



Student Rights and Responsibilities

Release of Information

Flathead Valley Community College will release to outside agencies or persons, upon request, the following directory information:

- Name;
- Phone number;
- Temporary or permanent address;
- Email address;
- Enrollment status;
- Dates of attendance;
- Area of study;
- Degrees/certificates awarded;
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- Honors and awards received; and
- Grade level.

If a student chooses not to have any or all of the directory information released, he/she is required to inform the Admissions and Records Office in writing, by submitting a *Release of Information* form available in the Admissions and Records Office. The college will not release other information without written permission, unless subpoenaed by a court or tribunal of competent jurisdiction.

Students have the right to review and inspect all information pertaining to their educational records, including admissions and academic records. The Admissions and Records Office requires at least 48 hours notice if a student wishes to review his/her records. A student may request an amendment to his/her records on the grounds he/she feels the records are inaccurate, misleading or violate his/her rights. If the amendment is denied, the contents can be challenged through a hearing process with the Director, Enrollment Planning and Research.

According to *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA) regulations, a student's education records may be disclosed without prior written consent to specific bodies. A record of each request will be kept in the student's file.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 prohibits disclosure of academic information to third parties without prior written consent of the student.

Academic Probation and Dismissal

A degree-seeking student will be placed on academic probation anytime his/her grade point average (GPA) falls below 2.0.

A student on probation will be required to meet with a retention advisor before starting the next semester to discuss academic goals and barriers and ways to achieve the goals. A review of the academic assistance available at FVCC and the development of a plan to assist the individual in achieving his/her academic goals will also take place.

If a student fails to bring his/her GPA above 2.0 for two semesters in a row, he/she will have two options—to choose academic suspension for a period of no less than

one year or agree to a plan of extensive remediation developed by the college. If remediation is unsuccessful or if the student fails to comply with the prescribed plan, he/she will be suspended immediately for no less than one year.

Student Conduct and Standards

In order to promote an atmosphere that protects students' rights and is responsive to students' needs, all students are expected to maintain acceptable standards of behavior on campus. The following behavior is considered unacceptable and may lead to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion from the college:

- Deliberate disruption in the classroom or at any college activities;
- Cheating, plagiarism and other forms of dishonesty including knowingly giving false information to the college;
- Forgery, alteration or misuse of community college documents, records or identification or computer programs or accounts;
- Physical abuse or harassment toward another person;
- Theft or damage to property of the college;
- Use/possession of illegal drugs or alcohol on campus;
- Carrying/discharging firearms on campus; and
- Unauthorized use or occupancy of college facilities.

Academic Integrity Guidelines

The faculty, staff and administration of Flathead Valley Community College believe academic dishonesty conflicts with a college education and the free inquiry of knowledge. Plagiarism, cheating, forgery, facilitating or aiding academic dishonesty, unauthorized access, or otherwise manipulating student records, and computer programs, are all forms of dishonesty that corrupt the learning process and threaten the educational environment for all students.

Plagiarism is using another person's writing or works as one's own. Plagiarism is an intolerable offense in the academic community and is strictly forbidden. Students must always carefully acknowledge others' ideas as well as words.

The consequences of academic dishonesty may vary depending on the situation and the individual instructor involved. Any student involved in academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary action imposed by the instructor up to and including administrative withdrawal or a failing grade for the course.

In addition, academic dishonesty is grounds for disciplinary action under the *Student Conduct and Standards* rules. The student found guilty of academic dishonesty may be reported to the Vice President of Instruction for the initiation of disciplinary sanctions ranging from a warning to expulsion from the college.



Right of Appeals and Grievances

A Student Appeals Policy (Board Policy 701) was developed for those situations that cannot be resolved informally. The purpose of the student grievance procedure is to promote the prompt and efficient resolution of student complaints (with the exception of sexual harassment charges which are dealt with in board policy number 920.1, page 33) about college faculty, administration, classified staff, professional and temporary employees. Copies of the current policy, procedures and the Student Appeals Complaint Form may be obtained from the Information Desk, Student Services, the Vice President of Instruction's Office, Student Senate or the Library.

The term "complaint" shall mean a claim or allegation by a student that members of the college faculty, administration, professional, or classified staff:

1. Significantly failed to carry out their professional responsibilities or failed to deal with a student fairly and impartially;
2. Significantly failed to carry out an assigned responsibility or failed to apply college policy fairly and impartially; or
3. Performed an action which impinged on the rights or activities of a student in the legitimate pursuit of the educative process.

Procedure

Step 1

Informal resolution of a problem must be attempted first by communicating with the person(s) against whom the complaint exists. This communication may be accomplished orally or in writing. If the complaint is oral, a mutually agreeable meeting time and place shall be established. Each party may bring another person as a witness. If the student's complaint is made in writing, all documents shall be dated and signed and the employee's written response must be made within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of the written complaint.

