

CODE OF CONDUCT

Conduct and Discipline

Students enrolling at WCU assume an obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the university's function as an educational institution of higher learning. All WCU community members assume the responsibility for knowing and abiding by the academic honor and student conduct codes. The codes were designed to provide insight and guidance into the expected behaviors and decisions of students, as well as to support and foster a safe, respectful, and ethical learning environment. The codes are not intended to be exhaustive.

The university expects its students to conduct themselves as responsible individuals, considerate and respectful of the rights and interests of others. The university's mission reflects an intention to partner with students in their preparation for a professional career and part of the education experience for students pertains to the kind of behavior that is acceptable in professional settings. Honesty, integrity, and respect for others are integral to the expectations of student conduct. If a student's conduct does not conform to the university's standards outlined in the code of conduct, university officials will follow a course of action deemed appropriate up to and including dismissal from a course and potentially suspension or dismissal from the university using the Student Conduct and Complaint Procedure.

Specific behaviors that are unacceptable within the classroom setting include the use of cell phones or any technology that is not intended for the express benefit of the learning experience and approved by the faculty. Disruptive behavior, including conversations unsanctioned by the faculty, is unacceptable.

Officially recognized student organizations are held to the university and professional standards and codes of conduct and could be responsible for behavior that violates WCU policies and procedures.

Authority

This Code of Conduct applies to all students, including those applying for admission. WCU has authority over student conduct that occurs on university property or in connection with university-related or sponsored activities, whether on or off university property.

Prohibited Behavior

Students may be held accountable for committing or attempting to commit any of the violations listed below. Students may also be held accountable for assisting, facilitating, or participating in the planning of an act that violates the Code of Conduct. The following list includes examples of violations of the conduct code that are subject to disciplinary action. The list is not intended to be exhaustive.

1. Suspicion, charges, or violations of federal, state, or local law on campus or off campus during participation in university-related or sponsored activities.
2. Violations or attempted violations of WCU codes, policies, rules, and regulations.
3. Violations or attempted violations of clinical affiliates' policies, rules, and regulations.
4. Abusive behavior, including but not limited to:
 - a. Verbal abuse, including but not limited to hostile or aggressive manner, profanity, derogatory or inflammatory language, defamation, coercion.
 - b. Behavior that poses a threat or danger to self and/or others or potentially disrupts the WCU community, including but not limited to hazing, bullying, sexual harassment, hate violence, intimidation, harassment, violence, assault in any form, stalking, or threats even in jest.
 - c. Terrorizing behavior, defined as behavior that causes a reasonable person to fear bodily harm or death.

Code Of Conduct (cont.)

5. Disorderly and/or disruptive conduct, including but not limited to:
 - a. Obstruction of teaching, university activities and events on or off campus, individual or group activities, on or off campus, that violate and/or disturb others' rights and/or safety, activities, and events on university property. The use of cell phones or any technology that is not intended for the express benefit of the learning experience and approved by the faculty is prohibited. Disruptive behavior, including conversations unsanctioned by the faculty, is unacceptable.
 - b. Incivility towards faculty, either in writing or verbally, to seek extra credit points, the ability to resubmit previously graded assignments, or to have work regraded for the sole purpose of improving grades without legitimate academic justification is unacceptable.
6. Dishonesty, including but not limited to:
 - a. Academic Dishonesty (see the academic honor code for more information)
 - b. Falsifying information, including but not limited to the falsification of citations or fabrication of research,
 - c. Forgery
 - d. Alteration or misuse of documents, records, or IDs
 - e. Fraud
 - f. Unauthorized multiple submissions, defined as the submission for credit in a WCU course of any work that has been previously submitted in identical or similar form without the informed permission or consent of the instructor in the WCU course in which the multiple submission is alleged to have occurred.
7. Failure to comply with directions or requests from university officials.
8. Discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender, gender expression, gender identity, gender transition status, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics), genetic information (including family medical history), ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, or service in the uniformed services (including protected veterans). Harassment is defined as conduct that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by the university.
9. Property damage/vandalism or attempted property damage/vandalism.
10. Theft or attempted theft.
11. Conduct that threatens the health or safety of oneself or others.
12. Unauthorized entry into university property.
13. Use, possession, and sale of alcohol or illegal drugs in any form on all university property, including university-owned and leased buildings and parking lots. This includes the use, possession, or sale of cannabis. Notwithstanding state law, the use, distribution, and possession of cannabis, also known as marijuana, remains illegal under federal law with narrow exceptions. The federal Controlled Substances Act criminalizes the possession and distribution of Schedule I controlled substances, including cannabis, with a limited exception for certain federally approved research. The Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act and the Drug-Free Workplace Act require that WCU, as a recipient of federal funding, establish policies that prohibit illicit marijuana use, possession, and distribution on campus and in the workplace.
14. Misuse of university property.
15. Making a video recording, audio recording, or streaming audio/video of private, non-public conversations and/or meetings without the knowledge and express consent of all recorded parties or posting online any audio/video/photographs made by another individual of any private, non-public conversations and/or meetings, without the knowledge and express consent of all recorded parties.

