

# Student Affairs

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*Dr. Vincent A. Miller*

*Vice President for Student Affairs*

*Room 3106, Student Union*

The Division of Student Affairs is charged with responsibility for student life outside the classroom and includes the following departmental areas: Campus Recreation (Student Recreation Center, Ropes Challenge Course, IM Fields, and Outdoor Rental Center), Career Opportunities and Volunteer Services, Counseling Center, Dean of Students, Health Services (Health Promotions), Housing and Residence Life, Student Conduct, Student Life (Student Union, Greek Life, Leadership, Homecoming, Parents' Weekend, and Student Organizations), and Student Diversity and Inclusion. It is the division's philosophy that students' non-academic experiences are important to both their formal education and personal development. The Vice President for Student Affairs coordinates the activities within the Division of Student Affairs. The Vice President's office is available to serve the needs of students as well as parents, alumni, and faculty and staff with student concerns. The Vice President for Student Affairs Office can be reached at 229-333-5941 and is located on the third floor of the Student Union. Valdosta State University is committed to the idea that total education involves more than academic pursuit. For more information, click here (<http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/student-affairs/>).

## Student Life

The Office of Student Life is located on the second floor of the Student Union. Student Life offers opportunities to enhance our students' collegiate experience with co-curricular activities that include Greek Life, Campus Activities Board, Student Leadership, Fire Pit, and over 175 various clubs and organizations. This office is also responsible for annual events such as Parents' Weekend, Homecoming, Fall Explosion, and the Happening. Student involvement on campus can enhance students' academic and personal development. For more information on what is going on around campus and how to join or create a new organization, please visit Blazer Link and log in with your MyVSU password or visit the Office of Student Life.

## Clubs and Organizations

There is a diversity of clubs and student organizations at the University, including Greek Life, religious organizations, various service organizations, honor societies, and department clubs.

## Student Publications

The University also provides opportunities for experience in journalism through *The Spectator*, the campus newspaper, and other student publications, which provide a forum for presenting current issues and also generate spirit within the student body.

## Campus Recreation

The Department of Campus Recreation offers a variety of services, such as: aquatics, intramural sports, club sports, informal recreational outdoor programs, fitness consulting, and group fitness classes. All are based in the Student Recreation Center (SRC), located at 1300 Sustella Avenue. The SRC is a state-of-the-art facility that includes three multipurpose basketball courts, an indoor jogging and walking track, a 9,000-square-foot weight room featuring free weights and cardiovascular equipment, an indoor pool, three racquetball courts, a large multipurpose aerobics room, and a 27-foot custom-built climbing wall.

The Intramural Sports program is designed to provide all students, faculty, and staff the opportunity to participate in organized recreational competitions. Structured leagues and tournaments are offered in a diverse array of sporting activities, such as flag football, softball, basketball, soccer, and volleyball. The Intramural Sports program offers over 10 different activities during the academic year.

Constantly growing to meet the needs of a diverse campus population, the Club Sports Program is designed to promote and develop the interests and skills of individuals in different sports and recreational activities.

CORE Outdoor Programs provides access to outdoor activities that will foster the development of friendships in the campus community, to educate, and to promote outdoor recreation. There are four different areas in Outdoor Programs: ropes course, climbing wall, outdoor trips, and outdoor rental center. The Outdoor Trip Program travels to places close to VSU. Trips have included rock climbing, canoeing, mountain biking, and back packing. The Outdoor Rental Center provides students with outdoor equipment for personal use.

For more information, click here (<http://www.valdosta.edu/student/rec-wellness/campus-recreation/welcome.php>) or call 229-333-5898.

## Career Opportunities and Volunteer Services

The Career Opportunities and Volunteer Services office offers a "one stop shop" to assist students as they navigate the career exploration and decision making process while enrolled at VSU. Students are encouraged to develop personalized career plans and utilize office services to assist them in choosing majors, identifying career goals, obtaining practical work experience, and seeking relevant employment upon graduation.

An easy way to get started with building your resume is through volunteering. Career Opportunities and Volunteer Services offer local volunteer service opportunities in addition to helping student organizations plan their own volunteer events.

Individual career counseling is available for students who wish to explore how their abilities, values, and interests match particular career fields. Students may utilize the varied resources in the office including printed career materials, career informational videos, and computer-assisted career exploration programs. The office offers internships, cooperative education opportunities, and part-time jobs to assist students with gaining practical experience related to their career goals.