Step 2

If the matter cannot be informally resolved, a student may make a formal request using the Student Appeals Complaint Form. The form identifies the complaint and desired remedy. It is submitted to the Student Appeals Officer for a hearing before the employee's supervisor. The Step Two hearing will be held within ten (10) working days of the receipt of this written request. Those present at this session shall be the student, the person against whom the grievance is filed, the complainant's supervisor and the Student Appeals Officer. The student may also request that either his/her advisor or counselor and/or the Director, Enrollment Planning and Research be present. The supervisor shall decide upon the requested remedy at the conclusion of

this meeting. The student may either accept this decision or refer the complaint for Step Three resolution. If a complaint is lodged by a student against the college President, the Step Two procedure will be bypassed and the Step Three process will be initiated.

Step 3

If a student feels the matter was not resolved satisfactorily at Step Two, he/she shall instruct the Director, Enrollment Planning and Research to convene the Student Appeals Committee for Step Three. The Student Appeals Committee shall consist of two (2) members of the faculty appointed by the Faculty Senate President, two (2) members from within the college community (other than faculty or students) appointed by the college President, two (2) students appointed by the college Student Senate and one (1) student appointed by the Director, Enrollment Planning and Research.

Within ten (10) calendar days of the completion of the fact finding portion of Step Three, the Student Appeals Committee shall review its findings and issue a decision. If the complaint is denied, the committee's decision shall be the final college disposition of the complaint. Copies of the resolution of the claim or allegation shall be forwarded to the college President, the appropriate Dean or Director and to each of the parties.

If a student seeks resolution of a complaint in any forum other than that established by this procedure, whether administrative or judicial, the parties to the complaint shall have no obligation to proceed further under the provisions of this procedure.

Cell Phones

Cell phones and other noise-making devices are required to be turned off in classrooms, labs, library and study areas and at other functions where they may be disruptive.

Student Publications

Flathead Valley Community College recognizes that student publications are a valuable aid in establishing and maintaining an atmosphere of free and responsible discussion and intellectual exploration. They serve as vehicles to bring student concerns to the college community's and public's attention, and formulate student opinions on various issues.

As citizens, students enjoy the same basic rights and are bound by the same responsibilities as are all citizens. Among these rights are freedom of speech and freedom of press. The Flathead Valley Community College Board, faculty and staff shall not exercise editorial control over student publications, except where specifically provided by FVCC policies and procedures. The college shall not be deemed to endorse the content of these publications unless so stated.



Waiver of Regulations

Rules and regulations contained in this catalog have been adopted by the Flathead Valley Community College faculty, administration and Board of Trustees and are subject to modification and revision. Students who feel that extenuating circumstances might justify the waiver of any college regulation may file a petition with the Director, Enrollment Planning and Research.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Flathead Valley Community College is committed to maintaining a work and learning environment free of drug and alcohol abuse and strives to create an environment that promotes healthy and responsible living and respect for community and campus standards and regulations. The following guidelines describe college policy regarding the use of alcohol and drugs:

- The possession, use and/or consumption of alcohol and/or illicit drugs by anyone on campus is prohibited;
- The distribution of alcohol by the college or by any college-affiliated organization is prohibited;
- Alcohol-free events are promoted;
- Assistance should be provided to individuals who are abusing drugs and alcohol;
- Safe transportation to and from events is encouraged and/or provided, including a designated driver program; and
- Ongoing education is provided by Flathead Valley Community College to inform individuals about the potential risk associated with excessive use of alcohol and the illicit use of drugs.

Sexual Harassment Policy

Flathead Valley Community College recognizes the importance of every individual's personal dignity and is therefore committed to providing an educational and work environment where students, faculty and staff are safe, secure and respected. FVCC is committed to serving as a learning community free of all forms of sexual harassment, exploitation or intimidation. Sexual harassment unfairly interferes with the opportunity for all persons, regardless of gender, to have comfortable and productive education and work environments.

It is also unlawful and against college policy to retaliate against an employee or student for filing a complaint of sexual harassment or cooperate in an investigation of sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment consists of unwanted or unwelcome behavior of a sexual or gender directed nature severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or learning environment when:

- A. Submission to such conduct is made (either explicitly or implicitly) a term or condition of instruction, employment, or participation in any other college activity (quid pro quo); or
- B. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making academic or personnel decisions affecting an individual (quid pro quo); or
- C. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or learning environment.

Sexual harassment may result from an intentional or unintentional action and can be subtle or blatant. It can be verbal or physical and can occur in any setting, and the spectrum of behavior may range from verbal remarks to physical assault. The context of events and the totality of the circumstances surrounding those events are important in determining whether a particular act or series of events constitutes sexual harassment.

Student's Responsibility

A student should speak up about sexual harassment when he/she witnesses or experiences it, either among students or staff. Retaliation is illegal.

A student who has been a victim of any form of sexual harassment, knows someone who has been a victim, or has questions regarding sexual harassment should contact the Vice President of Instruction at (406) 756-3894. Students may also contact Title IX liaisons in each campus building. The names of Title IX liaisons are posted in each building.