

# THE PATHFINDER

## STUDENT HANDBOOK

The information contained in this publication may be changed without prior notice.

In this publication, the term “College” shall mean Panola College. “Student” shall mean any College student enrolled for one or more credit or clock hours in the current semester and who lives on or off-campus. The term faculty/staff shall mean any administrator, faculty member, or classified staff member currently employed by the College. References to “the student handbook” refer to this publication.

Panola College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award Certificates and Associate Degrees. Contact the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Panola College.

Panola College is an Equal Opportunity Institution that provides educational and employment opportunity on the basis of merit and without discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, veteran status, disability or genetic information.

## Table of Contents

Topic	Page #	Topic	Page #
Quick Reference for Assistance	4	Social Events	13
Statement of Mission	5	Intramural Programs	13
Student Success Purposes	5	Student Publications	13
Admissions and Records	5	Lost and Found	14
Bacterial Meningitis	5	Fitness Center	14
Academic Advisors and Guidance	5	Health Services	14
Job Placement	5	HIV/AIDS/Other Communicable Diseases	14
Students with Disabilities	5	Panola College Store	14
Student Activities	6	Textbook/Merchandise Refunds	15
Student Orientation	6	Textbook Buyback	15
Testing and Assessment	6	Campus Police/Security Force	15
Policies and Procedures	6	Vehicle/Parking Issues	16
Inclement Weather Policy	6	Emergency Messages	16
Official Publications	6	Student Right to Know	16
Schedule of Classes	6	M.P. Baker Library	16
Texas Common Numbering System	6	Copyrights	16
Core Curriculum	7	Standards of Conduct	17
Field Of Study	7	Acquaintance with Policies	17
Unit of Credit	7	Violation of Policy	17
Student Load Information	7	Directive of a College Official	17
Determining the Grade Point Average	7	Official Summons	17
Developmental Courses	8	Tobacco Policy	17
Grade Reports	8	Children on Campus	17
First Alert	8	College Keys	18
Adding and Dropping Courses	8	Alcohol/Controlled Substances	18
Withdrawal from the College	9	Crimes of Violence	18
Incomplete Course Work	9	Destruction of Property	19
Repetition of Courses	9	Disruptions/Demonstrations	19
Repetition for Grade Improvement	9	Distribution of Literature on Campus	19
Transferred Courses	9	Dress Code	19
Scholastic Probation	9	False Bomb Threats	20
Scholastic Suspension	10	False Testimony	20
Class Attendance	10	Falsification of Records	20
Religious Holy Days	10	Fighting	20
Texas Success Initiative Plan	10	Gambling	20
Change of Name or Address	10	Harassment	20
Access to Student Records	10	Hazing	20
Review of Record	11	Indecent Conduct	22
Financial Aid Opportunities	11	Institutional Name (Use Of)	22
Grants/Work Study	11	Loitering	22
Scholarships	11	Pet Policy	22
Veteran's Benefits	11	Probation Violation	24
Loans	11	Prohibited Weapons	24
Vocational Rehabilitations	12	Campus Carry Regulations	25
Financial Obligations	12	Scholastic Dishonesty	26
Deferred Payment Arrangements	12	Searches	27
Refund Policy	12	Selling or Soliciting	27
Returned Checks	12	Stealing	27
Obligation to the College	12	Unauthorized Entry	27
Student Success	13	Unlawful Assembly	27
Academic Advising	13	Violation of Law	27
Bulletin Boards	13	Safety and Security	27
Student Center	13	Emergency Evacuation	27
Identification Cards	13		
Motor Vehicle Registration	13		
Student Organizations	13		

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Page #</b>
Residence Hall Emergency Evacuation	28
Emergency Illness or Accident	28
Fire Fighting Equipment	28
Fire Prevention	28
Discipline and Penalties	28
Disciplinary Sanctions	28
Emergency Suspension	29
Suspended Students	29
Academic/Disciplinary Complaints/ Appeals	29
Student Appeal Form	33
Appendix	35
Bacterial Meningitis	35

