned for conduct violations occurring during the final three weeks of a semester may be doubled.

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### **Probation**

Disciplinary probation may be issued to students who willfully or repeatedly disregard University policies and regulations. While on probation, students are not eligible to:

- Hold membership or leadership in campus organizations
- Serve on University committees
- Participate in intercollegiate or intramural athletics
- Perform or represent the University publicly (e.g., choir, band, debate, etc.)

Counseling services may be recommended as part of a student's probation. Disciplinary probation is generally issued for a specific term, typically one semester.

Further violations may result in suspension or expulsion.

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### **Suspension**

Suspension ends a student's active enrollment at the University for a defined period of time. During the suspension, the student is not permitted to attend classes, access campus facilities, or participate in University events. Upon completion of the suspension period, the student may apply for readmission.

Suspended students will be notified of the timeframe within which they are required to vacate campus following the effective date of the suspension.

The student's academic transcript will include a notation indicating the student is ineligible to re-enroll at HPU for a specified period due to reasons other than academic or financial.

**Note:** If a student withdraws from HPU while disciplinary charges are pending that could result in suspension, the University may continue the conduct process until a final determination is made, including whether the student is ineligible to reenroll for reasons unrelated to academics or finances.

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### **Expulsion**

Expulsion permanently ends a student's active status at the University. An expelled student is not eligible for re-admission and may not access campus or attend any University-sponsored events.

The student will be notified of the timeframe within which they are required to leave campus once the expulsion becomes effective.

The student's academic transcript will include a notation stating that the student is ineligible to reenroll at HPU for reasons other than academic or financial.

**Note:** If a student withdraws from HPU while facing disciplinary charges that could result in expulsion, the University may continue the conduct process until a final determination is made, including whether the student will be ineligible to reenroll for non-academic or non-financial reasons.

### **Additional Information Regarding Transcript Notations**

At the student's request, Howard Payne University may remove a transcript notation if the student becomes eligible to re-enroll or if the University determines that good cause exists for the removal.

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### **Student Conduct Appeals Process**

Howard Payne University provides students with a transparent and respectful process for appealing disciplinary actions. Disciplinary decisions made at the lowest level should be appealed to the Dean of Students. More serious violations typically begin with a conduct hearing led by the Dean of Students. Decisions made by the Dean of Students may be appealed to the Student Experience Appeals Committee.

Students may appeal any disciplinary decision; however, an appeal is generally considered appropriate if the student believes:

- They were treated unfairly or unjustly;
- Relevant facts or evidence were not adequately considered; or
- The sanction imposed was disproportionately severe for the behavior involved.

Appeals must be submitted in writing within 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) of receiving the decision being appealed.

Appeals to the Student Experience Appeals Committee must be submitted by email to the Vice President for Student Experience, who will forward the appeal to the committee for review.

The Student Experience Appeals Committee is composed of students, faculty, and staff. The committee has the authority to uphold, reduce, reverse, or modify the original sanction(s). The decision of the Student Experience Appeals Committee is final and concludes the student conduct appeal process. If a student is unable to attend the appeal hearing in person, they may request to participate online. Students who arrive more than fifteen (15) minutes late to the scheduled appeal hearing—whether in person or online—will forfeit their appeal, and the original sanction will be upheld. All levels of the University appeals process are outlined in the University Catalog and the Student Handbook.

### **Charges of Violations of Local, State, or Federal Laws; Felony Charges**

If the University has:

(a) information indicating that a student has been convicted of, or has not contested (e.g., by pleading guilty or no contest/nolo contendere to), or has been charged with or arrested for a violation of local, state, or federal law involving drugs, gambling, violence (e.g., rape, assault, destruction of property), or any felony—regardless of jurisdiction; or

(b) confirmed information that a student has engaged in conduct that may constitute such a violation,

then the student may be immediately suspended from participation in student athletics and/or extracurricular activities. This suspension will remain in effect until the legal proceedings are resolved and/or any

applicable university or departmental disciplinary process has been completed.

Information that may trigger the application of this policy includes, but is not limited to, court records, arrest reports, law enforcement documentation, or university/departmental records.

### **Students are expected to report any criminal convictions immediately.**

By suspending the student's participation, the department and the university are not prejudging whether any crime has been committed or whether any institutional or departmental discipline is warranted. Such action is taken to protect the integrity of University life and activities.

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### ***Withdrawal or Suspension Due to Health Problems***

Students who are no longer able to meet the essential requirements of participation in the University's academic or residential programs due to serious physical or mental health concerns may be involuntarily withdrawn or suspended from the University. The University will make every reasonable effort to work collaboratively with students experiencing health challenges, including exploring possible accommodations or agreements to help them remain enrolled and supported.

However, if a student's health condition significantly disrupts the University environment or interferes with the educational experience or well-being of peers—for example, by compromising the safety, learning, or residential atmosphere—and reasonable accommodations are not feasible or effective, the University may initiate an involuntary withdrawal or suspension.

As with all policies, Howard Payne University will apply this process in a manner that does not unlawfully discriminate based on disability, race, color, national origin, sex, or age. All decisions will be made following an individualized assessment and in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

### **Physical or Mental Health Emergency Procedures**

Any student who is experiencing an immediate crisis or life-threatening situation should contact:

- **Brownwood:** HPU Department of Public Safety at 325-649-8609 or dial 911

- **El Paso:** El Paso Police Department at 915-832-4400 or dial 911
- **New Braunfels:** New Braunfels Police Department at 830-221-4100 or dial 911

If a student observes someone harming, attempting to harm, or expressing an intent to harm themselves or another person, the matter should be reported immediately to the Dean of Students, the HPU Department of Public Safety, or another University official.

### ***Individual Threat Assessment***

Howard Payne University takes seriously any behavior—including verbal conduct—that demonstrates a desire or intent to harm oneself or others.

The Dean of Students, along with the Vice President for Student Experience and/or a University counselor, will initiate an individual threat assessment if there is reason to believe a student has:

- Engaged in or threatened behavior that creates a direct threat to the health or safety of others, or that poses a high probability of substantial harm to themselves;
- Contracted a contagious disease or virus that creates a direct threat to the health or safety of others, or poses a high probability of substantial self-harm;
- Caused or is likely to cause substantial disruption to the University's academic or residential programs; or
- Damaged or threatened to damage another person's property.

The threat assessment will be based on an individualized, objective evaluation of the student's conduct, actions, and statements. When necessary, the University may consult with qualified medical or mental health professionals.

Whenever reasonably possible, the student will be notified that a threat assessment is being conducted and provided an opportunity to respond before any adverse action is taken. The University will also consider any reasonable accommodations or adjustments based on the student's circumstances.

The Dean of Students and/or the Vice President for Student Experience will take formal action only when it is determined that the situation presents a high

probability of substantial harm. Decisions will never be based on stereotypes or generalizations about disabilities, health conditions, or mental health status.

## Responses and Interventions

The student will be notified of any restrictions, interventions, or sanctions imposed as a result of the threat assessment. These may include:

- A required course of medical treatment or mental health counseling;
- Removal from university housing;
- Removal from one or more classes or activities;
- Removal from campus;
- Withdrawal from the University; or
- Other appropriate sanctions or precautions.

Sanctions imposed under this procedure are *not* disciplinary and will not be recorded in the student's educational file as disciplinary violations. However, if the student violates any of the imposed restrictions, such violations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the University's student conduct process.

It is the sole responsibility of the student to secure, at their own expense, any services necessary to comply with imposed restrictions, such as alternative housing or academic support. Any departure from university housing policies must be approved by the Vice President for Student Experience.

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## Appeals Process

A student may appeal the decision by submitting a written appeal to the Office of Student Experience within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the decision. The student may include medical evaluations, personal statements, or other pertinent documentation with the appeal.

A vice president-level administrator, appointed by the University President, will review the submitted appeal materials, the original threat assessment, and the decision of the Dean of Students and/or Vice President for Student Experience. The administrator may also consider any other relevant information.

A decision will be rendered within five (5) business days of receiving the appeal or as soon thereafter as

reasonably possible. The student will be notified in writing of the outcome. The decision of the reviewing administrator is final.

All restrictions, interventions, or sanctions will remain in effect during the appeal process unless the reviewing administrator determines otherwise.

## Reinstatement Process

Restrictions, interventions, or sanctions may only be removed with the express permission of the Dean of Students and/or the Vice President for Student Experience.

Upon the student's request for reinstatement, the student will receive clear communication outlining the specific steps required, which may include:

1. **Evaluation by a Qualified Healthcare Professional**

If the situation involves a medical or psychological emergency, the student may be evaluated by a local emergency room physician. If the student is currently under the care of a qualified healthcare provider, that provider may conduct the evaluation. Students not currently in treatment will need to contact a qualified provider of their choice. Assistance in locating a provider is available through the Office of Student Experience.

2. **Communication of Evaluation Results to the Appropriate University Official**

The student must provide written authorization for the healthcare professional to release evaluation results to the designated University representative. These results must:

- Substantiate the student's readiness to return to residential facilities, classes, and/or campus activities; and
- Include any recommended treatment or follow-up care.

Verbal communication may be used initially for time-sensitive decisions; however, a written evaluation must follow promptly.

3. **Reinstatement Interview**

The student must schedule an interview during regular business hours with the Dean of Students and/or the Vice President for Student Experience. If the University official

determines the student is ready to resume participation in previously restricted activities, the student will receive a reinstatement letter confirming their return.

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## **Drugs, Alcoholic Beverages, and Tobacco Products**

Howard Payne University is a tobacco- and nicotine-free campus. The use of any nicotine or tobacco product is prohibited in all campus buildings, outdoor spaces, University housing, and University-sponsored events.

The University strictly prohibits the use of illegal drugs both on and off campus, recognizing their harmful effects on a student's physical, psychological, social, and spiritual health. For similar reasons, the possession or use of alcohol is not permitted on campus, at University-sponsored events or trips, or in any situation that violates municipal, county, state, or federal law. Substance abuse interferes with academic progress and undermines the university's mission. HPU fully cooperates with federal, state, and local authorities in the prevention of drug and alcohol abuse.

In compliance with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989 (Public Law 101-226), HPU affirms the findings of the U.S. Surgeon General, which highlight the dangers of drug and alcohol use to the health of students and employees.

As a matter of enforcement and to avoid misunderstandings, empty alcoholic beverage containers are not allowed on campus. Possession of such containers may result in a charge of violating the University's alcohol policy.

Information about drug and alcohol counseling, treatment, and rehabilitation programs is available through the Office of Student Experience.

A criminal conviction is not required for the University to impose sanctions related to violations of this policy.

It is a violation of University policy for a student to:

- Consume or possess alcohol or be under the influence of alcohol on campus or at any University-sponsored or affiliated event;
- Possess, use, or be under the influence of illegal drugs or non-prescription hallucinogenic substances; or
- Provide or misuse prescription drugs, including using another person's prescription medication or sharing one's own prescription with others.

This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, any University-sponsored trips or events sponsored by University-approved student organizations.

Students may be asked to provide documentation confirming lawful use of prescription medications under the care of a licensed medical provider. Documentation must be submitted immediately upon request by a University official.

Students are encouraged to notify their parents or legal guardians if found in violation of this policy. In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the University may notify the parent or legal guardian of a student under 21 years of age following a confirmed policy violation.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary sanctions, which may include but are not limited to: required participation in a treatment or rehabilitation program, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. The University may also refer cases to law enforcement authorities when appropriate.

### **Drug Testing Policy**

Designated University officials reserve the right to require a student to demonstrate a drug-free condition, including undergoing drug testing, when there is suspicion or reason to believe the student may be using drugs on or off campus. The determination of reasonable suspicion rests solely with University officials and may include, but is not limited to, the following indicators:

- Unexplainable, incoherent, or erratic behavior
- Repeated tardiness and/or absenteeism from class
- Noticeable drug-related odors on the person, clothing, or belongings
- A sudden and unexplained decline in academic performance
- Possession of drug paraphernalia

- Previous positive drug test results
- Citation or conviction for substance-related violations by University or municipal authorities
- Observable signs of substance use, such as physical symptoms or manifestations of impairment
- Credible reports of drug use or abuse provided by reliable sources

A student who refuses to comply with a drug test, assessment, or who declines to authorize the release of test results may be subject to disciplinary sanctions, up to and including expulsion from the University. A confirmed positive drug test may result in disciplinary actions such as suspension or expulsion.

Drug testing may be administered by the University Nurse or conducted at a designated local clinic or hospital. Refusal to comply when requested will be treated as a violation of the University's drug policy. If a test yields a positive result, the student is responsible for the cost of the test. If the result is negative, the University will cover the cost.

The University also reserves the right to use canine detection services on University property when drug possession or use is suspected and cannot be confirmed by other means. Canine detection may also be used as a preventive measure to discourage drug-related activity.

### **Criminal Sanctions**

For legal information regarding drug and alcohol possession, use, or purchase, students should refer to applicable local, state, and federal laws.

### **Health Risks Associated with Drug or Alcohol Use**

The use and abuse of drugs and alcohol can result in serious physical, psychological, academic, legal, and spiritual consequences. Below are examples of the health risks associated with various substances:

#### ***Narcotics (e.g., Opium, Morphine, Heroin, Fentanyl):***

These substances can cause euphoria, drowsiness, respiratory depression, constricted pupils, and nausea. Fentanyl is an extremely potent synthetic opioid that significantly increases the risk of overdose and death, even in very small amounts. Overdose symptoms include slow and shallow breathing, clammy skin, convulsions, coma, and possible death. Withdrawal symptoms may include watery eyes, a runny nose,

yawning, irritability, tremors, cramps, nausea, and chills.

#### ***Depressants (e.g., Barbiturates, Benzodiazepines, Quaaludes):***

These drugs depress the central nervous system, leading to slurred speech, disorientation, and impaired coordination. An overdose can result in shallow respiration, weak pulse, coma, and death. Withdrawal may involve anxiety, insomnia, tremors, seizures, and, in severe cases, death.

#### ***Stimulants (e.g., Cocaine, Crack, Ritalin, Adderall, Methamphetamine, Crystal Meth):***

Stimulants increase alertness and energy but also elevate heart rate and blood pressure. Misuse of prescription stimulants like Ritalin and Adderall—often prescribed for ADHD—can lead to addiction, heart issues, anxiety, and sleep disorders. Methamphetamine and crystal meth are highly addictive and can cause severe dental problems ("meth mouth"), skin sores, hallucinations, paranoia, and violent behavior. An overdose can result in seizures, heart failure, stroke, or death. Withdrawal symptoms include fatigue, depression, agitation, and suicidal thoughts.

#### ***Hallucinogens (e.g., LSD, Psilocybin/Magic Mushrooms):***

These drugs distort perception of time and space and can cause hallucinations, panic attacks, paranoia, and psychosis. In some cases, persistent psychosis or flashbacks may occur even after drug use ends. Overdose effects may include intense fear, dangerous behavior, and in rare cases, death.

#### ***Marijuana and Hashish:***

While often perceived as less dangerous, marijuana can impair short-term memory, coordination, and learning. It may also lead to anxiety, depression, and paranoia, especially with long-term or heavy use. Overuse can cause fatigue, psychosis, and dependency. Withdrawal symptoms may include irritability, insomnia, and decreased appetite.

#### ***Alcohol:***

Alcohol impairs judgment, coordination, and reaction time, increasing the risk of injury and accident. It is a central nervous system depressant and can lead to memory loss, liver damage, brain impairment, dependency, and death, especially when combined with other depressants. Withdrawal symptoms can include tremors, seizures, hallucinations, and in severe cases, death. Long-term use is linked to chronic illnesses and birth defects such as fetal alcohol syndrome.

**Polysubstance Use:**

Using multiple substances together (e.g., alcohol and sedatives or opioids) significantly increases the risk of overdose, unconsciousness, respiratory arrest, and death.

**Dependency & Long-Term Risks:**

All of the substances listed above have the potential for addiction and long-term damage to vital organs, cognitive function, and emotional well-being. Substance abuse often disrupts academic success, relationships, employment, and spiritual growth.

## RESIDENCE LIFE (UNIVERSITY HOUSING)

The residential communities at Howard Payne University offer a nurturing environment that fosters intellectual, social, and spiritual development.

Living in community requires the cooperation of all members. To promote a positive, safe, and healthy experience for all students, HPU has established a Student Code of Conduct and clear expectations for behavior. Students are responsible for knowing and following all university policies and guidelines.

In support of the University's commitment to the residential experience, students are required to live in residence halls unless they meet one or more of the following exemptions:

- Are a Brownwood-area resident living with parents or guardians within a 30-mile radius of HPU
- Have lived in a residence hall for four long semesters (i.e., fall and spring semesters)
- Have completed 60 HPU academic credit hours
- Are legally married to a person of the opposite sex and can provide a valid marriage license
- Will be 21 years old by August 1 (for the fall semester) or January 1 (for the spring semester)

Students under the age of 17 are not permitted to live in university housing.