Code Of Conduct (cont.)

Sanctions for the violations or attempted violations of this Code of Conduct are handled on a case-by-case basis. The sanction imposed is based on the nature of the violation, disciplinary history, circumstances surrounding the violation, precedent, impact of possible sanction, and motivation. When appropriate, disciplinary sanctions will include an educational aspect, designed to assist students with personal and professional growth and development. Sanctions are imposed to promote campus integrity and safety. If a student fails to comply, further disciplinary action may occur, including but not limited to suspension or dismissal from the university. Under certain circumstances, sanctions may be postponed and/or suspended.

In the event of a violation or attempted violation of the codes, one or more of the following sanctions may be imposed and a copy of the disciplinary action will be placed in a student disciplinary file. The list of sanctions is not intended to be exhaustive and these sanctions are not listed in sequential order.

1. Warning (verbal or written)
2. Restitution
3. Loss or restriction of privileges
4. Forfeiture of financial assistance
5. Probation
6. Suspension
7. Dismissal
8. Educational activity; the list is not intended to be exhaustive:
 - a. Reflection paper
 - b. Class
 - c. Documentation of specific goals and evidence showing achievement towards goals
 - d. Community service
 - e. Research paper
 - f. Presentation
 - g. In the event of extraordinary circumstances or an emergency, the campus executive director, working in consultation with university administration leadership, may temporarily bypass the judicial conduct process and/or impose immediate conduct sanctions, including but not limited to suspension or dismissal, as necessary to protect the university community. Characteristics that define an extraordinary circumstance include but are not limited to dangerous or disruptive behavior to self or others and credible threats of harm to self, others, or campus facilities. If deemed warranted for campus safety, sanctions could occur prior to the start of the student judicial conduct process and without prior notification. However, students will be advised of the measures taken as soon as possible thereafter. If further investigation of the precipitating facts indicates that the situation does not warrant continued emergency action, the action may be modified or rescinded. The code of conduct process will be initiated as soon as possible to allow the students the benefit of due process.

Code Of Conduct (cont.)

Academic Honor Code

Academic honesty, integrity, and ethical behavior are required of all members of the university community. Students are always expected to conduct themselves in a manner reflecting the ideals, values, and educational aims of the university. Academic integrity and honorable behavior are essential parts of professionalism that will be required well beyond graduation. They are the foundation for ethical behavior in the workplace to which WCU students aspire.

The public, professional organizations and accrediting bodies hold individuals in the healthcare industry to a high standard and expect the university to monitor the professional behavior of faculty, associates, and students. As current or future professionals, students have a responsibility to follow this model and guide their actions to serve in the best interests of their fellow students, faculty, and healthcare professionals and those they will care for as patients by maintaining the highest degree of personal and professional integrity. Students know that they represent their profession in and out of the academic environment. Therefore, allegations of misconduct, regardless of where that misconduct may have occurred, will be taken seriously.

Academic integrity requires that work for which students receive credit be entirely the result of their effort. Acting honorably in an academic setting requires more than simple honesty. Academic dishonesty takes place whenever a student undermines the academic integrity of the institution or attempts to gain an unfair advantage over others. The following list includes some examples of honor code violations; the list is not intended to be exhaustive.

1. Cheating

- a. Using unauthorized materials such as books, notes, cell phones, PDA accessories, or crib sheets to answer examination questions.
- b. Taking advantage of information considered unauthorized by one's instructor regarding examination questions.
- c. Copying another student's homework, written assignments, examination answers, electronic media, or other data.
 - i. The university takes a dim view when a student compile "study guides" on the basis of memorizing questions from exams and broadly shares those guides with other students. This violates the independent nature of student preparation for assessment and can be determined to be a violation of the code of conduct.
 - ii. Assisting someone else to cheat or knowingly allowing someone else to cheat.
 - iii. Failure to report cheating to an academic official of the university.