# Quick Reference for Assistance

## QUESTIONS? ANSWERS!

Student Success	903.693.2077
Add/Drop/Withdrawal	
Address/Name Change	
Career Planning	
Clubs and Organizations	
Counseling and Testing	
Graduation/Certification	
ID Cards/Parking Stickers	
Posting Notices/Signs	
Residence Halls	
Texas Success Initiative	
Transcripts	
Tutoring	
Residence Life Coordinator	903.693.1176/1103
College Store	903.693.2019
Books and Supplies	
Post Office	
Business Office	903.693.2082
Checks Cashed	
Fees and Tuition	
Lost and Found	
Refunds	
Disabled Student Services - Student Success	903.693.2046
Campus Police	903.693.1112
Emergency Messages	
Thefts/Accidents	
Food Service/Student Center	903.693.2020
Financial Aid Office	903.693.2039
Grants/Student Loans/Work Study	
Intramural Sports	903.693.2048
Library/Learning Resource Center	903.693.2052
Fitness Center	903.693.1156
Marshall College Center	903.935.5039
Shelby College Center	936.598.9543
Shelby Regional Training Center	936.591.9075

# STATEMENT OF MISSION

Panola College is dedicated to providing excellence in education. The range of educational offerings includes university transfer programs, technical and workforce programs, instruction designed to increase academic proficiencies, and continuing education to enrich lives and improve skills. Our aim is to engage students to achieve success.

## STUDENT SUCCESS PURPOSES

The Student Success Center offers services to all Panola College students, both in and out of the classroom, to provide them with unique opportunities to develop and enhance their personal, social, and educational identity.

### Admissions and Records

Realizing that attending Panola College may be the first or only College experience for some, the staff strives to meet the students' concerns during the admission and registration processes, enabling them to benefit from the educational and social experiences available. This office is also responsible for the maintenance and security of the educational records that will be needed as students seek additional education, employment, and the fulfillment of personal goals. Students seeking admission may complete the Apply Texas Application to Two-Year Institutions online at [www.panola.edu](http://www.panola.edu).

### Bacterial Meningitis

Beginning January 1, 2012, Texas state law requires the following: All entering students under 22 years of age must provide documentation of receiving an initial bacterial meningitis vaccination dose or booster within the last 5 years. This includes all new and transfer-students, as well as former students who are re-enrolling after a break in enrollment. Students must show proof of having the vaccination at least 10 days prior to the start of the semester.

### Academic Advisors and Guidance

The primary function of the counseling program is to help students adjust to the College environment as well as provide academic and career counseling. Advisors also provide referral information when requested. Advisors may assist students with the selection of schools to continue further study. In addition, students should meet with departmental faculty advisors for additional information about courses of study, transfer options, and career planning. All new students, students required to take a developmental course, students in a certificate or Career and Technical field of study will be required to see an academic advisor prior to registration each semester.

### Job Placement

Panola College attempts to assist students in job placement. Interest assessment, investigating career options, and access to occupational information are provided by the Career Information Center. Job opportunities are posted regularly on designated bulletin boards. Directors of career programs provide placement information to graduates of these programs. Finding employment is ultimately the student's responsibility.

### Students with Disabilities

The Disability Support Services (DSS) Office at Panola College provides and facilitates support services and accommodations for students with disabilities. The DSS office works under the federal guidelines included in Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act. Panola College is committed to providing a barrier-free educational environment to the extent possible. To this end, every effort is made to ensure that programs and facilities are accessible to students with disabilities. Support Services are available to students to provide them with an equal opportunity to benefit from the educational offerings of the institution and to participate in the life of the university.

A disability, as defined by federal guidelines, is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities such as walking, hearing, or seeing. A student must self-identify, complete an application for disability accommodations, and provide recent documentation of his or her disability to the DSS office.

Disability Support Services will facilitate accommodation for students with documented disabilities. New students are encouraged to read the Handbook for Students with Disabilities and to contact the DSS office following admission to ensure needed accommodations are available at time of enrollment.