Students who meet exemption requirements must complete an off-campus housing application and receive approval before moving off campus. The application is available in the Student Experience Forms section on Gateway. Without official approval, students are required to live in residence halls and purchase a resident meal plan.

Requests for housing exemptions must be submitted to the Housing Coordinator by **December 1** for spring semester exemptions and **May 1** for fall semester exemptions. The **Vice President for Student Experience** reviews all exemption requests.

All students who reside in the residence halls are required to purchase a resident meal plan. To apply for university housing in a residence hall, students must

submit a Housing Application/Agreement along with a one-time, non-refundable \$200 residence hall maintenance fee.

### University Apartments and Duplexes

Howard Payne University maintains three 8-unit apartment complexes (each housing four upper-level students) and nine duplex units, which are primarily designated for part-time graduate employees. These residential options offer upperclassmen and graduate employees greater independence while maintaining opportunities for connection and community.

Please note: HPU does not offer married student housing.

### Apartment Assignments

University apartment spaces are assigned during both the fall and spring semesters through the Apartment Selection Process, which is advertised by Residence Life each semester. Assignments are made based on eligibility, submission of required materials, and space availability.

### Eligibility for Apartment or Duplex Housing

Students are eligible to live in university apartments or duplexes if they meet **one or more** of the following criteria:

- Completion of four (4) long semesters (i.e., fall and spring semesters) in a residence hall
- Completion of 60 HPU academic credit hours
- Will be 21 years of age by August 1 (for fall) or January 1 (for spring)

Students living in university apartments or duplexes are not required to purchase a resident meal plan. However, a variety of optional meal plans are available through the university dining services for students who choose to participate.

### Apartment Deposits and Agreements

- Students approved to live in university apartments must pay a \$400 refundable housing deposit per occupant space prior to move-in.
- If a student elects to occupy a bedroom as a single (without a roommate), they are required to pay an \$800 refundable housing deposit (equivalent to two spaces).

- Part-time graduate employees assigned to duplex housing must pay a \$250 refundable housing deposit prior to move-in.

All apartment and duplex residents are required to sign a University Apartment Housing Agreement. Upon signing, the student assumes full responsibility for the terms outlined in the agreement. All duplex residents must submit a housing application and agreement each semester they will live in the residence.

### **Pets and ESA Policy**

In accordance with university housing policy, emotional support animals (ESAs) are not permitted in university apartments or duplexes. Students requesting accommodations for service or emotional support animals under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) may apply for approval in designated residence halls through the Student Experience Office.

### **Conduct and Compliance Expectations**

All student conduct policies outlined in the Student Handbook apply to students living in university apartments and duplexes. Residents are expected to uphold the community standards and contribute to a respectful, Christ-centered living environment.

### **Deposit Refunds**

Students may request a refund of their housing deposit within 30 days of vacating their assigned unit, provided the unit is returned in good condition, free of damages or excessive cleaning needs, and a proper checkout was conducted.

### **Housing Agreements (All Residences)**

All students living or planning to live in university housing must complete and submit an online Housing Application/Agreement. Upon submission, the student assumes full responsibility for the terms and conditions outlined in the agreement. The housing agreement is binding for the full term unless the student graduates, participates in an approved study abroad program, or receives written approval for early termination. By submitting a housing application and agreement, students acknowledge and accept full financial responsibility for the entire term's housing charges. Once submitted, the agreement is binding, and housing fees will not be canceled, terminated, or prorated if a student withdraws from the university prior to the end of the term, or if the student is required to vacate their assigned room due to disciplinary action or any other reason.

**Part-Time Graduate Employees (PTGEs)** must complete a Housing Application each semester. The housing agreement is valid for six months (fall and

spring terms), and a tuition waiver form must also be submitted each semester.

Requests to cancel any housing agreement must be made **in writing** to the Housing Coordinator and the appropriate Resident Director. Any resident who moves off campus without official approval will be held financially responsible for the full term of the agreement. The University reserves the right to terminate a housing agreement for disciplinary reasons.

Students who request to privately occupy a room in a residence hall (without a roommate) may be approved by the Resident Director, based on space availability. An additional fee of **\$1,000 per semester** will apply. Private rooms are not permitted for first-year students during their first semester after high school graduation. The University reserves the right to change room assignments when deemed necessary.

Students may not occupy any university housing until a Resident Director or Resident Assistant has officially checked them in. Upon check-in, students are required to complete and sign a Check-In/Check-Out Form and participate in a walk-through inspection of their room, apartment, or duplex. Any damages, cleaning needs, or repairs should be noted at that time. Keys will be issued upon completion of this process.

At the time of move-out, the student must return the key and complete a check-out walk-through with a Resident Assistant or Resident Director, during which the condition of the unit will be evaluated. Failure to follow these procedures may result in charges or fines. Students are only permitted to occupy the room assigned to them and may not switch rooms without prior approval from the Resident Director.

The housing agreement period for **residence halls** covers two semesters and concludes on the day of spring commencement in May. It does not include Thanksgiving break, Christmas break, spring break, university holidays, or the days between semesters. Students living in residence halls must vacate within 24 hours of their last final exam. Graduating seniors are typically granted an additional 24 hours beyond the hall's closing time to check out, when feasible. For information about housing during breaks, contact the Office of Student Experience.

The resident director supervises all activities in the residence halls. Any unusual behavior, difficulties, or concerns should be reported to him/her.

**Apartment and duplex residents** are not required to vacate their residence at the end of the semester unless their housing agreement has ended due to graduation,

withdrawal from the university, or another approved reason for termination. These residents are also subject to all university housing policies and conduct expectations.

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## **Residence Hall Hours, Secure Access, and Surveillance Cameras**

Residents, Residence Life staff, and the HPU Department of Public Safety work together as partners to create a secure and safe residential community.

To promote safety and security, all residence halls are equipped with ID card readers. Residents must use their HPU ID cards to access the buildings at all times. Residence hall doors must never be propped open, as doing so is a violation of the Clery Act and poses a significant safety risk to all residents. Students are required to keep their University-issued ID cards in their possession at all times and may not lend or share their ID cards with anyone for any reason.

Residence halls close at 2:00 p.m. on commencement day at the end of both the fall and spring semesters.

Surveillance cameras are in use in residence halls and are positioned in common areas such as entry doors, lobbies, and corridors on each floor to support campus safety and security. Surveillance cameras are also in use on the exterior of the university apartments, wellness center, and library to help ensure the safety and security of those communities.

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### ***Housing Damages***

Students are responsible for any damage to university-owned furniture, equipment, or rooms. Each room is inspected before move-in and at the time of move-out. Any damage observed should be reported immediately to the Resident Director.

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### ***Individual Rooms***

Occupants of university housing are responsible for any damage to their assigned rooms, regardless of who caused the damage. Students are expected to maintain their rooms in a clean and orderly condition and must not obstruct walkways, hallways, or surrounding premises.

No partitions, alterations, or additions may be made to a room without prior written consent from the Resident Director. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Adding or changing locks
- Removing window screens

- Tampering with heating, lighting, or other fixtures
- Painting or removing any surface finishes
- Installing television or radio antennas
- Adding internet routers or extenders
- Modifying electrical, cable TV, or telephone wiring

Nails, screws, or adhesives that may cause damage to walls or surfaces are strictly prohibited. Any damage observed in the room must be reported to a Resident Assistant or the Resident Director.

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### ***Residence Hall Furniture***

Students may not dismantle or remove any university-provided furniture. All furniture must remain intact and within the assigned room. Students are responsible for the condition and presence of all issued furniture.

- Dressers may not be stacked.
- Heavy items (e.g., refrigerators or microwaves) may not be placed on top of dressers or other furniture.
- Any missing, damaged, dismantled, or relocated furniture will result in charges to the assigned resident(s).

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### ***Residence Hall Damages (Common Areas)***

All residents share responsibility for the care and upkeep of the residence hall community. Students are expected to report any damage to shared spaces (e.g., lobbies, hallways, restrooms) to the Residence Life staff immediately.

Residents are also encouraged to take initiative in preventing damage and holding others accountable. If a specific individual cannot be identified for damages in common areas, the cost of repairs may be divided among all residents of that floor or building.

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### ***Defacing Property***

Defacing or damaging university property in any form—such as graffiti, paint, stickers, signs, or posters—is strictly prohibited. Students involved in such acts will be subject to disciplinary action and may be held financially responsible.

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### ***Repairs***

All damages or maintenance needs should be reported as soon as possible using the online work order

system. Once submitted, requests will be reviewed by HPU Maintenance and addressed based on urgency and priority.

Emergency repair needs must be reported directly to a member of the Residence Life staff immediately.

## **Housing Policies**

### ***Animals/Pets***

Residents may keep goldfish or tropical fish in a small aquarium (no larger than five gallons). All other animals and pets are prohibited in university housing.

To request a service animal, complete the appropriate form on Gateway. [Service/Emotional Support Animal Accommodations Request](#)

### ***Appliances for Cooking and Storing Food (Residence Halls Only)***

Cooking in residence hall rooms is strictly prohibited for health, safety, and maintenance reasons. Cooking equipment such as hot plates, air fryers, crock pots, toasters, electric fry pans, microwaves, and coffee pots (unless the coffee maker is equipped with an automatic shut-off or is a single-cup maker with no hot plate) is not permitted and will be removed from residence halls. Small refrigerators, no larger than 36" tall, may be used in residence hall rooms. A Fridge/Microwave combination unit is permitted (only the microwave/fridge models– 2.7 cubic feet or 3.7 cubic feet– are allowed.) An amperage overload protector for microwave/refrigerator combos is permitted, provided the two devices do not exceed 10 AMPS.

### ***Appearance Expectations***

Students are expected to be fully dressed when in any public or common areas of the residence hall. For the comfort and respect of all residents, students should not exit restroom or shower areas wearing only a towel, robe, or similar attire. Appropriate dress and conduct must be maintained in all shared spaces at all times.

### ***Authorized Entry and Search***

The University respects the student's right to privacy and protection against unwarranted and/or unreasonable search. The policy regarding room entry, inspection, and/or search and seizure is that university officials will enter a student's room only with the student's consent, except in specific situations.

Authorized agents and personnel of HPU will enter the residence of a student in the event of:

- An emergency
- Health and safety checks
- Maintenance purposes

- Reasonable grounds to believe the room contains evidence of the commission of a criminal offense or a violation of university rules or policies
- A valid search warrant presented by the proper authority

Before holidays and housing closures, residence life staff will check all rooms to ensure that rooms are secured and proper procedures have been followed.

### ***Bicycles***

Bicycle racks are provided outside each residence hall and near the Newbury Apartments. Bicycles may also be stored in student rooms with the roommate's agreement. Bicycles may not be stored in halls, stairways, bathrooms, or storage closets. If a bike is found in a hallway, storage closet, or waste disposal room, it will be placed outside without a lock or key. Bicycles may not be locked to HPU apartment railings. Bicycles should not be left during summer sessions unless students take summer classes. Bicycles that appear to be abandoned are subject to removal and disposal.

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### ***Check-In/Check-Out***

A room condition report must be completed and turned in at check-in. It is the resident's responsibility to note any existing damages in the room (e.g., wall damage, chipped paint, missing items, broken furniture, etc.). This form will be used to determine damages that have occurred during a resident's use of the room. Each resident must also follow all check-out procedures. Failure to check out properly will result in an improper check-out charge and may also result in disciplinary action.

Check-out includes:

All residents' possessions must be out of the room, apartment, or duplex, and the room, apartment, or duplex must be clean. All furniture must be in the proper location. The key must be returned to the RD (Dean of Students for duplexes). Before leaving, checkout must be approved by the RD or RA. Apartment and duplex checkouts must be scheduled with the RD or Dean of Students at least one week prior to move out.

### ***Cleaning Expectations***

Students are expected to maintain clean and orderly residences. Periodically throughout the semester, Resident Directors and/or Resident Assistants will conduct health, hygiene, safety, and security checks in campus housing. All rooms/apartments/duplexes must comply with the standards of the Resident Director, Resident Assistant, or Dean of Students.

Custodial service is limited to cleaning public use areas and emptying trash from public area receptacles. Trash should not be swept into the hall but deposited in public area waste containers. Students may not store empty alcohol bottles, cans, etc., in their residence hall rooms. Any unauthorized items should be reported to the Resident Assistant.

### ***Decorations***

Students are welcome to decorate their rooms tastefully and respectfully, which reflects good judgment. Vulgar, obscene, or offensive materials are not allowed. The possession or display of stolen property—including items such as road or traffic signs—is illegal and will result in disciplinary action and possible involvement of law enforcement.

To maintain a uniform appearance, posters, signs, flags, or other materials may not be displayed in windows or be visible from outside the building. Students may use proper curtains if desired (the University does not provide them); however, these must be neat and appropriate.

Decorations must not damage walls, doors, or fixtures, and nothing may be hung from ceilings, sprinklers, or life-safety equipment. The University reserves the right to require the removal of any items deemed inappropriate or unsafe.

### ***Electrical Appliances***

The following electrical appliances may be used in a student's room: computer, television, video game system, DVD player, stereo, clock, personal lamp, shaver, hairdryer, flat iron, and candle warmer. Air conditioners, sun lamps, heaters, and personal routers may not be used because of safety regulations. Burned-out light bulbs will be replaced without charge. They should not be replaced with bulbs larger than those provided. Any fuses or repairs needed should be reported to the Resident Assistant or Director.

Owners and users of stereos and televisions must operate them at a reasonable volume for their own benefit and should keep their room door closed when using them. Whenever they are operated, it should be with consideration for other people. Students may lose the privilege of using stereos and televisions if they refuse to operate them at an acceptable volume level.

### ***Entrance and Exit***

Students entering or exiting University buildings must do so through exterior access doors only. Entering or exiting through windows or occupying ledges,

balconies, or the roof of any building is strictly prohibited.

### ***False Alarms/False Emergency Reports***

It violates Texas Penal Code 42.06 to make a false alarm or report to a public institution of higher education. Students accused of this crime may face charges up to a state jail felony and will be referred through the student conduct process. A full description of the code and subsequent penalty is provided below. Please help us keep our university safe and report any suspicious activities to HPU DPS, the Office of Student Experience, a Resident Director, or other University personnel.

According to Sec. 42.06 of the Texas Penal Code, (a) A person commits an offense if he knowingly initiates, communicates, or circulates a report of a present, past, or future bombing, fire, offense, or other emergency that he knows is false or baseless and that would ordinarily:

- (1) cause action by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies;
- (2) place a person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury; or
- (3) prevent or interrupt the occupation of a building, room, place of assembly, place to which the public has access, or aircraft, automobile, or other mode of conveyance.

An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor unless the false report is of an emergency involving a public primary or secondary school, public communications, public transportation, public water, gas, power supply, or another public service. In this event, the offense is a state jail felony.

### ***Firearms/Weapons***

Firearms for protection or sport are strictly prohibited at HPU except as State law allows. This includes, but is not limited to, shotguns, rifles, pistols, BB/pellet guns, paint guns, airsoft guns, etc. Ammunition for firearms is also prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, shotgun shells, ammunition, BBs, pellets, etc. Illegal knives are prohibited.

### ***Fire Drills***

Fire drills will be held periodically; whenever the fire alarm sounds, everyone must leave the building immediately. Failure to leave immediately or to follow the directions of the residence hall staff or HPU Dept. of Public Safety officers will result in disciplinary action.

### ***Fire Extinguishers and Fire Equipment***

All residence halls are equipped with fire extinguishers for use only in a minor fire emergency. If an extinguisher is missing or not fully charged, notify a Residence Life staff member immediately.

When a fire alarm is activated—whether real or false—the fire department must respond, and the building must be evacuated entirely until cleared to re-enter.

Improper use of fire equipment, such as pulling an alarm without cause, discharging an extinguisher, or tampering with sprinklers, is a serious offense. Students who do so may face disciplinary action, fines (including reimbursement for fire department response), and possible legal consequences. False alarms also take emergency personnel away from real emergencies, putting others at risk.

### ***Food Storage***

Students are required to store all food in sealed containers to help maintain a clean, healthy, and pest-free living environment. Perishable or leftover food should be discarded promptly and not allowed to accumulate in rooms.

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### ***Guests and Visitation***

All guests are subject to University policies and regulations. A student is responsible for the conduct of his/her guests. Guests may not occupy a resident's room without the resident present. Individuals under 18 are not allowed to visit the residences or stay overnight. Exceptions may be made if the minor is a relative of the student, provided the Resident Director is informed and gives approval in advance.

### ***Overnight Guests of Same-Sex:***

Guests of the same sex are permitted to stay overnight under the following conditions:

- The student has requested and received permission in advance from the Resident Director and his/her roommate.
- The overnight stay is NOT during finals week.
- The stay is no more than three days and two nights. The Resident Director must approve exceptions.
- The guest is 12 years of age or older. Babysitting is not allowed in HPU housing.
- The guest registers his/her presence with the Resident Director. Guests are expected to conform to the same standards of conduct as students. Violations of university policies and standards by visitors are the responsibility of the

student whom the guest is visiting. Conduct violations may result in disciplinary action against the student, requiring the guest to leave campus, or both.