All students are encouraged to take advantage of Blazing Careers, which is a free career development and job listing website offered by Career Opportunities.

For more information about services or to schedule an appointment, students may call or drop by in person. Career Opportunities, Student Union, 2nd floor, (229) 333-5942, [www.valdosta.edu/career](http://www.valdosta.edu/career) (<http://www.valdosta.edu/career/>).

## Counseling Center

The Counseling Center provides a broad range of mental health services to the university community aimed at maximizing the personal growth and development of its members.

Individual counseling is available for students who wish to discuss and explore their thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and lifestyles. In addition, group counseling provides an opportunity for students to grow in their communication, social, and interpersonal skills with others who have similar goals and interests. Counselors are available to conduct workshops or make presentations on specific topics for classes, residence halls, campus organizations, fraternities and sororities, or other student groups. The Center also provides consultation to students, staff, and faculty regarding issues of human functioning and development.

The Counseling Center is accredited by the International Association of Counseling Services, Inc. It is located in the Student Health Center, 2nd floor. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 229-333-5940. When necessary, referrals will be made on campus or in the community so that all available resources are utilized.

## Health Services

The Student Health Center, located on Georgia Avenue at the end of the Pedestrian Mall, provides routine health care, along with some emergency care, for all students who have satisfied the health fee requirement. Health care is provided by nurse practitioners, registered and licensed practical nurses, a pharmacist, a medical technologist, and office staff.

All new students are required to provide evidence of inoculation for the following:

- Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) - 2 doses
- Tetanus (within last 10 years)
- Hepatitis B (required for students under 19 years of age at time of enrollment)
- Varicella (Chickenpox or history of disease)

Various health screenings are provided throughout the year.

## Housing & Residence Life

Valdosta State University houses approximately 2,800 students on campus in traditional residence halls, suite-style halls, and apartment communities.

Through our roommate matching system in the Housing portal, our Housing staff strives to pair students together, according to their preferences marked on the housing applications. Students also have the option of rooming with a friend who will also be attending VSU. The Housing & Residence Life office does its best to accommodate all requests.

## Housing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Specially equipped facilities for students with disabilities are available. Students requesting modified housing accommodation may register with the Access Office in Farbar Hall, telephone 229-245-2498. The Access Office will notify Housing & Residence Life of any reasonable accommodations required to meet a resident's housing needs.

## Residence Hall or Apartment Contract

The application and contract contain items and conditions of occupancy for which you are legally responsible.

Housing applications cannot be initiated until a student has been formally accepted by Valdosta State University. Prospective residents will need a VSU ID number, username, and password to access the Housing portal. An application fee is required of all students at the time they apply for campus housing. All students are also required to pay a deposit by the deadlines established in the Housing Contract to reserve a room in the residence halls. The housing contract outlines conditions under which refunds may be made. All students applying for campus housing will be required to contract for housing for the academic year.

For additional information on Housing & Residence Life at Valdosta State, see the web page (<http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/finance-admin/auxiliary-services/housing/welcome.php>).

## Student Conduct Office

The primary responsibility of the Student Conduct Office (SCO) is to oversee and conduct the student disciplinary process on campus. The SCO deals mostly with individual violators but is also called on to assist with groups that violate the Code of Conduct. The SCO is located on the third floor of the Student Union in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students. The SCO assists students, staff, and faculty in the determination of the appropriate response to alleged violations of the Student Handbook's Student Code of Conduct. The SCO's main goal is to redirect student misconduct in support of the achievement of academic goals. For more in-depth SCO information, please call 229-333-5941 or visit SCO's web page (<https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/student-affairs/student-conduct-office/>).

## Regulations

### General Expectations

As expressed in the Blazer Creed, Valdosta State University is a learning environment based on trust and mutual respect in which open dialogue, vigorous debate, and the free exchange of ideas are welcome. The University is equally dedicated to the core values of community, including a commitment to practice **civility**, **integrity**, and **citizenship**. As members of this community, and proud Blazers, we will strive to uphold these core values for the advancement of the University.

Students at Valdosta State University are expected to read, understand, and adhere to the policies and regulations outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. Knowledge of these regulations will assist students and organizations in exercising their rights and avoid infringement on the rights of others. Unfamiliarity with the code is not a valid excuse for infractions of the regulations.