## **Student Activities**

Student activities are provided to complement the academic program of studies and enhance the social understanding, leadership, and responsibility of students through development of, exposure to, and participation in social, cultural, intellectual, recreational, and governance programs.

## **Student Orientation**

Orientation is conducted to help entering students maximize their chances for success at Panola College. Orientation sessions include important information on registration, academic advisement, financial aid, student activities, and other support services and programs available to students. Orientation also provides a new student with the opportunity to ask questions and to meet other students.

## **Testing and Assessment**

Panola College offers a variety of testing and assessment services. The College gives the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Test daily, (Monday through Thursday) at the Carthage campus & periodically at the Marshall and Center campuses. This test is offered at area high schools upon request. Individuals wishing to enroll in any of Panola College's academic or career/technical programs must provide acceptable placement test scores prior to enrolling. The ACT (American College Testing Program) may be taken on the Carthage campus in February, April and October. The GED (General Educational Development) Test is given regularly at the Carthage campus and two times each semester at the Center campus. The HESI (Health Education Systems, Inc.) test is administered in February and September at the Carthage and Center campuses for admissions to the Vocational Nursing and Associate Degree Nursing programs. The Work keys test is administered on an as needed basis at the Carthage and Center campuses for admission to the Cosmetology program. Contact the Student Success Center for information about tests and for scheduling.

# **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **Inclement Weather Policy**

Panola College has scheduled its instructional program to comply with the Common Calendar of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, as well as to meet instructional requirements for awarding credit hours earned. College instructors are obligated to meet all scheduled classes. If severe weather makes it necessary to cancel classes, the College Administration will notify students through emails, text messages, local television, and radio stations. If the College cancels classes then all work is delayed until the next class meeting or until a date determined by the instructor. If a student is in an area which experiences severe weather and the College has not officially closed, it is that student's responsibility to decide whether or not to attend class. The student must then contact the instructor for information concerning make-up of work missed.

Panola College has teamed up with RAVE Mobile Safety Alert and its emergency notification system to send text and email messages to the College community, in the event of delays, closures, or emergencies at the College. Sign up for text and email messages in the event of Panola College delays, closures, or emergencies. To sign up, go to the Pony Alert section on the Campus Police webpage.

Those registering for emergency notification will be requested to give their name, email address and phone number. Please note that while signing up for PONY ALERT is free of charge, wireless carriers may charge users a fee to receive text messages.

## **Official Publications**

All students should be knowledgeable and responsible for information published in the *General Catalog*, *The Pathfinder*, the *Schedule of Classes* and other publications pertaining to policies and procedures.

## **Schedule of Classes**

Courses to be offered each semester will be published online in the *Schedule of Classes* prior to the beginning of each semester. The *Schedule* includes meeting days, times, location, and instructor for each course. Copies of these schedules will be available online [www.panola.edu](http://www.panola.edu). The College reserves the right to cancel any course section for any semester in which there is an inadequate number of registrants. The College may also change the instructor for a given course without prior notice.

## **Texas Common Course Numbering System**

By joining the Texas Common Course Numbering System, Panola College simplified the transfer process for students by making transfer evaluation at the receiving school more standardized. Member schools have implemented a four-letter course prefix as

well as a four-digit course number. For example, all schools in the system use ENGL as the prefix for English courses. The first digit in this number indicates the level or year of the course (for example, the number 1 would indicate a freshman-level course). The second number indicates the number of hours to be earned in the course. (For example, a 3 would indicate three College credit hours). The last two digits indicate the sequence of a course in a program of study. (For example, the numbers 01 would indicate that the course was the first of the sequence).

## Core Curriculum

“Core curriculum” means the curriculum in creative arts, humanities, sciences, political, social, and cultural history that all undergraduate students of an institution of higher education are required to complete before receiving an academic undergraduate degree. Each institution of higher education shall adopt a core curriculum of no less than 42 semester credit hours, including specific courses comprising the curriculum. Refer to the *General Catalog* for detailed information.