The Resident Director may limit a) the number of guests, b) the length of stay of a guest, and/or c) the number of times a student has guests during the semester if any of these factors adversely affect the residents of the hall/apartment or put an undue burden on the facilities and utilities of the University.

### ***Visiting Residents of Opposite Sex: Residence Halls***

Members of the opposite sex are not permitted in residence hall living areas or rooms except during approved visitation hours.

- **Lobby visitation hours:** 8:00 a.m. – midnight, Monday through Sunday.
- **Room visitation hours:** 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m., Monday through Sunday.
- All opposite-sex guests must:
  - Enter through the front lobby of the residence hall.
  - Sign in and sign out using the logbook at the Resident Director's office.
  - Be escorted by their student host at all times.
  - Remain in a room where the door is completely open during the entire visit.
- Both students and their guests are expected to follow all university conduct standards during visits.
- Students are responsible for the actions and behavior of their guests. Policy violations by a guest may result in disciplinary action for the host and/or removal of the guest from campus.

### ***Visiting Residents of Opposite Sex: Apartments and Duplexes***

For the purposes of this policy, the term “apartment(s)” includes both Smith Bell Duplexes and Newbury Place Apartments. These guidelines are in place to promote respect, safety, and consideration among roommates and members of the residential community.

Visitation by members of the opposite sex should always be conducted with discretion and respect for others. It is strongly recommended that additional

individuals be present in the apartment whenever a guest of the opposite sex is visiting. If conflicts arise due to visitation issues, students are encouraged to discuss the matter directly with their roommate first. If the concern is not resolved, the situation should then be brought to the attention of the Resident Assistant and/or Resident Director.

Key policies regarding opposite-sex visitation in apartments include:

- **Overnight stays:** Guests of the opposite sex, including other students, are not permitted to sleep over or stay overnight in apartments. Anyone staying past 2:00 a.m. will be considered an overnight guest, which constitutes a violation of this policy.
- **Host responsibility:** Students are responsible for the behavior and actions of their guests at all times.
- **Standards of conduct:** Both hosts and guests must comply with University expectations of conduct.
- **Consequences:** Violations of University policies by a guest may result in disciplinary action for the host and/or removal of the guest from campus.

### ***Hall Meetings***

When mandatory meetings are called in the residences, all residents are required to attend. If a student is prevented from attending, he/she must inform the Resident Director. Failure to attend without prior approval from the Resident Director will result in disciplinary action. Mandatory meetings cannot be called without the Resident Director's permission.

### ***Personal Property***

Students are responsible for taking appropriate precautions to safeguard their personal property. Because University housing involves many individuals living in close proximity, these areas can be prime targets for theft. Maintaining a secure environment is in everyone's best interest.

To protect personal belongings, students should:

- Consider engraving personal possessions and maintain a list of serial numbers for items such as watches, televisions, stereos, and computer equipment to assist with recovery in the event of theft.
- Keep all valuables securely locked and out of sight.
- Lock their room door whenever leaving and before going to sleep.

Please note:

- The University is not responsible for property that is lost, stolen, or damaged.
- Any theft of property valued over \$50 should be reported to the HPU Department of Public Safety.
- All thefts or criminal activity must also be reported to the Resident Director.
- Students are strongly encouraged to obtain adequate personal property/renter's insurance.

By taking these precautions, students can help protect their belongings and contribute to a safer residential community.

### ***Pornographic & Obscene Materials***

Recognizing that certain images or materials can be offensive or disrespectful to members of the residential community, the University expects students to exercise discretion regarding the content of pictures, posters, written materials, and electronic media displayed in rooms or hallways. Any decorations or materials that conflict with the values and philosophy of the University are not permitted. This includes, but is not limited to, sexually oriented or suggestive images (including "soft pornography"), depictions that present the human body in a degrading or demeaning manner, occult materials, and any advertisements or paraphernalia related to alcohol, drugs, or tobacco.

The Resident Director has the authority to make the final determination of what constitutes inappropriate or questionable material. Students found to have such items may be instructed to remove them from their rooms. Additionally, the viewing or possession of pornographic materials is strictly prohibited anywhere on campus.

### ***Prohibited Materials***

Substances that could cause a fire, such as paints and chemicals, may not be stored in University housing. Students may not store or repair motor vehicles in their residences. Flammable liquids such as gasoline, kerosene, and other fuel products may not be kept in University housing. Fireworks and/or firecrackers are

not allowed on the campus. Burning candles, incense, etc., is also prohibited in all on-campus housing.

### ***Room Changes***

Before requesting a room change, talk with your Resident Assistant and/or Resident Director. Other than moving from your current location, there may be some possible solutions to the problem. If you are sure you want to change rooms, follow these steps:

- Room change requests will be considered after the first two weeks of each semester. (Consolidation may occur earlier.)
- Discuss available rooms/roommates with your Resident Director.
- After identifying a new room/roommate, coordinate arrangements with your Resident Director. Remember, you must have prior approval from your Resident Director before moving.

Failure to follow these procedures and moving before you receive approval may result in disciplinary sanctions, charges, and loss of moving approval. (You may also be required to return to your original room.)

**A \$25 charge may be assessed per requested room change.**

Note: A person cannot ask a roommate to move out for the sake of convenience. The roommate who desires a change or a new roommate must be the one to move to a new location.

### ***Room Keys***

Students should carry their room keys with them at all times. Lost room keys should be reported to the Resident Director. A student who loses his/her key will be charged a nonrefundable fee to re-core the lock and replace the room keys.

### ***Smoke Alarms***

Smoke alarms are placed in rooms for the students' protection. A fine of \$100.00 will be charged for vandalism, tampering, or removal of these alarms.

Students are not to use batteries in smoke alarms for other purposes. The unauthorized removal of batteries will result in a fine of \$100.00. In certain situations, such as the malfunction of the system, a student will need to remove the battery. If such a situation should occur, the proper procedure is to report the incident either to the Resident Assistant or Resident Director by the following day. If the problem is with the battery, the bad battery will be exchanged, and a new one will be issued. If the alarm malfunctions, the problem will be reported to the Resident Assistant for repair.

### ***Soliciting***

Soliciting is not permitted in the halls, apartments, or duplexes. Solicitors should be reported immediately to the Resident Director. Ticket sales for University or hall functions are exceptions. Residents who wish to sell certain merchandise or services should contact the Resident Director for information.

### ***Quiet Hours***

Quiet hours are observed every night from 10:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. All other times are courtesy hours. Students are to consider the community setting where not everyone has the same waking and sleeping schedules. Therefore, students need to be sensitive to the needs of others living around them. Special quiet hours are posted for finals week and must be followed.

### ***Amenities***

#### ***Internet***

Each student's room is wired for Internet access. This access is provided to students as a part of the Student Experience fee for educational purposes. Students are reminded not to give out personal information (e.g., middle name, social security number, date of birth, mother's maiden name, etc.) to anyone on the Internet. The University's IT department monitors the campus's Internet traffic. Inappropriate use will not be tolerated.

**The use of routers and wireless hotspots is prohibited.** All campus housing facilities are equipped with wireless internet connectivity, which requires WPA-2 Enterprise encryption. Devices that are not capable of this level of encryption (some smart TVs, streaming sticks, gaming systems, and wireless printers) must be connected to the University network via the provided Ethernet connection.

#### ***Laundry Rooms***

Washers and dryers are available in each residence hall. Washers and dryers are available in each Newbury Place Apartment. Students encountering problems with the machines should contact the Resident Assistant or Resident Director. Residents in the duplexes may use the laundry facilities in the appropriate residence hall.

#### ***Lobbies***

Each residence hall has a lobby on the first floor where students can sit, talk, study, play games, etc. Because these spaces benefit all the students living in the building, they should be treated accordingly. All furniture must remain in the lobbies, not be rearranged, and is not permitted to be in individual student rooms at any time. Students are responsible for

cleaning up any messes made while using the lobby. Students may not block access to hallways or walkways adjacent to lobby areas for activities such as video game play or movie viewing.

### ***Vending Machines***

Vending machines are located in each residence hall. Students encountering problems with the machines should contact an RA or the Resident Director.

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## **PARKING, VEHICLE REGISTRATION, & TRAFFIC SAFETY**

### **Policy Statement and Advisement**

Howard Payne University (HPU) has established the following parking and traffic safety regulations to promote the safety and security of all individuals on campus and to ensure that parking and traffic flow operate efficiently. These regulations apply to all students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

While voluntary compliance with these regulations is the goal, Parking and Traffic Safety Citations, which include fines, have been authorized by the Dean of Students and University Administration to deter violations. Enforcement officers are encouraged to consider unusual circumstances when deciding whether to issue a citation.

Violators may receive one of two types of citations issued by the HPU Department of Public Safety:

1. A University Citation
2. A Texas State Criminal Code Citation

Parking on campus is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Possession of a parking permit does not guarantee the availability of a parking space. A perceived lack of parking does not justify parking or traffic violations.

### **General Guidelines and Policies**

- Parking and traffic regulations are enforced year-round, including weekends, holidays, breaks, and the summer term.
- The speed limit on all University property is **10 MPH**.
- The absence of a citation for a violation does not mean that the regulation is no longer in effect.

- HPU assumes no responsibility for loss of or damage to vehicles parked on or traveling across University property.
- Any vehicle operated or parked on University property must:
  - Meet state registration requirements
  - Display a current registration sticker and license plates
  - Carry proof of liability insurance, which must be presented to an HPU Public Safety Officer upon request. Failure to meet these requirements may result in the vehicle being banned from campus.
- Inoperable vehicles may be towed at the owner's expense.
- During certain special events throughout the year, parking areas may be reserved for patrons. While this may be inconvenient, it does not authorize individuals to violate parking regulations.

For additional information or assistance, contact:

- **Office of Student Experience:** 325-649-8017 (8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday–Friday)
- **Department of Public Safety (DPS):** 325-649-8609

### **Motor Vehicle Registration**

All vehicles parked on Howard Payne University (HPU) property must display a current parking permit.

Permits must not be falsified, transferred to another individual or vehicle, forged, or altered in any way.

### **Placement of Permits**

- **Students:** Permits must be permanently affixed to the outside of the vehicle's rear window on the lower left side. For convertibles, the permit may be placed on the rear bumper on the driver's side.
- **Motorcycles:** Permits must be displayed in a clearly visible location on the motorcycle.
- **Faculty/Staff:** Permits should be hung from the vehicle's rearview mirror.

### **Obtaining Permits**

Parking permits are issued by the Office of Student Experience, which sets all associated fees.

### **Replacement Permits**

If a student purchases a new vehicle or begins driving a different vehicle than the one originally registered, a replacement permit must be obtained from the Office of Student Experience:

- If the remains of the original permit are returned, there is no charge.
- If the original permit is not returned, a \$5.00 replacement fee will be assessed.

### **Temporary Permits**

Temporary permits are available from the Office of Student Experience for extenuating circumstances. There is no charge for a temporary permit; however:

- Temporary permits are valid for a maximum of 30 days.
- If a different vehicle is used beyond 30 days, a permanent permit must be purchased.

Each vehicle is permitted to display only **one current HPU parking permit** at a time.

### **Parking Permits and Regulations**

Parking is permitted only in clearly designated and lined parking spaces located in campus parking lots and along public and private streets throughout campus. Vehicles may not park in visitor-designated spaces unless the driver is an eligible campus visitor. For the purposes of these regulations, a visitor is defined as any individual who is not a current HPU student, staff member, or faculty member.

Parking permits are not required at the University's El Paso or New Braunfels centers.


### **Special Designations and Permits**

Motorcycles may park in any lined parking space on campus (excluding visitor spaces) or in areas specifically designated as motorcycle-only parking.

Only vehicles displaying valid federal or state-issued handicap license plates or parking placards (hang tags) may park in University handicap-designated spaces. In accordance with state law, the HPU Department of Public Safety reserves the right to verify the rightful ownership of a disabled placard or license plate and request proof of eligibility when necessary. The placard may only be used when the individual to whom it was issued is present in the vehicle.

A **long-term visitor** is defined as any visitor whose vehicle will be regularly parked on University property for more than 48 hours (two days). Long-term visitor permits can be obtained from the Office of Student Experience at no charge.

### **Parking Restrictions**

- Spaces designated for **Faculty, Staff, or Official Use** are restricted and may not be used by students at any time.
- **Student parking spaces** are clearly marked with white or yellow lines on both sides of each parking space.
- **Safety Zones**, often located at the ends of parking rows, are designated by stripes and/or posted signage to allow emergency vehicles (such as fire apparatus) to maneuver; parking in these areas is prohibited.
- **Handicap parking spaces and access areas** are identified by posted signage (including the international handicap symbol ) and/or pavement striping or wording.

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### **Campus Visitors**

A visitor is defined as one who is not affiliated, associated, or related to HPU as a student or employee.

Students currently enrolled are never considered visitors. Students driving a vehicle not registered with the University, even temporarily, must obtain a Temporary Parking Permit from the Office of Student Experience.

Visitors to HPU should be given parking guidance by the person or organization inviting them to campus.

Visitors using vehicles with a current HPU parking permit must comply with the rules and regulations applicable to that permit.

Visitor lots and/or parking spaces are open daily from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. No overnight parking is allowed in visitor spaces unless approval is obtained from the HPU Department of Public Safety. This regulation helps prevent non-HPU-related parking within the limited parking spaces the University provides.

### **University Parking and Traffic Safety Fines**

Students are responsible for any citation issued to their

vehicles. Fines not paid by the violator (or a request for an appeal filed) within TEN (10) working/business days of the date of issuance of the citation shall automatically be charged to the registered student's account or, in the case of an unregistered vehicle, the operator or registered owner of the vehicle shall be responsible for the violation and all fines that may be charged for the violation. Fines may be paid at the Cashier's Office (Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., excluding University holidays).

***University Parking and Traffic Safety Violations***

Parking and Safety Enforcement is in effect 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The more severe and dangerous the violation, the greater the fine for such violation(s). The violation for which a person is charged shall be plainly stated on the citation(s) issued for the offense(s).

\$35	Failure to Display Parking Permit
\$35	Display of Expired Permit or Improperly Affixed Permit
\$35	Improper Parking or Not Parked in Defined Limits of Parking Space
\$35	Parked After Posted Lot Closing Time
\$35	Parked Overtime in Time-Limited Zone
\$35	Unauthorized Parking or Stopping in a Visitor or Reserved Parking Space
\$35	Other Parking Violation--indicated by Issuing Officer
\$50	Double Parking, Obstruction of Traffic, or Parking in Traffic Lane
\$50	Failure to Obey Traffic Control Devices, Cones, Barricades, etc.
\$50	Parked in a Designated "No Parking Zone" or "Designated Safety Zone."
\$75	Reuse of Old Citation to Avoid New or Additional Citation
\$75	Vehicle Traveling at Unsafe Speed or Reckless Driving on HPU Property
\$100	Unlawful Parking in Fire Lane
\$150	Unlawful Parking in a Designated Handicap Parking Space or Access Space

Persons receiving a citation should read it carefully to determine whether it is a University Citation issued by the University Department of Public Safety or a State Citation issued by a Texas Peace Officer. This distinction is important because the University handles University Citations and fines must be paid at the Business Office, while State Citations are issued for violations of state statutes or city ordinances and must be resolved through the court identified on the citation. Always review the citation closely so you know who to contact and where any fines must be paid.

**Appeals**

All University Citations issued by the HPU DPS Officers may be appealed. However, if the recipient of the citation chooses to appeal, he/she must file an appeal within TEN (10) working/business days of the date of the citation, excluding University holidays. Appeals are processed during business hours and must be filed in person at the Office of Student Experience (8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday). A telephone call or email does not constitute an appearance.

Appeals will initially be reviewed by the Director of Public Safety/Chief of HPU DPS. Consult the Student Handbook and University Catalog for additional information regarding the appeals process. The appeal results will be sent via one or more of the following methods: campus mail, U.S. mail, or e-mail.

***Immobilized (Booted) or Towed Vehicles***

Vehicles that have been charged with three or more citations may be immobilized or impounded/towed, with all towing fees being the sole responsibility of the vehicle's owner/operator. There is a \$50 service charge to release an immobilized (booted) vehicle. The University shall not, nor shall any of its authorized personnel, be liable or assume any responsibility for any loss or damage resulting from a vehicle being immobilized (booted) or towed. The payment of fines for University Citations does not remove citations from the record. Citations accumulate during the academic year.

Vehicles illegally parked (regardless of the number of violations) are subject to being immobilized or towed when parked in or obstructing a fire lane, reserved space, handicap or handicap access space, overtime in a loading zone, blocking another vehicle in a parking space, or blocking a driveway, aisle, entry or exit to any parking area.