Students are also members of the larger community of the city, state, and nation and, as such, enjoy the rights of citizenship. However, students who violate local, state, or federal laws that adversely affect the interests of the University, may also be subject to the Valdosta State University disciplinary process. Pending civil or criminal matters shall not prevent Valdosta State University, at its discretion, from initiating appropriate disciplinary action.

The most recent version of the Student Code of Conduct can be found in its entirety here (<https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/student-affairs/student-conduct-office/student-handbook.php>). Additional policies and regulations may be developed, under established procedures (Appendix D, Section III), during the academic year as required for the general well-being of Valdosta State University.

### Alcohol and Drugs

Valdosta State University, as a comprehensive university within the University System of Georgia and as a recipient of federal funds, supports and complies with the Drug Free Work Place Act of 1988, the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989, and the Drug Free Postsecondary Education Act of 1990.

Faculty, staff, and students of Valdosta State University are advised that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of illicit drugs and alcohol is prohibited, and violations of this policy will result in appropriate disciplinary action, to include suspension or termination.

Faculty, staff, and students are expected to adhere to the policies of the institution, observe the basic rules of good conduct, and observe all local, state, and federal regulations relative to illegal drugs and alcohol. Violations of such regulations, including misdemeanor or felony convictions during the course of student employment or enrollment, will result in appropriate disciplinary action that could include suspension or expulsion and loss of Federal Financial Aid.

## Board of Regents Policy 6.5 Freedom of Expression

(New policy effective 07-01-2022)

The rights guaranteed by the First Amendment, including the right to free speech, free expression, free exercise of religion, and the right to assemble peaceably are of the utmost importance, and the University System of Georgia (USG) is committed to protecting those rights.

As public institutions of higher education, USG institutions must promote open ideas and academic freedom on their campuses. To that end, the unrestricted outdoor areas of institutions are deemed public forums for the campus community of each institution. For purposes of this policy, the campus community means students, faculty, staff, and their invited guests. While institutions may need to enact policies to promote campus safety, to ensure the proper functioning of the academic environment and institution activities, or to further other important institution objectives, those policies should not unduly burden the free expression rights of students, faculty, and staff.

Institutions may maintain and enforce reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions narrowly tailored to serve a significant institutional interest. Such restrictions must employ clear, published, content- and viewpoint-neutral criteria, and provide for ample alternative means of expression. Finally, any such restrictions may include reservation requirements, if needed, but must also allow for members of the campus community to spontaneously and contemporaneously assemble or distribute literature.

Institutions can designate accessible, high-traffic locations on campus as public forum areas for individuals or groups who are not members of the campus community and can require these individuals or groups to comply with reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions, including reservation requirements. Institutions may not consider the content or viewpoint of expression when requiring or assigning use of public forum areas.

USG institutions must place their student free expression policies and procedures in the student handbook and make the same publicly available online. These policies and procedures must also be incorporated into student orientation programs. Finally, institutions must develop materials, programs, and procedures to ensure that faculty and staff understand the institutional policies and duties regarding free expression on campus.

### **Board of Regents Policy 6.8 Disruptive Behavior**

Any student or employee, acting individually or in concert with others, who clearly obstructs or disrupts or attempts to obstruct or disrupt any teaching, research, administrative, disciplinary, public service or other activity at any University System of Georgia (USG) institution is considered by the Board to have committed an act of gross irresponsibility and shall be subject to disciplinary procedures, possibly resulting in academic dismissal or termination of employment.

### **Sexual Misconduct (Title IX)**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities that receive federal funding. Title IX provides that:

“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

VSU considers sex discrimination in any form to be a serious offense. Title IX refers to all forms of sex discrimination committed against others, including but not limited to: sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, and sexual violence by other employees, students or third parties and gender inequity or unfair treatment based on an individual's sex/gender.

Title IX covers the following key areas:

- Access to higher education
- Athletics
- Career education
- Education for pregnancy and parenting students
- Employment
- Learning environment
- Math and Science
- Sexual harassment
- Standardized testing

Title IX prohibits discrimination in any university program including athletics, admissions, academic programs, extracurricular activities, employment, financial aid, housing, and student services. The application of Title IX is not gender specific.

Find more information on Title IX and Reporting Options online at <https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/student-affairs/title-ix/>.

### **Student Diversity and Inclusion**

The office of Student Diversity and Inclusion provides, plans and implements programs and events to create an inclusive and supportive campus environment for all students through an understanding of differences that intersects in a way that is beneficial through involvement and respect.