## Field of Study

Prior to registration each semester, all students are recommended to see an advisor to be assisted in selecting their courses. Several selected programs and majors are blocked and the students will be required to see an advisor each semester in order to register. The catalog of the transfer school should be studied carefully, making certain that the student takes only courses which are equivalent to those required by the senior College of his or her choice. Articulation agreements with universities indicate the courses that are equivalent to the specific degree requirements are available in the Student Success Center.

## Unit of Credit

The standard unit of credit at Panola College is the semester hour. One credit hour is awarded for each hour of lecture scheduled in a week of instruction in a semester. Generally, three hours of lab instruction in a week earn one hour of semester credit.

## Student Load Information

A student enrolled in fewer than 12 semester hours is classified as a part-time student. Individuals enrolled in 12 or more semester hours are classified as full-time students. A normal student load during a fall or spring semester is five academic or career/technical courses totaling 14 to 17 hours of instruction. To this total, a student may add one-hour courses such as a physical education activity course. Students wishing to enroll in six academic courses will need to secure the written permission of the Vice President of Instruction after providing documentation of past academic success. A normal load during a five-week summer session is 6 semester hours with a maximum load being 7 semester hours.

## Determining the Grade Point Average

The following grades have the indicated number of points assigned for each semester hour of credit earned:

A (excellent)	4 grade points
B (above average)	3 grade points
C (average)	2 grade points
D (passing)	1 grade point
F (failure)	0 grade points
I (incomplete)	0 grade points
Q (must repeat)	0 grade points

Although a “D” is considered passing at Panola College for College credit courses, some Colleges will not accept a “D” for transfer credit. The grade point average (GPA) is determined by dividing the total number of grade points earned by the total number of semester hours attempted.

1. Multiply the second digit of the course number by the grade point value assigned to the letter grade.  
Example: ENGL 1301 (3 semester hours) x 2 (value assigned to grade of C) = 6 grade points.
2. Repeat for each course.
3. Add all grade points earned.
4. Add the semester hours attempted in all courses taken.
5. Divide the sum of the grade points by the sum of the semester hours attempted.

<u>Course</u>	Semester Hours <u>Attempted</u>	Grade <u>Earned</u>	Grade <u>Points</u>	
ENGL 1301	3	C	6	
HIST 1301	3	D	3	
BIOL 1411	4	B	12	24 divided by 14 = 1.71 GPA
MATH 1314	3	W	0	
MUSI 1306	3	F	0	
PHED 1109	<u>1</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>3</u>	
	14		24	

Developmental courses are included in GPA calculation for each semester. These courses are not included in the cumulative GPA. However, they are included in determining the eligibility for financial aid and athletic eligibility.

## Developmental Courses

Courses designated as developmental will not count as credit toward any degree or certificate. Developmental courses have four-digit numbers; the first digit is a “0”. In the developmental studies program, a grade of “C” or better indicates satisfactory progress for advancement either to the next level within the developmental program or into academic studies. A grade of “D” means the student will be retained in the same level in the developmental program, repeating the class. Receiving a “Q” can only occur once per developmental class. If the student fails to retake the class the following semester, the “Q” remains on the transcript and is treated as a “W” for state reporting purposes and Financial Aid. If a student is awarded a “Q”, they must repeat the same course the next long semester or retake and pass a TSI assessment before the next long semester begins. The repeated class will receive the grade earned, but the “Q” from the previous semester will not be amended. Students who are TSI deficient in two or more areas may not skip a semester if a grade of “Q” is attributed. If a student who received a “Q” decides to retest rather than take the course again, the existing TSI policy in regards to retesting will hold true. His/Her “Q” from the previous semester will remain on his/her transcript. In the case where a student has been given an “I”, after the 6 week completion period the “I” may be changed to a regular grade or a “Q” if the student meets the criteria.