2. Plagiarism

- a. Representing the ideas, expressions, or materials of another without providing the author with due credit.
- b. Paraphrasing or condensing ideas from another person's work without proper citation.
- c. Failing to document direct quotations and paraphrases with proper citation.

3. Other forms of academic dishonesty

- a. Fraud, deception, and the alteration of grades or official records.
- b. Changing examination solutions after the fact, inventing, changing or falsifying laboratory data or research.
- c. Purchasing or in some other manner obtaining and then submitting written assignments, homework, or examinations that do not represent the student's original work.
- d. Reproducing or duplicating images, designs, or web pages without giving credit to the developer, artist, or designer.
- e. Submitting work created for another course without instructor approval.
- f. Misrepresenting oneself or one's circumstance to gain an unfair advantage.
- g. Collaborating with another person(s) without instructor approval.
- h. Selling or providing term papers, course work, study guides, or assignments to other students.

Code Of Conduct (cont.)

- i. The improper use of artificial intelligence to generate content submitted for a grade. Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology can be used as a tool to support learning, such as generating topic ideas or providing feedback on grammar and punctuation. Students may integrate AI-generated content with their ideas and writing if properly cited and evaluated for potential issues such as biases, copyright, and factual inaccuracies. Improper use of AI includes submitting an entire assignment written by AI; use of AI-generated content without evaluation of the risks of biases, copyright, misinformation, legal issues, factual inaccuracies, and other potential issues; use of AI-generated content without citing the source properly. **Submitting an entire assignment written by AI is strictly prohibited.** Any student found to have done so will receive a failing grade for the assignment and may face disciplinary action. Students must cite all uses of AI in any paper submitted for a grade. Failure to properly cite the use of AI in an assignment submitted for a grade may result in disciplinary action. It is the responsibility of the students to create their work and to ensure that they are not solely relying on AI-generated content.

4. Sharing login and/or password information is prohibited.

Honor Code Violations

There are several possible consequences for a student who has violated the university's honor code.

These include but are not limited to:

1. Failure of the assignment
2. Failure of the course
 - a. A student is prohibited from withdrawing from a course in which an "F" grade is received due to a violation of the honor code
3. Expulsion from the university
4. Rescinding a certificate or degree

All violations of the honor code will be reported to the university's administration for further investigation. Individual reports will be evaluated in the context of potential patterns of dishonesty. The faculty, in conjunction with the administration, decides the effect on student status and/or course grades resulting from substantiated reports of honor code violations.

Academic dishonesty is a corrosive force in the academic life of a university. It jeopardizes the quality of education and depreciates the genuine achievements of others. It is the responsibility of all members of the campus community to actively deter it. Apathy or ignoring the presence of academic dishonesty is not acceptable. If faculty, associates, or students do not confront academic dishonesty, it will reinforce, perpetuate, and enlarge the scope of such misconduct. Ignorance of the university's honor code is not a valid excuse for engaging in prohibited conduct. All university community members are responsible for knowing and living by the honor code. Furthermore, all members of the university community, including faculty, associates, or students, share the responsibility and authority to challenge and make known acts of apparent academic dishonesty.

Student Conduct and Complaint Process

1. Any person(s) or group may submit a complaint regarding a student's conduct as it pertains to the Codes. Complaints should be submitted in a timely manner using the Incident Report Form.
2. Students who are alleged to have violated the Code may be referred to the Conduct Committee.
3. Referrals to the Conduct Committee may be submitted by the Program Dean or the Director of Student Affairs. Referrals for violations of conduct governed by Title IX shall be reported to the Title IX Coordinator. The Director of Student Affairs at each campus or his or her designee shall serve as the Student Conduct Affairs Chair for that campus.
4. The Office of Student Affairs at each campus receives the Incident Report and any supporting documentation.

Code Of Conduct (cont.)