If a vehicle has been towed or immobilized, the individual seeking its release may obtain information from the HPU Department of Public Safety by calling 325-649-8609.

**Disciplinary Action for Excessive Parking or Traffic Safety-Related Violations**

An indefinite number of University Parking or Traffic Safety-related citations will not be tolerated. Upon receipt of the fifth University Citation, parking privileges shall be immediately suspended pending a review by the Director of University Public Safety. The Director shall send a formal recommendation to the Vice President of Student Experience for final determination. If the Vice President of Student Experience elects to suspend or permanently revoke

the parking privileges of the habitual violator, then the violator will be notified to surrender their parking permit.

Failure to comply with the terms of the suspension or continued receipt of citations may result in an additional \$100.00 fine in addition to the offense fine(s), immediate towing, and further administrative disciplinary action by the Dean of Students or Vice President of Student Experience.

#### ***Residence Hall Move-In/Out Procedures***

Special loading/unloading areas will be designated for significant residence timeframes, such as hall “move in” and “move out,” by temporary signs erected by the University DPS. Visitors/parents and students are expected to show courtesy to others by moving vehicles from these zones into other authorized parking spaces as soon as possible. Driving or parking on sidewalks or grass is not permitted at any time. Violators may be subject to citation or towing at their own expense. Once the temporary signs are removed, regular parking rules will be enforced.

#### **Miscellaneous Information**

Vehicles parked on campus should remain locked at all times.

Personal safety escorts are available from DPS upon request.

Theft of, damage to, or accidents involving vehicles should be reported to DPS immediately.

Theft of or damage to personal property or property owned by HPU (while on campus) should be reported to the DPS immediately.

All lost and found items should be reported to and turned over to DPS immediately.

Students may not leave their vehicle on HPU property during a semester in which they are not enrolled (including summer). Such vehicles may be towed.

Students are welcome to use the parking lot at any time as a quiet space to sit in their personal vehicles to study or have private conversations with friends. Those with trucks or SUVs may also sit on the tailgate of their vehicle for this purpose. This privilege is available at all hours, provided that students refrain from any criminal activity or inappropriate behavior while on the premises.

Students should only sit in, on, or touch vehicles they own unless they have been given permission by the

vehicle’s owner. Out of respect for everyone’s property and safety, students are also asked not to loiter or hang around in parking areas without a clear purpose. DPS officers may approach students in the lots to ask questions or request to see their HPU ID card if needed.

#### **Special Regulations**

Special temporary disabled/handicap permits may be obtained from the Cashier’s Office with specific approval by the Director of University Public Safety. In all cases, the applicant shall present for review and verification the prescribing physician’s certificate stating the disability, necessity for special privileges, and length of disability. The special permit is a *University-Issued Permit* that ONLY allows parking in all student, faculty, and staff areas and visitor lots. It DOES NOT allow parking in designated State Handicap Spaces or Access Areas (*where State of Texas Permits are required by State Statute/Law*), Reserved Spaces, Fire Lanes, or Time-Restricted Parking Zones/Spaces/Areas.

All buses, RVs, trailers, and boats must obtain permission from DPS before parking on HPU property. These types of vehicles are not allowed to park permanently.

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## **SAFETY & SECURITY**

### **Clery Act – Annual Security and Fire Safety Report**

In compliance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act), Howard Payne University publishes an Annual Security and Fire Safety Report by October 1 of each year. This report includes:

- Campus crime statistics for the previous three calendar years
- Policies and procedures for reporting crimes or other emergencies
- The University’s response protocols
- Security and access policies
- Crime prevention and safety awareness programs
- Policies related to alcohol, drugs, sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, stalking, and related prevention and awareness programs

The most recent Annual Security and Fire Safety Report is available on the University website. Printed copies may be requested from the Office of Public Safety.

### **Sex Offender Information**

Information about registered sex offenders in Texas can be accessed through the Texas Department of Public Safety Sex Offender Registry:  
<https://publicsite.dps.texas.gov/SexOffenderRegistry/Search>

### **Access to Annual Crime Statistics**

The University provides this information to all current students and employees and, upon request, to any applicant for enrollment or employment, as required by federal law. These disclosures are made pursuant to the Jeanne Clery Act and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act.

### **Reporting Requirements**

The Clery Act requires that certain crimes occurring on campus, on public property immediately adjacent to campus, and at specific non-campus locations be reported to the University community each year.

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## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

### **Emergency Notification**

Howard Payne University will employ several methods of communication during emergencies, including campus-wide e-mail messages, telephone voice mail messages to campus extensions, text messages, and voice messages to cellular phones for students, faculty, and staff, provided up-to-date contact information is available.

Each student is responsible for maintaining updated and accurate contact information with the Registrar's Office. You may also update contact information on your myGateway account: [Update Contact Info](#)

### **Missing Persons Policy**

If a student who resides in campus housing has not been seen on campus for more than 24 hours and acquaintances do not know where the student may be, the Vice President for Student Experience, Dean of Students, or Resident Director should be notified. Students under the age of 18 will have their parents notified if they are determined missing for more than 24 hours. Law enforcement will be notified of any student who has been missing for more than 24 hours. If a student has been seen in the company of an individual(s) indicating that he/she may be in danger,

the HPU Dept. of Public Safety (325-649-8609) and/or the Brownwood Police Department (911) should be notified. If desired, students can designate a confidential contact person on their Emergency Information Form to contact if the student is deemed missing. At the University's discretion, in addition to a confidential contact, the University reserves the right to contact a parent and/or guardian.

### **Tornado Watch**

A tornado watch is issued when conditions are favorable for the formation of tornadoes. In the event of a tornado, watch and/or listen to local media sources to monitor the situation. Continue with normal activities, but be alert to changes in the weather.

### **Tornado Warning**

A warning is issued when a tornado has been sighted nearby and is approaching or when weather radar indicates certain features indicative of tornadoes. There is a significant danger during a tornado warning. The Brownwood Emergency Preparedness system will give a five-minute public warning siren blast, indicating an emergency. The University will also seek to deploy its Emergency Notification System. Go immediately to the center of the lowest floor of the building where you are. Avoid windows and glass doors, and listen to any instructions given by the building supervisor. If you are outside, seek shelter! If no shelter is available and the threat of danger is imminent, get in the closest ditch, lie flat, and cover your head.

### **Snow and Ice**

Inclement weather: Listen to local radio stations for road conditions and possible school closings. Classes are not canceled unless necessary. If classes are not canceled and travel is dangerous, stay where you are and call the University to notify your professors.

### **Fire**

When a manual pull station is activated or a smoke detector is triggered, the fire alarm will sound. Every alarm must be treated as a genuine emergency, and immediate evacuation of the building is required.

If the designated escape route for a building is unfamiliar, evacuation maps are posted near stairwells. If a fire is observed but the alarm has not activated, pull the nearest manual alarm, call 911, and notify the HPU Department of Public Safety without delay.

Upon hearing an alarm:

- Evacuate the building promptly and remain calm.
- Use stairways rather than elevators.

- Before opening any door, carefully check for heat. If the door feels hot, use an alternate exit.
- Once outside, move at least 300 feet away from the building and keep all access roads clear for emergency vehicles.
- Do not re-enter the building until emergency personnel have confirmed it is safe to do so.

### ***A.L.I.C.E./Dangerous Person(s)***

#### ***Active Shooter Preparedness and Response***

An **active shooter** is an individual actively engaged in causing, or attempting to cause, serious harm or death to people in a confined and populated area. Firearms are most often used, and there is typically no pattern or method to the selection of victims. These incidents evolve rapidly and are usually over within ten to fifteen minutes, requiring immediate law enforcement response.

All members of the Howard Payne University community must be mentally and physically prepared to respond if such an event occurs. The HPU Department of Public Safety (HPU DPS) provides training based on the **A.L.I.C.E. principles (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Escape)**. The following guidelines outline actions to take in an active shooter situation.

#### ***If evacuation is possible:***

- Quickly assess the threat and take immediate action.
- If it is safe to do so, leave the building immediately.
- Run away from the danger and do not stop until you reach a safe location.
- Once safe, call 911.

#### ***If evacuation is not possible and the door opens into or out of the room:***

- Take shelter in the nearest office, classroom, or closet.
- Silence cell phones and encourage others to do the same.
- Stay low and out of sight of doors and windows.
- Lock and barricade the door using available objects (chairs, desks, trash cans, etc.).
- If possible, secure the door with a belt or other device to prevent entry.
- Look for alternate escape routes, such as windows or secondary doors.
- Call 911, provide as much detail as possible, and leave the phone line open if speaking is not safe.

- Do not open the door for anyone. Law enforcement will access the room when it is safe.
- If the shooter enters, be prepared to defend yourself using any available items as improvised weapons and position yourself to take the element of surprise.

#### ***If forced to evacuate through an area where the shooter may be present:***

- Run in a zig-zag pattern and do not stop running until you are clear of the danger.
- Consider exiting through a window if necessary. Assess the risks of falling.
- Use belts, clothing, or other items to make an improvised rope to reduce the distance of a fall.
- Hang from the window ledge before dropping, and aim to land on grass, shrubs, or mulch.

#### ***If trapped in the same room as the shooter:***

- Take immediate action to disrupt or incapacitate the shooter.
- Throw objects to distract the shooter, aiming for the face.
- If possible, work with others to subdue the shooter by grabbing arms and legs and taking the person to the ground.
- Use your body weight to restrain the shooter. Survival is the priority—fight with full force.

#### ***If the shooter is incapacitated:***

- Call 911 and report that the shooter has been subdued, providing your exact location.
- Secure the shooter with belts, body weight, or other means.
- Move any weapons away from the shooter, but do not handle them. If possible, cover them with a trash can or other object.
- Remain in the room and wait for law enforcement to arrive. Do not leave the area until directed to do so.

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### ***Bomb Threats***

If a bomb threat is received by phone:

- Remain calm and do not panic.
- Listen carefully to gather as much information as possible.
- Ask the caller specific questions, such as:
  - Where is the bomb located?
  - What time is it set to detonate?
  - Is the caller male or female, young or older?

- Were there any unusual sounds or background noises during the call?
- Why has the threat been made?
- Pay close attention to the caller's exact words and attempt to remember every detail.

***After the call:***

- Immediately contact the HPU Department of Public Safety at **325-649-8609**.
- DPS will coordinate with police and fire departments.
- Building supervisors will determine whether to evacuate; however, **evacuation is strongly recommended in all cases**.
- Do not touch or move any suspicious items.
- Report anything unusual or suspicious to the building supervisor.
- Do not use cell phones in the area, as a signal could potentially trigger a device.
- If the threat involves immediate detonation, evacuate the building without delay.

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***Responding to a Victim of Sexual Assault***

If someone discloses that they have been sexually assaulted:

- **Ensure a safe environment** for the victim.
- If medical care is needed due to injuries sustained during the assault, encourage the victim to seek immediate medical assistance.
- Do not pressure or demand that the victim take any action they are not comfortable with. Allow them to maintain control of all decisions.

***Supporting the victim's choices:***

- Ask the victim what steps they wish to take:
  - Do they want to notify the police?
  - Do they wish to go to a hospital?
- If the victim indicates that they may want to involve law enforcement, encourage them to seek a medical exam as soon as possible. **The victim should avoid changing clothes or showering prior to the exam**, as doing so may destroy important physical evidence.

***University support:***

- If the victim wishes to notify University personnel, a member of the **Student Experience staff** is the appropriate point of contact.
- Referrals to University authorities will be handled with care and confidentiality, and the wishes of the victim will be honored to the greatest extent possible.

- Even if the victim chooses not to formally report the assault, it is strongly encouraged that they seek counseling and emotional support.

***Serious Injury or Illness***

In the event of a serious injury or illness, the primary priority is to assist the injured or ill individual. The following general guidelines should be followed:

- **Contact the University Nurse at 325-649-8601** for medical assistance.
- If the incident occurs in a residence hall, immediately notify a member of the residence hall staff.
- If other channels of communication are unavailable or if the situation is life-threatening, call **911** without delay.
- **Do not attempt to move an injured person** in the case of a serious injury. Call **911** immediately and wait for emergency responders to arrive.

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***Suicide***

***Warning Signs***

Individuals considering suicide may exhibit certain signals and behaviors. These can include:

- Extreme depression or hopelessness
- Withdrawal from family, friends, or usual activities
- Talking about death or dying, including reference to their own death
- Self-destructive behavior, including previous suicide attempts
- Use of drugs or alcohol
- Giving away personal possessions
- Declining academic performance or problems in classes
- Feelings of rejection or isolation
- Breakup of a significant relationship

***What to Do if You Are Concerned About Someone***

If there is concern that a friend or peer may be contemplating suicide:

- Encourage the person to seek professional help.
- Personally contact a counselor to share your concerns. This is not a betrayal; it may save a life.
- Continue to provide support by being available to listen.
- Monitor for changes in behavior and promptly report those changes to a counselor.

***If a Crisis Point is Reached (suicide attempt appears imminent):***

- Contact your **Resident Director, University Counselor, or the HPU Department of Public Safety at 325-649-8609.**
- Local MHMR services are also available at **325-646-6467.**
- If with the person, **do not leave them alone.**
- If the individual is in immediate danger, **call 911 immediately.**
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Once an administrator or law enforcement has taken control of the situation, and you are no longer directly involved:

- Complete an **Incident Report** and submit it to the **Office of Student Experience.**
- Do not discuss the situation with anyone other than the University officials involved.

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### ***Other Potentially Threatening Situations***

For any other threatening situation on campus, immediately contact the **HPU Department of Public Safety at 325-649-8609.** If the situation poses an immediate danger to life or safety, do not hesitate to call **911** first.

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## **TITLE IX POLICY**

### **I. Policy Statement**

#### **A. *Statement of Nondiscrimination***

Howard Payne University (the “University”) is committed to providing an educational and employment environment free of unlawful sex discrimination. Consistent with Howard Payne University’s Non-Discrimination Notice and the U.S. Department of Education’s implementing regulations for Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”), the University prohibits Sexual Harassment that occurs within its Education Programs and Activities.

As further defined below, for purposes of this Policy, Sexual Harassment includes Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment, Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking.

The University will provide persons who have experienced Sexual Harassment ongoing remedies as reasonably necessary to restore or preserve access to the University’s Education Programs and Activities. Administrators, faculty members, staff, students, contractors, guests, and other members of the University community who commit Sexual Harassment are subject to the full range of University discipline.

### **B. *Statement of Values and Religious Exemption***

The University affirms that all members of the University’s community are created in the image of God and therefore should be treated with dignity and respect. The University does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of any status or condition protected by applicable federal or state law. Further, the University respects the inherent worth of each member of the University Community and does not tolerate conduct that fosters any form of harassment.

With a Biblical foundation of human dignity and worth, the University approaches issues of sex-based misconduct not only as acts that may be potential violations of the law, but also as conduct that is contrary to Christian scripture. Thus, Sexual Harassment is harmful not only to the individuals involved but also undermines the Mission Statement and Core Values of the University.

In accordance with the University’s Mission Statement and Core Values, the U.S. Department of Education has granted the University exemptions from certain provisions of Title IX based on the religious tenets of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. The University may act in accordance with these tenets in resolving complaints of Sexual Harassment under this Policy.

### **II. Scope**

This Policy applies to Sexual Harassment, as defined below, that occurs within the University’s Education Programs and Activities and that is committed by an administrator, faculty member, staff, student, contractor, guest, or other member of the University Community. This Policy does not apply to Sexual Harassment that occurs off-campus, in a private setting, and outside the scope of the University’s Education Programs and Activities; such Sexual Harassment may be prohibited by other University policies and standards, including the University’s Nondiscrimination Policy.

This Policy does not apply to Sex-Based Harassment that occurs off-campus, in a private setting, and outside the scope of the University’s Education Programs and Activities, except where the University has disciplinary authority; such Sex-Based Harassment may be prohibited by other University policies and standards, including the University’s Non-discrimination Policy. Sex-Based Hostile Environment may be addressed when some conduct alleged to be contributing to the hostile environment occurred outside of the University’s education program or outside of the United States.

### III. Definitions

- a. "Sexual Harassment" for purposes of this Policy is conduct on the basis of sex that constitutes Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment, Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, or Stalking.
- b. "Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment" occurs when an employee of the University conditions the provision of aid, benefit, or service of the University on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual contact.
- c. "Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment" is unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person access to the University's education programs and activities.
- d. "Sexual Assault" includes the sex offenses of Rape, Sodomy, Sexual Assault with an Object, Fondling, Incest, and Statutory Rape.\*

*\*Note: 1 The University's definition of "Sexual Assault" is mandated by federal regulations implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Those regulations require the University to adopt a definition of "Sexual Assault" that incorporates various forcible and non-forcible sex crimes as defined by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting System.*

1. "Rape" is the carnal knowledge of a person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity. There is "carnal knowledge" if there is the slightest penetration of the vagina or penis by the sexual organ of the other person. Attempted Rape is included.