## Grade Reports

Official grades are available on-line through Campus Connect at the end of the semester. Official transcripts may be withheld if money is owed to any department of the College. The instructors in the fall and spring semesters file mid semester deficiency grades of “D” or “F”. Students may access the mid-term grades through Campus Connect. The grades do not become a part of the student’s permanent record. Students that receive a deficiency are encouraged to make an appointment with the teacher to discuss the deficiency. The Student Success Center will contact each student to see what services could be useful to help the student’s academic progress.

## “First Alert”

The First Alert Program is designed to identify students’ class deficiencies before it is too late to help them succeed in College. It is the College’s goal to engage the faculty and Student Success staff into the student’s path of education, by identifying deficiencies and engaging a plan for success. Contact will be made with the student to discuss all opportunities to get on a correct path for success. Perhaps tutoring or better time management is needed. Perhaps the student needs to learn how to organize course content for better understanding. Whatever the problem may be, Panola College is committed to the success of our students.

## Adding and Dropping Courses

During a designated time (located in the current class schedule), students may change their schedules by dropping or adding courses. A fee is assessed for schedule changes. If it becomes necessary to “drop” a course after the schedule-change period has ended, students must pick up an add/drop form from the Student Success Center. Students should fill out the information at the top and put the class/classes they wish to withdraw from on the form in the proper place and sign on the signature line. Students must then have the instructor/instructors, Financial Aid or scholarship grantor (if applicable), ELearning (if class is Internet class) and Residence Hall Supervisor (if dropping below 12 hours) sign the form in the appropriate places. If students are totally withdrawing from College, they do not need signatures from their instructors but all other signatures are required. The withdrawal will become official once it is submitted to the Student Success Center. Students will then receive a copy of the completed form for their records and a copy to take to the business office. The grade of “W” (withdrawn) is given during the first 12 weeks of the semester. The grade of “W” has no negative effect on the student’s GPA. All withdrawals from classes must be approved to become official. If the student does not contact the Student Success Center and exits a class unofficially, the instructor will award a grade of “F”.



Legislation was passed by the Texas Senate (SB 1231) in spring 2007 which could affect your College career. This legislation applies to all students entering a Texas public institution of higher education as a **first time freshman for fall 2007** and subsequent terms. Please read the following information carefully.

- Under section 51.907 of the Texas Education Code, “an institution of higher education may not permit a student to drop more than six courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education.” Any course that a student drops is counted toward the six course limit if “(1) the student was able to drop the course without receiving a grade or incurring an academic penalty; (2) the student’s transcript indicates or will indicate that the student was enrolled in the course (signified by a “W” grade at Panola College); and (3) the student is not dropping the course in order to withdraw from the institution.”
- The legislation does provide for some exemptions that would allow a student to drop a course without having it counted towards this limit. Contact the Student Success Center for more information.
- This statute applies to all Texas public Colleges and universities. Therefore, a Panola College student affected by this statute that has attended or plans to attend another institution of higher education should become familiar with that institution’s policies on dropping courses.
- Students should contact the Student Success Center for more information before dropping a course.

### **Withdrawal from the College**

When a student finds it necessary to leave College before the end of a semester, the student **must** notify the Student Success Center. Instructions for clearing with the library and other departments will be given at the time of withdrawal. Students who fail to officially withdraw will receive the grade of “F”. Ceasing to attend class does not constitute official withdrawal. Refer to the College calendar for the last day to withdraw with a “W”.

### **Incomplete Course Work**

Incomplete (“I”) is a temporary grade indicating that a student has satisfactorily completed the requirements of a course with the exception of a final examination or other work delayed by an illness, emergency, or authorized absence. The grade of “I” has the effect of an “F” in computing the GPA. The student must provide documentation to the instructor when requesting consideration for additional time. Before awarding an “I”, the instructor must secure the permission of the Vice President of Instruction. The student must complete work within six weeks after the end of the semester in which the grade was issued or receive an “F” for the course.