5. The Incident Report is assigned to a neutral Dean or Supervisor for an initial review. The Dean or Supervisor reviewing the report will consider information acquired from the re-reporting party and may conduct a further investigation.
6. The Office of Student Affairs at each campus will be notified of the results of the investigation. If the Dean or Supervisor determines there is sufficient information to proceed with the conduct process, the Student Conduct Affairs Chair will give written Notice to the Student, as outlined below, of the alleged violation. If it is determined that no action is required, the complainant will receive written communication from the Office of Student Affairs at each campus, and the file will be closed.
7. The Notice to the Student will be sent via email. It is the student's responsibility to regularly check their email and to ensure that the University has the correct and most current contact information. The Notice to the Student will include:
 - a. The nature of the conduct in question and the basis for the allegation,
 - b. The University policy(ies) allegedly violated, and information on how to access a full version of the WCU Code of Conduct,
 - c. A hearing date, location, and time,
 - d. Notice that the student has five days from the date of notice to propose a change in schedule for the hearing date.
8. When feasible, the hearing should occur no later than thirty (30) days of the receipt of the incident report. Extensions are permitted within reason.
9. Respondents and complainants, if any, shall be notified of the hearing at least ten (10) days in advance of the hearing.
10. The respondent will have reasonable access to the documentation related to the alleged violation.
11. The respondent may submit a written response to the allegations. All submissions must be received at least one business (1) day prior to the hearing.
12. Students have the right to request a support person to be present. Support persons are at the expense of the student. Support persons are not permitted to speak to the Conduct Committee or at the hearing. A support person or persons are individuals who are not involved in the incident.
13. Attorneys are not permitted at the hearings nor are they permitted as a support person except for cases involving any of the conduct under V.6 when it is adjudicated under the Title IX policy.
14. Decisions in Absentia – if a student fails to participate in the disciplinary process or has withdrawn from the University while subject to pending disciplinary action, the Conduct Committee may move forward to resolve the matter without the Student's participation.
15. Respondents will be provided with the Hearings and Appeals Process.

Informal Resolution Process

For cases involving any of the conduct under V.6, either party may request to proceed under a voluntary, informal resolution process that does not involve a full investigation. The Title IX Coordinator will determine, based on the totality of the circumstances, whether an informal resolution process is appropriate given the facts and participants. Both parties must agree in writing to the informal resolution process to proceed.

Sexual Harassment Policy

It is the policy of WCU to provide all students and employees with an educational, employment, and business environment free from all forms of harassment, exploitation, intimidation, or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined and otherwise prohibited by the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, California Education Code, and state and federal rules, regulations, statutes, and laws prohibiting sexual harassment and retaliation.

The university expressly forbids sexual harassment of its students and employees by faculty, managers, supervisors, employees, students, or members of the public. The university will take any action necessary to prevent, correct, and discipline those who engage in inappropriate behavior. Where evidence of sexual harassment is found, appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken. Sexual harassment should be reported immediately to the campus Title IX administrator, deputy, or coordinator through the Student Affairs office. Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained.

Code Of Conduct (cont.)

Title IX Nondiscrimination Policy and Notice of Nondiscrimination

WCU does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment.

WCU's Title IX nondiscrimination statement is provided: on the website under <https://westcoastuniversity.edu/legal/title-ix>; in the catalog, in the student handbook, and in the employee handbook. The Title IX policy and grievance procedures are provided on the website under: westcoastuniversity.edu/legal/title-ix.

Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to the WCU Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Coordinators, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both. Contact information for OCR is available here: <https://ocrcas.ed.gov/contact-ocr>.

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to the Title IX Coordinator or the Deputy Coordinators.

The Title IX Coordinator is:

Audrey Kaplan, Vice President Compliance and Risk Management
151 Innovation Dr. Irvine, CA 92617
akaplan@westcoastuniversity.edu / Tel: 949-743-5765

The Deputy Title IX Coordinators are:

Mandy DeJong, Senior Compliance Liaison
151 Innovation Dr. Irvine, CA 92617
mdejong@westcoastuniversity.edu / Tel: 949-783-4952

This deputy coordinator is responsible for providing modifications/supports for pregnancy or related conditions for students.

Nina Khiev, Regulatory Compliance Associate
151 Innovation Dr. Irvine, CA 92617
nkhiev@westcoastuniversity.edu / Tel: 949-783-4826

This deputy coordinator is responsible for providing guidance to students who have questions about Title IX regarding the actions of other students.

Leslie Zarrelli, Executive Director, HR Business Partner
151 Innovation Dr. Irvine, CA 92617
lzarrelli@westcoastuniversity.edu / Tel: 202-794-7768

This deputy coordinator is responsible for providing modifications/supports for pregnancy or related conditions for employees/faculty and for any Title IX complaints that include an employee as a party, but no student as a party.