2. "Sodomy" is oral or anal sexual intercourse with another person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.

3. "Sexual Assault with an Object" is using an object or instrument to unlawfully penetrate, however slightly, the genital or anal opening of the body of another person, without the consent of the victim, including

instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity. An "object" or "instrument" is anything used by the offender other than the offender's genitalia.

4. "Fondling" is the touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.

5. "Incest" is sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by Texas law.

6. "Statutory Rape" is sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent as defined by Texas law.

e. "Domestic Violence" is felony or misdemeanor crime of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of Texas, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of Texas.

f. "Dating Violence" is violence committed by a person –

1. Who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and

2. Where the existence of such a relationship will be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:

- The length of the relationship;
- The type of relationship; and
- The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

g. “Stalking” is engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to:

- Fear for their safety or the safety of others; or
- Suffer substantial emotional distress.

h. “Consent” refers to words or actions that a reasonable person in the perspective of the Respondent would understand as agreement to engage in the sexual conduct at issue. A person who is incapacitated is not capable of giving Consent.

i. “Incapacitated” refers to the state where a person does not appreciate the nature or fact of sexual activity due to the effect of drugs or alcohol consumption, medical condition or disability, or due to a state of unconsciousness or sleep.

j. “Coercion” is conduct, including intimidation and express or implied threats of emotional, educational, reputational, financial, or other harm that would place a reasonable person in fear of immediate or future harm and that is employed to persuade or compel someone to engage in unwelcome sexual contact.

k. “Retaliation” is intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX and its implementing regulations or because an individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this policy.

l. “Complainant” means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute Sexual Harassment.

m. “Respondent” means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute Sexual Harassment.

n. “Formal Complaint” means a document filed by a Complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging Sexual Harassment against a Respondent and requesting that the University investigate the allegation of Sexual Harassment in accordance with this Policy. At the time of filing a Formal Complaint, a Complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the University’s education programs and activities. A

“document filed by a Complainant” means a document or electronic submission (such as an email) that contains the Complainant’s physical or electronic signature or otherwise indicates that the Complainant is the person filing the Complaint.

o. “Supportive Measures” are non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered, as appropriate, and reasonably available, and without fee or charge, that are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the University’s Education Programs and Activities without unreasonably burdening another Party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties implicated by a report or the University’s education environment, or to deter Sexual Harassment. Supportive measures may include: counseling, extensions of academic or other deadlines, course-related adjustments, modifications to work or class schedules, campus escort services, changes in work or housing locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of campus, and other similar measures. Supportive Measures may also include mutual restrictions on contact between the parties implicated by a report.

p. “Education Programs and Activities” refers to all the operations of the University, including, but not limited to, in-person and online educational instruction, employment, research activities, extracurricular activities, athletics, residence life, dining services, performances, and community engagement and outreach programs. The term applies to all activity that occurs on campus or on other property owned or occupied by the University. It also includes off-campus locations, events, or circumstances over which the University exercises substantial control over the Respondent and the context in which the Sexual Harassment occurs, including Sexual Harassment occurring in any building owned or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by the University.

#### **IV. Understanding Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment**

In determining whether a Hostile Environment exists, the University will consider the totality of circumstances, including factors such as the actual impact the conduct has had on the Complainant; the nature and severity of the conduct at issue; the frequency and duration of the conduct; the relationship between the parties (including accounting for whether one individual has power or authority over the other); the respective ages of the parties; the context in which

the conduct occurred; and the number of persons affected. The University will evaluate the totality of circumstances from the perspective of a reasonable person in the Complainant's position. A person's adverse subjective reaction to conduct is not sufficient, in and of itself, to establish the existence of a hostile environment.

The University encourages members of the University Community to report any and all instances of Sexual Harassment, even if they are unsure whether the conduct rises to the level of a policy violation.

Sexual Harassment also includes gender-based harassment, which may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on gender or gender stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature. This definition will be interpreted and applied in a manner consistent with the accepted standards of mature behavior and the Christian Mission Statement and Core Values of the University.

Some specific examples of conduct that may constitute Sexual Harassment if unwelcome include, but are not limited to:

Unreasonable pressure for a dating, romantic, or intimate relationship or sexual contact;

- Unwelcome kissing, hugging, or massaging;
- Sexual innuendos, jokes, or humor;
- Displaying sexual graffiti, pictures, videos, or posters;
- Using sexually explicit profanity;
- Asking about, or telling about, sexual fantasies, sexual preferences, or sexual activities;
- E-mail and Internet use that violates this policy;
- Leering or staring at someone in a sexual way, such as staring at a person's breasts or groin;
- Sending sexually explicit emails, text messages, or social media posts;
- Commenting on a person's dress in a sexual manner;
- Giving unwelcome personal gifts such as lingerie that suggest the desire for a romantic relationship; or
- Insulting, demeaning, or degrading another person based on gender or gender stereotypes.

## **V. Understanding Consent and Incapacitation**

### **A. Consent**

Consent exists when someone knowingly, voluntarily, and by word or action agrees to engage in mutually agreed upon sexual activity or contact. Consent is active and not passive. Silence may not be interpreted as consent. • Consent to one act does not constitute consent to another act.

- Consent on a previous occasion does not constitute consent on a later occasion.
- Consent to an act with one person does not constitute consent to an act with any other person
- The existence of a prior or current relationship does not constitute consent. Even in the context of a relationship, there must be mutual consent.
- Consent can be withdrawn or modified at any time, and sexual contact must stop immediately once consent is withdrawn.
- Consent cannot be inferred from silence, passivity, or lack of resistance.
- Relying on nonverbal communication alone may result in a violation of this Policy.

In evaluating Consent, the University will consider the presence of any force, threat of force, or Coercion, whether the Complainant had the capacity to give Consent, and, whether the communication (through words and/or actions) between the parties would be interpreted by a reasonable person (under similar circumstances and with similar identities) as a willingness to engage in a particular sexual act. An individual is unable to provide Consent to engage in sexual activity when the individual: 1. Is under age 17 and (1) is not a spouse of the Respondent or (2) is more than three years younger than the alleged perpetrator at the time of the offense; 2. Has a mental disorder or developmental or physical disability that renders her or him incapable of giving knowing Consent; 3. Is unconscious or physically unable to resist; or 4. Is Incapacitated from alcohol or other drugs, and this condition was known, or reasonably should have been known, by the Respondent.

### **B. Incapacitation**

Incapacitation is a state where an individual cannot make an informed and rational decision to Consent to engage in sexual contact because the individual lacks conscious knowledge of the nature of the act (e.g., to understand the "who, what, where, when, why or how" of the sexual interaction) and/or is physically or mentally helpless. An individual is also considered Incapacitated, and therefore unable to give Consent, when asleep, unconscious, or otherwise unaware that sexual contact is occurring.

Incapacitation can only be found when the Respondent knew or should have known that the Complainant was incapacitated when viewed from the position of a sober, reasonable person. One's own intoxication is not an excuse for failure to recognize another person's Incapacitation. Incapacitation may result from the use of alcohol and/or other drugs; however, consumption of alcohol of other drugs, inebriation, or intoxication alone are insufficient to establish Incapacitation. Incapacitation is beyond mere drunkenness or intoxication. The impact of alcohol or drugs varies from person to person, and evaluating Incapacitation requires an assessment of how consumption of alcohol and/or drugs impacts an individual's:

- Decision-making ability
- Awareness of consequences
- Ability to make informed judgments
- Capacity to appreciate the nature of circumstances of the act.

No single factor is determinative of Incapacitation. Some common signs that someone may be incapacitated include slurred speech, confusion, shaky balance, stumbling or falling down, vomiting, and unconsciousness.

## **VI. Reporting Sexual Harassment**

### **A. Title IX Coordinator**

Any person may report Sexual Harassment to the Title IX Coordinator. Reports may be made in person, by regular mail, telephone, electronic mail, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report. In-person reports must be made during normal business hours, but reports can be made by regular mail, telephone, or electronic mail at any time, including outside normal business hours, to the following University employee:

Mrs. Tammy Arreola  
Dean of Students and Title IX Coordinator  
Howard Payne University  
1000 Fisk Street  
Mabee University Center  
Office of Student Experience, 206C  
Brownwood, Texas 76801 325-649-8630  
[tarreola@hputx.edu](mailto:tarreola@hputx.edu)

### **B. Mandatory Reporting Requirement for University Employees**

Under Texas law, all University employees, with the exception of Confidential Employees, who:

1. in the course and scope of their employment

2. witnesses or receives information regarding an incident that the employee reasonably believes constitutes Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Dating Violence, or Stalking, which
3. is alleged to have been committed by or against a person who was a student enrolled at or an employee of the University at the time of the incident, must promptly report the incident to the University's Title IX Coordinator or a Deputy Title IX Coordinator.

**Writing required.** Reporting by email to the Title IX Coordinator is the preferred method of communicating incidents promptly, so that a record is made of the time and all factual details disclosed in the initial report. The University's online reporting form may be used to submit a report (including an anonymous report) to the Title IX Coordinator and Deputy Title IX Coordinator. A written memo is also acceptable if it can be delivered to a Coordinator promptly after the employee's duty to report arises.

**Exigent Circumstances.** If the urgency of the situation or other circumstances necessitates an initial oral report (whether in person or by phone), at the conclusion of the oral report, the employee must immediately send the Coordinator to whom the oral report was made an email detailing all relevant information known to the reporting person, receipt confirmation requested. The Coordinator will also confirm receipt by return email. If the employee does not promptly receive a written confirmation from a Coordinator, the employee should continue to follow up with emails or phone calls to the Coordinator until a confirmation is received.

**Anonymous reports.** Employees are discouraged from reporting anonymously pursuant to this policy, except in circumstances where the employee would not otherwise report at all. Anonymous reports present difficulties in proving the identity of the reporter and to shield that person from the potential legal consequence of a criminal prosecution and/or mandatory termination of employment.

**Report Contents.** The employee's report must include all information concerning the incident known to the employee which is relevant to an investigation under this Policy, including whether the subject of the report has expressed a desire for an institutional response to the incident or made a request for confidentiality in reporting the incident. Employees are requested to include information about the approximate location of the alleged incident so the

University can determine its Clery Act and other reporting obligations. For instance, state that the incident occurred in “a residence hall,” “a building on-campus,” “outdoors but on-campus,” or “not on or near any University-owned property,” etc.

The Clery Act requires colleges and universities that receive federal funding to disseminate a public annual security report (ASR) to employees and students every October 1st. This ASR must include statistics of campus crime for the preceding three calendar years, plus details about efforts taken to improve campus safety. ASRs must also include policy statements regarding (but not limited to) crime reporting, campus facility security and access, law enforcement authority, incidence of alcohol and drug use, and the prevention of/response to sexual assault, domestic or dating violence, and stalking.

**Confidentiality.** Unless waived in writing by the affected individual, the identity of an alleged victim of an incident reported pursuant to this mandatory reporting requirement may be disclosed only to (a) employees of the University who are necessary to conduct an investigation of the report or any related hearings and (b) a law enforcement officer.

Exceptions. The mandatory reporting requirement does not apply to:

1. Individuals who are themselves the victims of the Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Dating Violence, or Stalking;
2. Instances when an employee receives information about Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Dating Violence, or Stalking at a public awareness event sponsored by the University; or
3. Employees designated as Confidential Employees.

**Consequences of Non-Compliance.** An employee who fails to make a required report will be terminated following an investigation and any required process under the applicable personnel policy.

**Immunity.** An employee who, in good faith, reports or assists in the investigation of a report under this Policy or who testifies or otherwise participates in a disciplinary process or judicial proceeding arising from a report of such an incident will not be subject to disciplinary action for violations of the Administrative Policies of Howard Payne University that are reasonably related to the incident. This immunity does

not apply to a person who perpetrates or assists in the perpetration of the incident reported under this policy or who commits a criminal offense pursuant to Texas Education Code § 51.255(a).

*Note: Employees who fail to make a mandatory report under this provision may also be subject to criminal prosecution pursuant to Texas Education Code section 51.255(a).*

### **C. Confidential Employees**

The University believes it is critical to provide community members who may be experiencing Sexual Harassment information about available institutional resources to empower those individuals to make informed decisions about their rights and options. Members of the University community may speak to officially designated Confidential Employees about Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Dating Violence, or Stalking without the conversation triggering a mandatory report of incident details.

The University has designated the following Confidential Employees:

- The University Counselors (located in Jennings Hall, Pod B, 325-649-8193) and via Tele counseling; and
- The University Nurse (located in Jennings Hall, Pod B, 325-649-8601)

A Confidential Employee is not required to report any information that would violate an individual’s expectation of privacy, such as the name or other identifying information of an individual who has experienced or allegedly engaged in Sexual Harassment. This provision does not affect any employee’s duty to report incidents of sexual misconduct as required by other laws.

*Note: Under Texas law, a “Confidential Employee” is an employee (1) designated by the University as a person with whom students may speak confidentially concerning Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Dating Violence, or Stalking or (2) receives information regarding such an incident under circumstances that render the employee’s communications confidential or privileged under other law.*

### **D. Reports to Law Enforcement**

Victims of a crime have the right to choose whether to report the crime to law enforcement, to be assisted by the University in reporting the crime to law enforcement, or to decline to report the crime to law enforcement. The University encourages anyone who believes they experienced or witnessed a crime to

make a report to the University's Department of Public Safety, if the assault occurred on campus, or to local law enforcement, for crimes occurring off campus.

Department of Public Safety  
Howard Payne University  
1000 Fisk Street  
Brownwood, TX 76801  
Phone: (325) 649-8609  
Emergencies: 911  
<https://www.hputx.edu/university-services/department-of-public-safety/>

Brownwood Police Department  
1050 W Commerce  
Brownwood, TX 76801  
Phone: 325-646-2525  
Emergencies: 911  
<https://www.brownwoodtexas.gov/243/Police-Department>

#### ***E. Medical Treatment and Preservation of Evidence***

In cases of sexual assault, and for one's safety and well-being, immediate medical attention is encouraged to evaluate for physical injury, sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy. Being examined as soon as possible, ideally within 72 hours, is important for evidence collection, which may be used to support prosecution should the Complainant decide to pursue criminal charges.

#### ***F. Anonymous Reports***

Anyone can make an anonymous report by submitting information through the Online Reporting Form at <https://www.hputx.edu/sexual-assault-policy-reporting/online-reporting-form/>.

#### **VII. Preliminary Assessment**

Upon receipt of a report, the Title IX Coordinator will conduct a preliminary assessment to determine whether the conduct, as reported, constitutes or could constitute Sexual Harassment.

If the Title IX Coordinator determines that the conduct reported could not fall within the scope of this Policy, and/or could not constitute Sexual Harassment, even if investigated, the Title IX Coordinator will close the matter and may notify the reporting party if doing so is consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"). The Title IX Coordinator may refer the report to other University offices as appropriate.

If the Title IX Coordinator determines that the conduct reported could fall within the scope of this Policy and/or could constitute Sexual Harassment, if

investigated, the Title IX Coordinator will proceed to contact the Complainant.

As part of the preliminary assessment, the Title IX Coordinator may take investigative steps to determine the identity of the Complainant if such identity is not apparent from the report.

#### **VIII. Contacting the Complainant**

If a report is not closed as a result of the preliminary assessment and the Complainant's identity is known, the Title IX Coordinator or their designee will promptly contact the Complainant to discuss the following:

- the availability of Supportive Measures with or without filing a Formal Complaint;
- the Complainant's wishes with respect to such Supportive Measures;
- the process for filing and pursuing a Formal Complaint;
- the importance of going to a hospital for treatment and preservation of evidence as soon as practicable after the incident, if applicable;
- the right to report the incident to the institution and to receive a prompt and equitable resolution of the report;
- the right of a victim of a crime to choose whether to report the crime to law enforcement, to be assisted by the institution in reporting the crime to law enforcement, or to decline to report the crime to law enforcement; and
- information about resources that are available on campus and in the community.

#### **IX. Supportive Measures**

Generally, any individual affected by or accused of Sexual Harassment will have equal access to support and counseling services offered through the University. The University encourages any individual who has questions or concerns to seek support of University-identified resources. The Title IX Coordinator is available to provide information about the University's policy and procedure and to provide assistance. A list of University identified resources is located at the following link: <https://www.hputx.edu/sexual-assault-policy-reporting/>

Complainant. The Title IX Coordinator or their designee will offer and make available Supportive Measures to the Complainant upon receipt of a report

of Sexual Harassment regardless of whether the Complainant elects to file a Formal Complaint.

**Respondent.** The Title IX Coordinator will notify the Respondent of the availability of Supportive Measures contemporaneously with the Respondent being notified of a Formal Complaint. Once a Formal Complaint has been initiated, the University will offer and make available Supportive Measures to the Respondent in the same manner in which it offers and makes them available to the Complainant. The University will also offer and make available Supportive Measures to the Respondent prior to the Respondent being notified of a Formal Complaint if the Respondent requests such measures.