### **Repetition of Courses**

If a course taken at Panola College is repeated, both grades will remain on the transcript but only the highest grade is counted in determining the total credit and overall GPA. It is the responsibility of the student to avoid inadvertently repeating a course. Panola College scholarships will not pay for a course repeated for the third time; students will be responsible for the “3 Peat” course.

### **Repetition of Courses for Grade Improvement**

The only way a course grade may be raised is by repeating the course and earning a higher grade. If a course is repeated and a lower grade is earned, the highest grade becomes the grade of record.

### **Repeat Course Fees**

The Texas Legislature has mandated that a course repeated by a student more than twice at a public institution of higher education may not be reported for state funding. For a course being “three-peated” (taken for a third time), students will be charged \$75 per semester credit hour (\$225 for a three hour course) in addition to tuition and required fees associated with the course. Courses in Developmental Studies are not affected by the supplementary fee. Scholarships do not pay for “three-peat” courses.

### **Transferred Courses**

Course work accepted for transfer is posted to the student’s Panola College transcript, but the grades are not calculated into the GPA. Proper course selection and the avoidance of duplicating course work remain the responsibility of the student. Panola College must receive official transcripts from all Colleges attended from all transfer students.

### **Scholastic Probation**

Probation occurs when the quality of a student’s work falls below the accepted standard of satisfactory progress. Scholastic probation is a conditional permission for a student to continue in College. A student must maintain a cumulative “C” (2.0 GPA) on all course work completed and/or accepted in transfer to Panola College. A student who fails to achieve a 2.0 GPA after accumulating 12 semester hours will be notified of his/her probationary status. The student should visit with a counselor concerning recommendations for improvement. (Refer to the *General Catalog* for additional important information.)

A student on probation may not register for more than four academic courses and two one-hour courses without the approval of the Vice President of Instruction.

### **Scholastic Suspension**

A student on scholastic suspension is denied the privilege of registering for one spring or fall semester, as appropriate. Following the semester of suspension, the student may re-enroll on a probationary status. A student may enroll in the summer sessions without restriction for the purpose of raising the grade point average. (Refer to the *General Catalog* for additional information).

### **Class Attendance**

Regular and punctual attendance of classes and laboratories is required of all students. When a student has been ill or absent from class for approved extracurricular activities, he or she should be allowed, as far as possible, to make up the work missed. When an instructor feels that a student has been absent to such a degree as to invalidate the learning experience, the instructor may recommend to the Vice President of Instruction that the student be withdrawn from the course. Instructors may seek to withdraw students for non-attendance after they have accumulated the following number of absences:

- Fall or spring semesters:
  - 5 absences, MWF classes
  - 3 absences, TR classes
  - 2 absences, one-day-per-week class
- Summer Sessions:
  - 2 absences, four-days-a-week classes
  - 2 absences, two-evenings-a-week classes

The student is responsible for seeing that he or she has been officially withdrawn from a class. A student who stops attendance in a class without officially withdrawing from that class will be given a failing grade; consequently, the student must follow official withdrawal procedures in the Student Success Center.

### **Religious Holy Days**

In accordance with Section 51.911, Texas Education Code, Panola College shall allow a student who is absent from class for observance of a religious holy day to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within one week after the absence if, not later than the 15th day after the first day of the semester, the student notifies the instructor of each class the student had scheduled on that date that the student would be absent for a religious holy day. Notifications of planned absences must be in writing and must be delivered by the student either personally to the instructor of each class, with receipt of the notification acknowledged and dated by the instructor; or by certified mail, return receipt requested, addressed to the instructor of each class.

### **Texas Success Initiative Plan (TSI) Class Required Attendance**

The student who has not satisfactorily completed the TSI testing requirement must be enrolled and participate continuously (every semester) in developmental education in at least one subject area, as determined by the institution. The student who is excessively absent from the required class or does not participate in the course work will be assigned a grade of “F” for the course.