**All Parties.** The University will, to the greatest extent practicable, ensure that each Party or other person who reports an incident of Sexual Harassment is offered counseling provided by a counselor who does not provide counseling to any other person involved in the incident. In addition, all Parties are allowed to drop a course in which both Parties are enrolled without any academic penalty.

**Confidentiality.** The University will maintain the confidentiality of Supportive Measures provided to either a Complainant or Respondent to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality does not impair the University's ability to provide the Supportive Measures in question.

**Complainant.** The Title IX Coordinator or their designee will offer and make available Supportive Measures to the Complainant upon receipt of a report of Sex-Based Harassment, regardless of whether the Complainant elects to file a Formal Complaint.

**Respondent.** The Title IX Coordinator will notify the Respondent of the availability of Supportive Measures contemporaneously with the Respondent being notified of a Formal Complaint. Once a Formal Complaint has been initiated, the University will offer and make available Supportive Measures to the Respondent in the same manner it offers and makes them available to the Complainant. The University will also offer and make available Supportive Measures to the Respondent prior to the Respondent being notified of a Formal Complaint if the Respondent requests such measures.

**All Parties.** The University will, to the greatest extent practicable, ensure that each Party or other person who reports an incident of Sexual Harassment is offered counseling provided by a counselor who does not provide counseling to any other person involved in the

incident. In addition, all Parties are allowed to drop a course in which both Parties are enrolled without any academic penalty.

**Confidentiality.** The University will maintain the confidentiality of Supportive Measures provided to either a Complainant or Respondent to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality does not impair the University's ability to provide the Supportive Measures in question.

## **X. Interim Removal**

At any time after receiving a report of Sexual Harassment, the Title IX Coordinator may remove a student Respondent from the University's education programs and activities on a temporary basis if an individualized safety and risk analysis determines that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of Sexual Harassment justifies removal. In the event the Title IX Coordinator imposes an interim removal, the Title IX Coordinator must offer to meet with the Respondent within twenty-four hours and provide the Respondent an opportunity to challenge the interim removal.

In the case of a Respondent who is a non-student employee (administrator, faculty, or staff), and in its discretion, the University may place the Respondent on administrative leave at any time after receiving a report of Sexual Harassment, including during the pendency of the investigation and adjudication process.

For all other Respondents, including independent contractors and guests, the University retains broad discretion to prohibit such persons from entering its campus and other properties at any time and for any reason, whether after receiving a report of Sexual Harassment or otherwise.

## **XI. Formal Complaint**

### **A. Filing a Formal Complaint**

A Complainant may file a Formal Complaint with the Title IX Coordinator requesting that the University investigate and adjudicate a report of Sex-Based Harassment in accordance with this Policy. Provided, however, that at the time the Complainant submits a Formal Complaint, the Complainant must be participating in, or attempting to participate in, one or more of the University's Education Programs or Activities.

A Complainant may file a Formal Complaint with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by regular mail, or by email using the contact information specified in

Section VI above. No person may submit a Formal Complaint on the Complainant's behalf.

In any case, including a case where a Complainant elects not to file a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator may file a Formal Complaint on behalf of the University if doing so is not clearly unreasonable. Such action will normally be taken in limited circumstances involving serious or repeated conduct or where the alleged perpetrator may pose a continuing threat to the University Community. Factors the Title IX Coordinator may consider include (but are not limited to):

1. the seriousness of the alleged incident, including (a) whether a weapon was involved in the incident, (b) whether multiple assailants were involved in the incident, and (c) whether the incident poses a risk of recurrence;
2. whether the institution has received other reports of Sexual Harassment committed by the Respondent;
3. whether the alleged incident poses a risk of harm to others; and
4. any other factors the University determines relevant.

If the Complainant or the Title IX Coordinator files a Formal Complaint, then the University will commence an investigation and proceed to adjudicate the matter. If the University elects to proceed as a Complainant, the University will inform the alleged victim of the incident of that decision. In all cases where a Formal Complaint is filed, the Complainant will be treated as a Party, irrespective of the Party's level of participation.

#### ***B. Consolidation of Formal Complaints***

The University may consolidate Formal Complaints as to allegations of Sexual Harassment against more than one Respondent, or by more than one Complainant against one or more Respondents, or by one Party against the other Party, where the allegations of Sexual Harassment arise out of the same facts or circumstances. Where the investigation and adjudication process involve more than one Complainant or more than one Respondent, references in this policy to the singular "Party," "Complainant," or "Respondent" include the plural, as applicable.

#### ***C. Dismissal Prior to Commencement of Investigation***

In a case where the Complainant files a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will evaluate the Formal Complaint and must dismiss it if the Title IX Coordinator determines:

- The conduct alleged in the Formal Complaint would not constitute Sexual Harassment, even if proven; or
- The conduct alleged in the Formal Complaint falls outside the scope of this Policy (*i.e.*, because the alleged conduct did not occur in the University's Education Programs and Activities).

In the event the Title IX Coordinator determines the Formal Complaint should be dismissed pursuant to this Section, the Title IX Coordinator will provide written notice of dismissal to the parties and advise them of their right to appeal. The Title IX Coordinator may refer the subject matter of the Formal Complaint to other University offices, as appropriate. A dismissal pursuant to this Section is presumptively a final determination for purposes of this policy unless otherwise specified in writing by the Title IX Coordinator in the written notice of dismissal.

#### ***D. Notice of Formal Complaint***

Within five days of the Title IX Coordinator receiving a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will transmit a written notice to the Complainant and Respondent that includes:

- A physical copy of or hyperlink to this Policy;
- Sufficient details known at the time so that the Parties may prepare for an initial interview with the investigator, include the identities of the parties involved in the incident (if known), the conduct allegedly constituting Sexual Harassment and the
- A statement that the Respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged Sexual Harassment and that a determination of responsibility will not be made until the conclusion of the adjudication and any appeal;
- Notifying the Complainant and Respondent of their right to be accompanied by an advisor of their choice;
- Notifying the Complainant and Respondent of their right to inspect and review evidence;
- Notifying the Complainant and Respondent of the University's prohibitions on retaliation and false statements; and

- Information about resources that are available on campus and in the community.

Should the University elect, at any point, to investigate allegations that are materially beyond the scope of the initial written notice, the University will provide a supplemental written notice describing the additional allegations to be investigated.

### ***E. Presumption of Non-Responsibility***

From the time a report or Formal Complaint is made, a Respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged misconduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made final.

## **XII. Investigation**

### ***A. Commencement and Timing***

After the written notice of Formal Complaint is transmitted to the Parties, an investigator selected by the Title IX Coordinator will undertake an investigation to gather evidence relevant to the alleged misconduct, including inculpatory and exculpatory evidence. The Title IX Coordinator will appoint an investigator with experience investigating allegations of discrimination and harassment. The investigator must be a professional with an advanced degree in law, criminal justice, or psychology and have experience investigating allegations of discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct. The investigator(s) may be an employee of the University, or an external investigator engaged to assist the University in its fact-gathering.

The burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination in the adjudication lies with the University and not with the Parties. The investigation will culminate in a written investigation report that will be submitted to the adjudicator during the selected adjudication process. Although the length of each investigation may vary depending on the totality of the circumstances, the University strives to complete each investigation within 45 days of the transmittal of the written notice of Formal Complaint.

### ***B. Equal Opportunity***

During the investigation, the investigator will provide an equal opportunity for the Parties to be interviewed, to present witnesses (including fact and expert witnesses), and to present other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the investigator retains discretion to limit the number of witness interviews the investigator conducts if the investigator finds that testimony would be unreasonably cumulative if the witnesses are offered solely as character references and do not have information relevant to the allegations at issue, or if

the witnesses are offered to render testimony that is categorically inadmissible, such as testimony concerning the sexual history of the Complainant. The investigator will not restrict the ability of the parties to gather and present relevant evidence on their own.

The investigation is a Party's opportunity to present testimonials and other evidence that the Party believes is relevant to the resolution of the allegations in the Formal Complaint. A Party aware of and has a reasonable opportunity to present particular evidence and/or identify particular witnesses during the investigation and elects not to, will be prohibited from introducing any such evidence during the adjudication absent a showing of mistake, inadvertence, surprise, or excusable neglect.

### ***C. Documentation of Investigation***

The investigator will take reasonable steps to ensure the investigation is documented. Interviews of the parties and witnesses may be documented by the investigator's notes, audio recorded, video recorded, or transcribed. The particular method utilized to record the interviews of parties and witnesses will be determined by the investigator in the investigator's sole discretion, although whatever method is chosen shall be used consistently throughout a particular investigation.

### ***D. Access to the Evidence***

At the conclusion of the evidence-gathering phase of the investigation, but prior to the completion of the investigation report, the investigator will transmit to each Party and their advisor, in either electronic or hard copy form, all evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in the Formal Complaint, including evidence the University may choose not to rely on at any hearing and inculpatory or exculpatory evidence whether obtained from a Party or some other source. The parties will have ten days in which to submit to the investigator a written response, which the investigator will consider prior to completing the investigation report.

The parties and their advisors are permitted to review the evidence solely for the purposes of this grievance process and may not duplicate or disseminate the evidence to the public.

### ***E. Investigation Report***

After the period for the parties to provide any written response has expired, the investigator will complete a written investigation report that fairly summarizes the various steps taken during the investigation, summarizes the relevant evidence collected, lists

material facts on which the parties agree, and lists material facts on which the parties do not agree. When the investigation report is complete, the investigator will transmit a copy to the Title IX Coordinator. The investigator will also transmit the investigation report to each Party and their advisor in either electronic or hard copy form.

### **XIII. Adjudication Process Selection**

After the investigator has sent the investigation report to the parties, the Title IX Coordinator will transmit to each Party a notice advising the Party of the two different adjudication processes specified below. The notice will explain that the hearing process is the default process for adjudicating all Formal Complaints and will be utilized unless both parties voluntarily consent to administrative adjudication as a form of informal resolution. The notice will be accompanied by a written consent to administrative adjudication and will advise each Party that, if both parties execute the written consent to administrative adjudication, then the administrative adjudication process will be used in lieu of the hearing process. Parties are urged to carefully review this Policy, consult with their advisor, and consult with other persons as they deem appropriate (including an attorney) prior to consenting to administrative adjudication.

Each Party will have three days from transmittal of the notice specified below to return the signed written consent form to the Title IX Coordinator. If either Party does not timely return the signed written consent, that Party will be deemed not to have consented to administrative adjudication and the Formal Complaint will be adjudicated pursuant to the hearing process.

### **XIV. Adjudication** ***Formal Hearing Process***

The process for adjudicating Formal Complaints is the hearing process specified in this Section. The hearing process will be used to adjudicate all Formal Complaints unless both parties provide timely consent to Informal Resolution.

#### **1. Hearing Officer**

After selection of the hearing process as the form of administrative adjudication, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly appoint a hearing officer who will oversee the hearing process and render a determination of responsibility for the allegations in the Formal Complaint, at the conclusion of the hearing process.

The hearing officer must be a professional with an advanced degree in law, criminal justice, or psychology and experience adjudicating allegations of

discrimination and harassment. The hearing officer may not be an employee of the University.

The Title IX Coordinator will see that the hearing officer is provided a copy of the investigation report and a copy of all evidence transmitted to the parties by the investigator.

#### **2. Hearing Notice and Response to the Investigation Report**

After the hearing officer is appointed by the Title IX Coordinator, the hearing officer will promptly transmit written notice to the parties notifying the parties of the hearing officer's appointment; setting a deadline for the parties to submit any written response to the investigation report; setting a date for the pre-hearing conference; setting a date and time for the hearing; and providing a copy of the University's Hearing Procedures. Neither the pre-hearing conference, nor the hearing itself, may be held any earlier than ten days from the date of transmittal of the written notice.

A Party's written response to the investigation report must include:

- To the extent the Party disagrees with the investigation report, any argument or commentary regarding such disagreement;
- Any argument that evidence should be categorically excluded from consideration at the hearing based on privilege, relevancy, the prohibition on the use of sexual history, or for any other reason;
- A list of any witnesses that the Party contends should be requested to attend the hearing pursuant to an attendance notice issued by the hearing officer;
- A list of any witnesses that the Party intends to bring to the hearing without an attendance notice issued by the hearing officer;
- Any objection that the Party has to the University's Hearing Procedures;
- Any request that the parties be separated physically during the pre-hearing conference and/or hearing;
- Any other accommodations that the Party seeks with respect to the pre-hearing conference and/or hearing;
- The name and contact information of the advisor who will accompany the Party at the pre-hearing conference and hearing;
- If the Party does not have an advisor who will accompany the Party at the hearing, a request that the University provide an advisor for purposes of conducting questioning.

A Party's written response to the investigation report may also include:

- Argument regarding whether any of the allegations in the Formal Complaint are supported by a preponderance of the evidence; and
- Argument regarding whether any of the allegations in the Formal Complaint constitute Sexual Harassment.

### **3. Pre-Hearing Conference**

Prior to the hearing, the hearing officer will conduct a pre-hearing conference with the parties and their advisors. The pre-hearing conference will be conducted live, with simultaneous and contemporaneous participation by the parties and their advisors. By default, the pre-hearing conference will be conducted with the hearing officer, the parties, the advisors, and other necessary University personnel, if any, together in the same physical location. However, upon request of either Party, the parties will be separated into different rooms with technology enabling the parties to participate simultaneously and contemporaneously by video and audio.

In the hearing officer's discretion, the pre-hearing conference may be conducted virtually, by use of video and audio technology, where all participants participate simultaneously and contemporaneously by use of such technology.

During the pre-hearing conference, the hearing officer will discuss the hearing procedures with the parties; address matters raised in the parties' written responses to the investigation report, as the hearing officer deems appropriate; discuss whether any stipulations may be made to expedite the hearing; discuss the witnesses the parties have requested be served with notices of attendance and/or witnesses the parties plan to bring to the hearing without a notice of attendance; and resolve any other matters that the hearing officer determines, in the hearing officer's discretion, should be resolved before the hearing.

### **4. Issuance of Notices of Attendance**

After the pre-hearing conference, the hearing officer will transmit notices of attendance to any University employee (including administrator, faculty, or staff) or student whose attendance is requested at the hearing as a witness. The notice will advise the subject of the specified date and time of the hearing and advise the subject to contact the hearing officer immediately if there is a material and unavoidable conflict.

The subject of an attendance notice should notify any manager, faculty member, coach, or other supervisor, as necessary, if attendance at the hearing will conflict with job duties, classes, or other obligations. All such managers, faculty members, coaches, and other supervisors are required to excuse the subject of the obligation, or provide some other accommodation, so that the subject may attend the hearing as specified in the notice.

The University will not issue a notice of attendance to any witness who is not an employee or a student.

### **5. Hearing**

After the pre-hearing conference, the hearing officer will convene and conduct a hearing pursuant to the University's Hearing Procedures. The hearing will be audio recorded. The audio recording will be made available to the parties for inspection and review on reasonable notice, including for use in preparing any subsequent appeal.

The hearing will be conducted live, with simultaneous and contemporaneous participation by the parties and their advisors. By default, the hearing will be conducted with the hearing officer, the parties, the advisors, witnesses, and other necessary University personnel together in the same physical location. However, upon request of either Party, the parties will be separated into different rooms with technology enabling the parties to participate simultaneously and contemporaneously by video and audio. The hearing may, in the hearing officer's discretion, be conducted virtually, by use of video and audio technology, where all participants participate simultaneously and contemporaneously by use of such technology.

While the Hearing Procedures and rulings from the hearing officer will govern the particulars of the hearing, each hearing will include, at a minimum:

- Opportunity for each Party to address the hearing officer directly and to respond to questions posed by the hearing officer;
- Opportunity for each Party's advisor to ask directly, orally, and in real time, relevant questions, and follow up questions, of the other Party and any witnesses, including questions that support or challenge credibility;
- Opportunity for each Party to raise contemporaneous objections to testimonial or non-testimonial evidence and to have such objections ruled on by the hearing officer and a reason for the ruling provided;
- Opportunity for each Party to submit evidence that the Party did not present during

the investigation due to mistake, inadvertence, surprise, or excusable neglect;

- Opportunity for each Party to make a brief closing argument.

Except as otherwise permitted by the hearing officer, the hearing will be closed to all persons except the parties, their advisors, the investigator, the hearing officer, the Title IX Coordinator, and other necessary University personnel. With the exception of the investigator and the parties, witnesses will be sequestered until such time as their testimony is complete.

During the hearing, the parties and their advisors will have access to the investigation report and evidence that was transmitted to them.

While a Party has the right to attend and participate in the hearing with an advisor, a Party and/or advisor who materially and repeatedly violates the rules of the hearing in such a way as to be materially disruptive, may be barred from further participation and/or have their participation limited, as the case may be, in the discretion of the hearing officer.

Subject to the minimum requirements specified in this Section, the hearing officer will have sole discretion to determine the manner and particulars of any given hearing, including with respect to the length of the hearing, the order of the hearing, and questions of admissibility. The hearing officer will independently and contemporaneously screen questions for relevance in addition to resolving any contemporaneous objections raised by the parties and will explain the rationale for any evidentiary rulings.

The hearing is not a formal judicial proceeding, and strict rules of evidence do not apply. The hearing officer will have discretion to modify the Hearing Procedures, when good cause exists to do so, and provided the minimal requirements specified above are met.

### **6. Subjection to Questioning**

In the event that any Party or witness refuses to attend the hearing, or attends but refuses to submit to questioning by the Parties' advisors, the statements of that Party or witness, as the case may be, whether given during the investigation or during the hearing, will not be considered by the hearing officer in reaching a determination of responsibility.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the hearing officer may consider the testimony of any Party or witness, whether given during the investigation or during the

hearing, if the parties jointly stipulate that the testimony may be considered or in the case where neither Party requested attendance of the witness at the hearing.

In applying this Section, the hearing officer will not draw an inference about the determination regarding responsibility based solely on a Party or a witness's absence from the live hearing and/or refusal to submit to questioning by the parties' advisors.

### **7. Deliberation and Determination**

After the hearing is complete, the hearing officer will objectively evaluate all relevant evidence collected during the investigation, including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence, together with testimony and non-testimony evidence received at the hearing, and ensure that any credibility determinations made are not based on a person's status as a Complainant, Respondent, or witness. The hearing officer will take care to exclude from consideration any evidence that was ruled inadmissible at the pre-hearing conference, during the hearing, or otherwise. The hearing officer will resolve disputed facts using a preponderance of the evidence (i.e., "more likely than not") standard and reach a determination regarding whether the facts that are supported by a preponderance of the evidence constitute one or more violations of the policy as alleged in the Formal Complaint.

### **8. Discipline and Remedies**

In the event the hearing officer determines that the Respondent is responsible for violating this policy, the hearing officer will, prior to issuing a written decision, consult with an appropriate University official with disciplinary authority over the Respondent and such official will determine any discipline to be imposed. The hearing officer will also, prior to issuing a written decision, consult with the Title IX Coordinator who will determine whether and to what extent ongoing support measures or other remedies will be provided to the Complainant.

Sanctions for a student found responsible for any type of Sexual Harassment may include but are not limited to, loss of housing privileges, restitution, changes in living assignment, assigned work, behavioral contract, being ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity representing the University (including athletics), disciplinary probation, loss of institutional financial aid, suspension or expulsion.

If a student is found responsible for Sexual Harassment and the sanction imposed makes the student ineligible to reenroll in the University (i.e., suspension or expulsion), the University will include a

notation on the student's transcript. The student may request the removal of a transcript notation imposed under this Policy if:

- the student becomes eligible to reenroll at the University; or
- the University determines that good cause exists to remove the notation.

If the University receives an appropriate request by another postsecondary educational institution, the University will provide to the requesting institution information relating to the University's determination that the student violated this Policy.

Sanctions for an employee found responsible for any type of Sexual Harassment may include discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

### **9. Written Decision**

After reaching a determination and consulting with the appropriate University official and Title IX Coordinator, as required above, the hearing officer will prepare a written decision that will include:

- Identification of the allegations potentially constituting Sexual Harassment made in the Formal Complaint;
- A description of the procedural steps taken by the University upon receipt of the Formal Complaint through the issuance of the written decision, including notification to the parties, interviews with the parties and witnesses, site visits, methods used to gather non-testimonial evidence, and the date, location, and people who were present at or presented testimony at the hearing.
- Articulate findings of fact, made under a preponderance of the evidence standard, that support the determination;
- A statement of, and rationale for, each allegation that constitutes a separate potential incident of Sexual Harassment, including a determination regarding responsibility for each separate potential incident;
- The discipline determined by the appropriate University official;
- Whether the Complainant will receive any ongoing support measures or other remedies as determined by the Title IX Coordinator; and
- A description of the University's process and grounds for appeal.

The hearing officer's written determination will be transmitted to the parties. Transmittal of the written

determination to the parties concludes the hearing process, subject to any right of appeal.

Although the length of each adjudication by hearing will vary depending on the totality of the circumstances, the University strives to issue the hearing officer's written determination within 15 days of the conclusion of the hearing.

### **B. Administrative Adjudication**

In lieu of the hearing process, the Parties may consent to have a Formal Complaint resolved by administrative adjudication as a form of informal resolution. Administrative adjudication is voluntary and must be consented to in writing by both parties and approved by the Title IX Coordinator. At any time prior to the issuance of the administrative officer's determination, a Party has the right to withdraw from administrative adjudication and request a live hearing. If administrative adjudication is selected, the Title IX Coordinator will appoint an administrative officer who does not need to be an employee of the University. The administrative officer must be a professional with an advanced degree in counseling, law, criminal justice, or psychology and experience adjudicating allegations of discrimination and harassment. The administrative officer may not be an employee of the University.

The Title IX Coordinator will see that the administrative adjudicator is provided a copy of the investigation report and a copy of all the evidence transmitted to the parties by the investigator.

The administrative officer will promptly send written notice to the Parties notifying the parties of the administrative officer's appointment; setting a deadline for the parties to submit any written response to the investigation report; and setting a date and time for each party to meet with the administrative officer separately. The administrative officer's meetings with the parties will not be held any earlier than ten (10) days from the date of transmittal of the written notice specified in this paragraph.

A Party's written response to the investigation report must include:

- To the extent the party disagrees with the investigation report, any argument or commentary regarding such disagreement;
- Any argument that a particular piece or class of evidence should be categorically excluded from consideration at the hearing based on privilege, relevancy, the prohibition on the use of sexual history, or for any other reason;

- Argument regarding whether any of the allegations in the Formal Complaint are supported by a preponderance of the evidence;
- Argument regarding whether any of the allegations in the Formal Complaint constitute Sexual Harassment.

After reviewing the Parties' written responses, the administrative officer will meet separately with each party to provide the Party with an opportunity make any oral argument or commentary the Party wishes to make and for the administrative officer to ask questions concerning the Party's written response, the investigative report, and/or the evidence collected during the investigation.

After meeting with each Party, the administrative officer will objectively reevaluate all relevant evidence, including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence and ensure that any credibility determinations made are not based on a person's status as a Complainant, Respondent, or witness. The administrative officer will take care to exclude from consideration any evidence that the administrative officer determines should be ruled inadmissible based on the objections and arguments raised by the Parties in their respective written responses to the investigation report. The administrative officer will resolve disputed facts using a preponderance of the evidence (*i.e.*, "more likely than not") standard and reach a determination regarding whether the facts that are supported by a preponderance of the evidence constitute one or more violations of the policy as alleged in the Formal Complaint.

Thereafter, the administrative officer will consult with any University official and the Title IX Coordinator and will prepare and transmit a written decision which shall serve as a resolution for purposes of informal resolution.

Transmittal of the administrative officer's written determination concludes the administrative adjudication, subject to any right of appeal.

Although the length of each administrative adjudication will vary depending on the totality of the circumstances, the University strives to issue the administrative officer's written determination within twenty-one (21) days of the transmittal of the initiating written notice.

#### **XV. Dismissal During Investigation of Adjudication**

The University may dismiss a Formal Complaint at any point during the investigation or adjudication process if the Title IX Coordinator determines that any one or more of the following is true:

- The Complainant provides the Title IX Coordinator written notice that the Complainant wishes to withdraw the Formal Complaint or any discrete allegations therein (in which case those discrete allegations may be dismissed);
- The Respondent is no longer employed by the University, or
- Specific circumstances prevent the University from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the Formal Complaint or any discrete allegations therein (in which case those discrete allegations may be dismissed).

In the event the Title IX Coordinator determines that a Formal Complaint should be dismissed pursuant to this Section, the Title IX Coordinator will provide written notice of dismissal to the parties and advise them of their right to appeal. The Title IX Coordinator may refer the subject matter of the Formal Complaint to other University offices, as appropriate. A dismissal pursuant to this Section is presumptively a final determination as it pertains to this policy, unless otherwise specified in writing by the Title IX Coordinator in the written notice of dismissal.

#### **XVI. Appeal**

##### ***Grounds for Appeal***

Either Party may appeal the determination of an adjudication or a dismissal of a Formal Complaint on one or more of the following grounds:

1. A procedural irregularity affected the outcome;
2. There is new evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination or dismissal was made that could have affected the outcome;
3. The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, hearing officer or administrative officer had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally, or against the individual Complainant or Respondent, that affected the outcome.

No other grounds for appeal are permitted.

##### ***B. Deadline to File Appeal***

A Party must file an appeal within seven days of the date they receive notice of dismissal or determination appealed from or, if the other Party appeals, within three days of the other Party appealing, whichever is later. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Vice President for Academic affairs, who serves as the appeal officer. The appeal must specifically identify the determination and/or dismissal appealed from, articulate which one or more of the three grounds for appeal are being asserted, explain in detail why the appealing Party believes the appeal should be granted, and articulate what specific relief the appealing Party seeks.

### ***C. Resolution of Appeal***

Promptly upon receipt of an appeal, the appeal officer will conduct an initial evaluation to confirm that the appeal is filed in a timely manner and that it invokes at least one of the permitted grounds for appeal. If the appeal officer determines that the appeal is not timely or that it fails to invoke a permitted ground for appeal, the appeal officer will dismiss the appeal and provide written notice of the same to the parties.

If the appeal officer confirms that the appeal is timely and invokes at least one permitted ground for appeal, the appeal officer will provide written notice to the other Party that an appeal has been filed and that the other Party may submit written opposition to the appeal within seven days. Any records from the investigation and adjudication necessary to resolve the grounds raised in the appeal.

Upon receipt of any opposition, or after the time period for submission of opposition has passed without one being filed, the appeal officer will promptly decide the appeal and transmit a written decision to the parties that explain the outcome of the appeal and the rationale. The determination of a Formal Complaint, including any discipline, becomes final when the time for appeal has passed with no Party filing an appeal or, if any appeal is filed, at the point when the appeal officer has resolved all appeals, either by dismissal or by transmittal of a written decision. No further review beyond the appeal is permitted.

Although the length of each appeal will vary depending on the totality of the circumstances, the University strives to issue the appeal officer's written decision within 21 days of an appeal being filed.

## **XVII. Informal Resolution**

The University may, in the Title IX Coordinator's discretion, facilitate an Informal Resolution in accordance with the protocol outlined below.

### ***A. Guiding Principles***

Generally, informal resolution involves a structured, supervised interaction between the Parties and/or other affected community members that seeks to identify and meet the needs of the Complainant while providing an opportunity for the Respondent and/or other affected community members to accept responsibility and repair harm (to the extent possible). Informal resolution may not include an investigation, hearing, or disciplinary action against a Respondent (including transcript notations), but may include imposing appropriate and reasonable remedies as agreed to by the Parties. All informal resolutions are facilitated by a trained administrator or outside expert.

### ***B. Availability of Informal Resolution***

Informal resolution is available in matters in which the Title IX Coordinator, in the Title IX Coordinator's discretion, determines it is appropriate. Factors the University will consider when determining whether a report of Prohibited Conduct is suitable for Alternative Resolution include, but are not limited to:

- the nature and severity of the conduct, including whether the use of force or a weapon was involved;
- the Respondent's prior known disciplinary or criminal conduct, including whether the University **has** received other reports of Prohibited Conduct committed by the Respondent;
- whether the alleged incident poses a risk of harm to other individuals or the community;
- the dynamics of power or control commonly associated with the alleged conduct or the nature of the parties' relationship;
- whether multiple parties are affected or involved;
- any admissions of responsibility by the Respondent; and
- any other factor deemed relevant by the Title IX Coordinator or their designee in the interest of overall campus safety or safety of the parties involved.

Informal resolution will not be permitted if the Respondent is a non-student employee accused of committing Sexual Harassment against a student.

### ***C. Informal Resolution Process***

At any time after the parties are provided written notice of the Formal Complaint, and before the completion of any appeal, the parties may voluntarily consent, with the Title IX Coordinator's approval, to engage in mediation, facilitated resolution, or other

form of dispute resolution the goal of which is to enter into a final resolution resolving the allegations raised in the Formal Complaint by agreement of the parties. Administrative Adjudication is a form of informal resolution.

The specific manner of any informal resolution process will be determined by the Parties and the Title IX Coordinator, in consultation together. Prior to commencing the informal resolution process agreed upon, the Title IX Coordinator will transmit a written notice to the Parties that:

- Describes the parameters and requirements of the informal resolution process to be utilized;
- Identifies the individual responsible for facilitating the informal resolution (who may be the Title IX Coordinator, another University official, or a suitable third-Party);
- Explains the effect of participating in informal resolution and/or reaching a final resolution will have on a Party's ability to resume the investigation and adjudication of the allegations at issue in the Formal Complaint; and
- Explains any other consequence resulting from participation in the informal resolution process, including a description of records that will be generated, maintained, and/or shared.

After receiving the written notice specified in this paragraph, each Party must voluntarily provide written consent to the Title IX Coordinator, before the informal resolution may commence. The University will not pressure or compel any individual to engage in mediation, to directly confront the other, or to participate in any particular form of informal resolution. Individuals may be accompanied by an adviser or support person at any meetings related to the informal resolution process.

If the Parties reach a resolution through the informal resolution process, and the Title IX Coordinator agrees that the resolution is not clearly unreasonable, the Title IX Coordinator will reduce the terms of the agreed resolution to writing and present the resolution to the parties for their written signature. Once both parties and the Title IX Coordinator sign the resolution, the resolution is final, and the allegations addressed by the resolution are considered resolved and will not be subject to further investigation, adjudication, remediation, or discipline by the University, except as otherwise provided in the resolution itself, absent a

showing that a Party induced the resolution by fraud, misrepresentation, or other misconduct or where required to avoid a manifest injustice to either Party or to the University. Notwithstanding the foregoing if the form of informal resolution is Administrative Adjudication, there shall not be an agreed resolution requiring the parties' signatures; instead, the determination issued by the administrative officer shall serve as the resolution and conclude the informal resolution process, subject only to any right of appeal. With the exception of a resolution resulting from the Administrative Adjudication process, all other forms of informal resolution pursuant to this Section are not subject to appeal.

#### ***D. Termination of Informal Resolution***

A Party may withdraw their consent to participate in informal resolution at any time before a resolution has been finalized.

#### ***E. Deadlines for Informal Resolution***

Absent extension by the Title IX Coordinator, any informal resolution process must be completed within 21 days. If an informal resolution process does not result in a resolution within 21 days, and absent an extension, abeyance, or other contrary ruling by the Title IX Coordinator, the informal resolution process will be deemed terminated, and the Formal Complaint will be resolved pursuant to the investigation and adjudication procedures. The Title IX Coordinator may adjust any time periods or deadlines in the investigation and/or adjudication process that were suspended due to the informal resolution.

During the pendency of the informal resolution process, the investigation and adjudication processes that would otherwise occur are stayed, and all related deadlines are suspended.

### **XVIII. Other Investigation and Adjudication Considerations**

#### ***A. Advisor of Choice***

From the point a Formal Complaint is made, and until an investigation, adjudication, and appeal are complete, the Complainant and Respondent will have the right to be accompanied by an advisor of their choice to all meetings, interviews, and hearings that are part of the investigation, adjudication, and appeal process. The advisor may be, but is not required to be, an attorney.

Except for the questioning of witnesses during the hearing specified in Section XVIII.A.5, the advisor will play a passive role and is not permitted to communicate on behalf of a Party, insist that communication flow through the advisor, or

communicate with the University about the matter without the Party being included in the communication. In the event a Party's advisor of choice engages in material violation of the parameters specified in this Section XXI and Section XVIII.A.5, the University may preclude the advisor from further participation, in which case the Party may select a new advisor of their choice.

In the event a Party is not able to secure an advisor to attend the hearing specified in Section VIII.A.5, and requests the University to provide an advisor, the University will provide the Party an advisor, without fee or charge, who will conduct questioning on behalf of the Party at the hearing. The University will have sole discretion to select the advisor it provides. The advisor the University provides may be, but is not required to be, an attorney.

The University will provide an advisor to any Party upon receipt of a request to the Title IX Coordinator or their designee. The University will provide an advisor for any Party at a hearing specified in Section XVIII.A.5 for the purpose of cross-examining a Party or witness.

#### ***B. Conflicts of Interest, Bias, and Procedural Complaints***

The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, hearing officer, administrative officer, appeals officer, and informal resolution facilitator will be free of any material conflicts of interest or material bias. Any Party who believes one or more of these University officials has a material conflict of interest or material bias must raise the concern promptly so that the University may evaluate the concern and find a substitute, if appropriate. The failure of a Party to timely raise a concern of a conflict of interest or bias may result in a waiver of the issue for purposes of any appeal.

#### ***C. Objections Generally***

Parties are expected to raise any objections, concerns, or complaints about the investigation, adjudication, and appeals process in a prompt and timely manner so that the University may evaluate the matter and address it, if appropriate.

#### ***D. Treatment Records and Other Privileged Information***

During the investigation and adjudication processes, the investigator and adjudicator are not permitted to access, consider, disclose, permit questioning concerning, or otherwise use:

- a Party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the Party; or
- information or records protected from disclosure by any other legally-recognized privilege, such as the attorney-client privilege unless the University has obtained the Party's voluntary, written consent to do so for the purposes of the investigation and adjudication process.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the investigator and/or adjudicator may consider any such records or information otherwise covered by this Section XIX if the Party holding the privilege affirmatively discloses the records or information to support their allegation or defense.

#### ***E. Sexual History***

During the investigation and adjudication processes, questioning regarding a Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior is not relevant unless such questions and evidence about the Complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the conduct alleged or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the Complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the Respondent and are offered to prove consent. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a Complainant who affirmatively uses information otherwise considered irrelevant by this Section for the purpose of supporting the Complainant's allegations may be deemed to have waived the protections of this Section.

#### ***F. Student Withdrawal or Graduation Pending Disciplinary Charges***

If a student withdraws or graduates from the University pending an investigation of a complaint of Sexual Misconduct under this Policy, the University will expedite the disciplinary process as necessary to accommodate both the Complainant and the Respondent's interest in a speedy resolution and continue the investigation with or without the participation of the Respondent.

### **XIX. Other Policy Violations**

#### ***A. Bad Faith Complaints and False Information***

It is a violation of this policy for any person to submit a report or Formal Complaint that the person knows, at the time the report or Formal Complaint is

submitted, to be false or frivolous. It is also a violation of this policy for any person to knowingly make a materially false statement during the course of an investigation, adjudication, or appeal under this policy. Violations of this Section are not subject to the investigation and adjudication processes in this policy; instead, they will be addressed under the Code of Student Conduct in the case of students and other University policies and standards, as applicable, for other persons.

### **B. Other Sex-Based Misconduct**

This policy applies only to Sexual Harassment as defined in this Policy. Complaints of other forms of sex discrimination are governed by the University's Non-Discrimination Policy.

## **XX. Discretion in Application**

### ***Interpretation***

The University retains discretion to interpret and apply this Policy in a manner that is not clearly unreasonable, even if the University's interpretation or application differs from the interpretation of the Parties.

The provisions of this Policy and the Hearing Procedures are not contractual in nature, whether in their own right or as part of any other express or implied contract. Accordingly, the University retains discretion in revising this Policy and the Hearing Procedures at any time and for any reason. The University may apply Policy revisions to an active case provided that doing so is not clearly unreasonable.

### **B. Outside Appointments, Dual Appointments, and Delegations**

The University retains the discretion to retain and appoint suitably qualified persons who are not University employees to fulfill any function of the University under this policy, including, but not limited to, the investigator, hearing officer, administrative officer, informal resolution officer, and/or appeals officer. The University also retains discretion in appointing two or more persons to jointly fulfill the role of investigator, hearing officer, administrative officer, informal resolution officer, and/or appeals officer.

The functions assigned to a given University official under this policy, including but not limited to the functions assigned to the Title IX Coordinator, investigator, hearing officer, administrative officer, informal resolution officer, and appeals officer, may, in the University's discretion, be delegated by such University official to any suitably qualified individual

and such delegation may be recalled by the University at any time.

### **C. Vendors, Contractors, and Third Parties**

The University does business with various vendors, contractors, and other third parties who are not students or employees of the University. Notwithstanding any rights that a given vendor, contractor, or third-party Respondent may have under this policy, the University retains its right to limit any vendor, contractor, or third party's access to campus for any reason. The University retains all rights it enjoys by contract or law to terminate its relationship with any vendor, contractor, or third party irrespective of any process or outcome under this policy.

### **D. Recordings**

Wherever this policy specifies that an audio or video recording will be made, the recording will be made only by the University and is considered property of the University, subject to any right of access that a Party may have under this policy, FERPA, and other applicable federal, state, or local laws. Only the University is permitted to make audio or video recordings under this policy. The surreptitious recording of any meeting, interview, hearing, or other interaction contemplated under this policy is strictly prohibited. Any Party who wishes to transcribe a hearing by use of a transcriptionist must seek pre-approval from the hearing officer.

### **E. Relationship With Criminal Process**

This policy sets forth the University's processes for responding to reports and Formal Complaints of Sexual Harassment. The University's processes are separate, distinct, and independent of any criminal processes. While the University may temporarily delay its processes under this policy to avoid interfering with law enforcement efforts if requested by law enforcement, the University will otherwise apply this policy and its processes without regard to the status or outcome of any criminal process.

### **Pregnancy, Childbirth, Lactation, and Related Medical Conditions Policy**

*Nothing in this policy is intended to create or define the terms of a contract between Howard Payne University and any student or other individual or entity. The University reserves the right to alter, amend, or deviate from the provisions in this policy at any time, with or without notice to the University community.*

### **I. Purpose**

Howard Payne University (the "University") is

dedicated to providing equal access to its education programs and activities for all students and fostering a welcoming and supportive community for pregnant and parenting students and employees. This policy outlines the University's commitment to comply with applicable Federal law, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and any other applicable law. It establishes the University's intent to protect students, employees, and applicants against unlawful discrimination based on pregnancy, childbirth, lactation, related medical conditions, and recovery from these conditions. The policy also describes reasonable accommodations and resources available to pregnant and parenting students, reasonable break time for employees for lactation, and a clean, private lactation space for students and employees.

While the University expects community members to abide by the provisions of the University's Lifestyle Commitment relating to sexual purity and marriage, the University is committed to supporting students who are pregnant or new parents, including the mother and, as appropriate, the father, regardless of their circumstances. The University expects all community members to treat students who are pregnant or new parents with Christian love, dignity, and respect in all situations.

## **II. Scope**

This policy applies to individuals seeking admission or currently admitted and to students enrolled at the University (collectively referred to as "students"). This policy applies to pregnancy, childbirth, medical conditions relating to pregnancy, lactation, and recovery from any of these conditions. Generally, recovery from childbirth will be presumed to include the six (6) weeks following childbirth. However, recovery time will be extended when deemed medically necessary by a student's medical provider. Recovery time from other conditions will be determined based on the time a student's medical provider deems medically necessary.

- a. Parental Status: a biological, adoptive, foster, stepparent, or legal custodian or guardian.

## **III. Nondiscrimination, Harassment, & Retaliation**

In accordance with Title IX and other applicable Federal and state laws, the University does not unlawfully discriminate against any student or exclude any student from its education program or activity on the basis of sex, which includes a student's pregnancy, childbirth, or recovery from any of these conditions in its education programs and activities. Additionally, in accordance with Title IX, the University will not apply

any rule concerning a student's actual or potential parental, family, or marital status, which treats students differently on the basis of sex.

The University will not tolerate discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex, including on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or recovery from any of these conditions, in its community. It will promptly and equitably respond to reports of discrimination and harassment. The University also prohibits retaliation against any individuals for reporting discrimination or harassment prohibited by this policy or for exercising or attempting to exercise a right under this policy. Reports of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should be made to the Title IX Coordinator at [TitleIX@hputx.edu](mailto:TitleIX@hputx.edu). Any member of the University community can make a report. Reports of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation will be handled according to the applicable grievance procedures outlined in the University's Student Grievance Process or Title IX Sexual Misconduct Policy, as is appropriate based on the allegations in the report.

As a faith-based institution, the University is exempt from certain laws and regulations concerning discrimination. The University maintains the right, with regard to its commitment to Biblical values, employment, and other matters, to uphold and apply its religious beliefs related to, among other issues, marriage, sex (gender), gender identity, sexual orientation, and sexual activity.

## **IV. Reasonable Accommodations**

As appropriate, the University will provide reasonable accommodations due to pregnancy, childbirth, medical conditions relating to pregnancy, lactation, or recovery from any of these conditions, provided such reasonable accommodations do not fundamentally alter the University's education program or activity. The University will treat pregnancy, childbirth, medical conditions relating to pregnancy, lactation, and recovery from any of these conditions in the same manner as it treats other temporary disabilities or medical conditions. A student in need of a reasonable accommodation on the basis of one of these conditions should contact the Title IX Coordinator at [TitleIX@hputx.edu](mailto:TitleIX@hputx.edu). The Title IX Coordinator will work with the student and faculty to identify and implement appropriate reasonable accommodations to help provide the student with equal access to the University's education program or activity and not fundamentally alter the education program or activity. In any situation where an agreement regarding an accommodation cannot be reached, the Title IX Coordinator has the discretion to determine whether a particular requested accommodation is reasonable and

will be provided. While not exhaustive, the following sub-sections provide additional information about reasonable accommodations that may be available.

a. Absences and Missed Coursework

- Course absences due to pregnancy, childbirth, medical conditions relating to pregnancy, lactation, and recovery from any of these conditions will be excused as long as a medical provider deems it necessary.
- When the student returns to the University, to the extent possible, the University will reinstate the student to the status the student held when the absence began.
- As discussed under the “Certification to Participate” section below, a student may need to provide the University with certification from the student’s medical provider prior to returning to an academic or extracurricular program or activity.
- The University will allow students to make up coursework missed as a result of an absence due to pregnancy, childbirth, medical conditions relating to pregnancy, lactation, and recovery from any of these conditions. The method and timing for making up missed coursework may depend on the nature of a particular course or activity. For example, courses with lab work or clinical rotations may need to be made up by taking or retaking part or all of a course during a subsequent semester.
- Where grading is based in part on class participation or attendance, students who miss classes due to pregnancy or childbirth will be permitted to make up the missed participation or attendance credits.
- Students are responsible for contacting faculty members to notify them of their intent to miss class or to be on leave due to pregnancy, childbirth, medical conditions relating to pregnancy, lactation, and recovery from any of these conditions. In the event prior notice is not possible due to an emergency, students are responsible for contacting faculty as soon as possible after the fact. Students should work with faculty to determine how they will make up any missed work during the absence.

- Faculty are responsible for ensuring all students have equal access to the University’s education programs and activities. This includes, where appropriate, making reasonable accommodations for students to make up any missed coursework, fieldwork, and any points or credits based on course attendance or participation. When appropriate, faculty may assign different coursework to replace missed coursework, fieldwork, or attendance/participation points. Notwithstanding the previous, nothing in this policy is intended to fundamentally alter course requirements or other aspects of the education program or activity.

b. Remote Learning

- When appropriate, remote learning may be a reasonable accommodation needed due to pregnancy, childbirth, medical conditions relating to pregnancy, lactation, or recovery from any of these conditions. The availability of remote learning as an accommodation will be based on the nature of the course, the availability of needed technology, and the student’s needs. Generally, remote learning will be provided as a reasonable accommodation only for a limited period based on medical necessity. Notwithstanding the previous, nothing in this policy is intended to fundamentally alter course requirements or other aspects of the education program or activity.

c. Physical Accommodations

- Physical accommodations, such as more comfortable seating, a larger desk, elevator access, more frequent breaks during class time or fieldwork to use the restroom or rest, etc., may also be made available for students as needed due to pregnancy, childbirth, medical conditions relating to pregnancy, lactation, or recovery from any of these conditions, provided such accommodations do not fundamentally alter an education program or activity.

d. Lactation Accommodations

- Reasonable accommodations are available for lactating students. A private room has been designated as a Mother’s Nursing Room in Thompson Academic Complex, Room 307, for students to breastfeed or express breastmilk. Students needing an alternative

location should contact the Title IX Coordinator at [TitleIX@hptux.edu](mailto:TitleIX@hptux.edu).

- If possible, students are encouraged to breastfeed or express breastmilk between classes or outside of instruction time to minimize disruption to the student's learning. When not possible and a student must miss class or fieldwork to breastfeed or express breastmilk, such absence will be excused, the student will not be penalized for the time missed, and the student will be provided an opportunity to make up any time or work missed during the absence, provided such accommodations do not fundamentally alter an education program or activity. Students should work with faculty to determine how they will make up any missed time or work during the absence. See the "Absences and Missed Coursework" section above for more information.

e. Accommodations for Pregnancy-Related Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations may also be available for students with a pregnancy-related disability. Students with a pregnancy-related disability are encouraged to contact the Academic Success Coordinator at 325-649-8620 or in the Thompson Academic Complex (TAC), 310. To the extent possible, the Title IX Coordinator and ASC will work together to provide reasonable accommodations to students with a pregnancy-related disability.

f. Other Reasonable Accommodations

- The descriptions of accommodations above are not an exhaustive list of accommodations available from the University. The availability and reasonableness of a requested accommodation will be determined on a case-by-case basis, regardless of whether they are specifically mentioned in this policy. The Title IX Coordinator will work with the student and faculty to identify and implement appropriate reasonable accommodations to help provide the student with equal access to the University's education program or activity and not fundamentally alter the education program or activity.

g. Assistance for Other Expectant and New Parents

- While most provisions in this policy apply to expectant or new birth mothers, assistance and adjustments may be available for expectant or new parents other than birth mothers, such as expectant or new fathers and expectant or new adoptive or foster parents, as appropriate. Students needing assistance or adjustments because they are an expectant or new father or expectant or new adoptive or foster parent should contact the Title IX Coordinator at [TitleIX@hputx.edu](mailto:TitleIX@hputx.edu). Additionally, resources available to all expectant and new parents are described in the "Resources" section below.

## V. Leave of Absence

Students may take a leave of absence due to pregnancy, childbirth, medical conditions relating to pregnancy, lactation, or recovery from any of these conditions for as long a period of time as is deemed medically necessary by the student's medical provider. At the conclusion of such leave of absence, to the extent possible, the student will be reinstated to the status the student held when the leave began. Notwithstanding the previous, nothing in this policy is intended to fundamentally alter course requirements or other aspects of the education program or activity.

## VI. Certification to Participate

Depending on the nature of the course, fieldwork, extracurricular activity, or other education program or activity in which a student is involved, the University may require the student to obtain written certification from the student's medical provider stating the student is physically able to continue or resume participation. Such certification will only be required in situations where the University requires certification from other students with other physical conditions requiring the attention of a medical provider.

## VII. University Employment

If the University also employs a student, the student should review the University's Staff Policy Manual and contact the Office of Human Resources regarding any pregnancy-related questions or concerns pertaining to the student's employment.

## VIII. Resources

The University is committed to supporting students who are expecting or new parents, including mothers and, as applicable, fathers. Students can contact the Title IX Coordinator at [TitleIX@hputx.edu](mailto:TitleIX@hputx.edu) for more resource information.

- a. On-Campus Resources  
University Nurse  
Martha Brunette, R.N.  
(325) 649-8601  
Jennings Hall – Pod B (outside)  
[nurse@hputx.edu](mailto:nurse@hputx.edu)

University Chaplain  
Gary Gramling  
(325) 649-8408  
[ggramling@hputx.edu](mailto:ggramling@hputx.edu)  
Paul and Jane Meyer Faith and Life  
Leadership Center, 135

Baptist Student Ministry Director  
Bryan Pate  
325-649-8319  
[bpate@hputx.edu](mailto:bpate@hputx.edu)  
The Hub at the Quinn House  
Davis-Thompson Baptist Student Ministry

University Counseling Services  
Kaye Cummings, LPA  
(325) 649-8193  
[kcummings@hputx.edu](mailto:kcummings@hputx.edu)  
Jennings Hall – Pod B (outside)

Center for Student Success  
Dr. Wendy McNeeley  
(325) 649-8200  
[css@hputx.edu](mailto:css@hputx.edu)

Office of Student Experience  
(325) 649-8017  
[studentexperience@hputx.edu](mailto:studentexperience@hputx.edu)

Office of Financial Aid  
Phone: (325) 649-8015  
Packer Administration Building, First Floor

- b. Off-Campus

Central Texas Pregnancy Care Center  
2200 Austin Avenue  
Brownwood, Texas  
325-646-5433  
[www.pccbrownwood.com](http://www.pccbrownwood.com)

Confidential free services include: pregnancy tests, pregnancy care education, free prenatal vitamins, physician referrals, community service referrals, Medicaid application assistance, parenting classes - Learn to Earn Program and baby needs store, and free diapers, formula, and other baby needs.

## IX. Contact Information

To make a report of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, to request reasonable accommodations, or to ask questions regarding this policy, please contact:

Tammy Arreola  
Title IX Coordinator  
(325) 649-8630  
[tarreola@hputx.edu](mailto:tarreola@hputx.edu)  
[Title IX@hputx.edu](mailto:TitleIX@hputx.edu)  
Mabee University Center  
Office of Student Experience  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Suite 206C

Anyone experiencing discrimination based on pregnancy or parenting status may file a complaint:

- Using the school's internal Title IX grievance procedures.
- With the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), even if you have not filed a complaint with your school. OCR complaints must be filed within 180 days of the discrimination taking place.
- In court, even if you have not filed a complaint with your school or OCR.