### **Change of Name or Address**

Students who change their name, residence or mailing address should notify the Student Success Center immediately. Failure to do so constitutes falsification of information. If a change of residency is made, documentation and all official correspondence will be mailed to the name and address on record. All changes must be completed in the Student Success Center (request for changes must be accompanied by official documents – drivers license, marriage license, divorce decree, etc.).

### **Access to Student Records**

Access to records by persons or agencies other than the student is limited by the Texas Open Records Act and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Information which may be released to the public without the consent of the student is limited to the following categories: name, address, telephone number, dates of attendance, classification, previous institutions attended, major field of study, awards, honors (including Vice President’s and President’s List), degree(s) conferred (including dates), past and present participation in officially recognized sports and activities, physical factors (height, weight of athlete), date and place of birth. This directory information is disclosed unless a request to withhold the release of the information was made in writing and received in the Student Success Center prior to or at the time of a student’s

initial registration. Any change in the release information status must be made in writing. Requests for directory information must be made in writing, and each request will be considered individually. Each student may request that any or all of this information be withheld from the public by making a written request to the Admissions/Records Department. Forms are available. Parents/legal guardians have the right to view student records upon request if the student is claimed as a dependent on the federal tax return.

## **Review of Record**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, provide students with the right to inspect and review the contents of their educational records (except as limited under this law). Areas in which records are maintained:

1. Academic: registrar, continuing education and faculty offices.
2. Placement and testing records: registrar and counseling offices.
3. Financial: financial aid and business offices.

Students are entitled to obtain copies, at their expense, to receive explanations or interpretations of the records and to request a hearing to challenge the content. Access to the records must be requested on a form available from the official in charge of the particular record. Informal Review: Follow the procedure requesting examination of records. An official will date and sign a summary of action form that will be maintained in the student's file. Formal Review: If the question of accuracy is not resolved during the informal review, the student may request a formal review. The Academic Appeals Committee will hear challenges concerning these records.

Challenging a grade must occur before the end of the fall or spring semester immediately following awarding of the grade.

## **FINANCIAL AID OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Grants and Work Study**

Panola College offers financial assistance to qualifying students in the form of federal and state grants and opportunities for student employment. Financial aid is money awarded to students to help pay for educational expenses. All students seeking financial aid at Panola College must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>, along with any institutional forms required. Students should submit all necessary paperwork and have their financial aid file completed as soon as possible. Since supplemental aid is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, it is best to apply as early as possible. Panola College receives both state and federal funds for student aid. Consequently, the entrance requirements and academic progress requirements for financial aid eligibility may be greater than those stated in other sections of this handbook.

### **Scholarships**

Panola College has various types of scholarships available, including endowed scholarships, organizational scholarships, and departmental scholarships. Students who feel that they need or are eligible for a scholarship should contact the person indicated within the scholarship description given in the *General Catalog*. Students on scholarship must be enrolled fulltime (taking a minimum of 12 semester hours) and must maintain a minimum of a 2.0 cumulative GPA or maintain the specific GPA required for a particular scholarship.

### **Veteran's Benefits**

Panola College is fully approved for training of veterans under the provision of the GI Bill<sup>®</sup> (Public Laws 346, 550, 16, and 890-358). Veterans and dependents of veterans should apply for benefits six weeks prior to registration and the VA certifying officer (Student Success Center) at 903-693-2034. Texas veterans who may be eligible for benefits under the Hazlewood Act should contact the Financial Aid Office. Consult the *General Catalog* for additional information.

GI Bill<sup>®</sup> is a registered trademark of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

### **Loans**

Panola College participates in the Federal Direct Student Loan program. Direct Loans are low-interest loans for students and parents to help pay for the cost of a student's education after high school. The lender is the U.S. Department of Education. All student loans will be processed through the Financial Aid Office at Panola College. In order to qualify, a student must complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). The application is online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). Entrance counseling and a loan application is required. The application is online and can be accessed through the financial aid office.

## **Vocational Rehabilitation**

A student who has a disability may obtain assistance for tuition, fees, and other expenses through the Texas Workforce Commission. A student who feels he or she qualifies should make application for this assistance to the Texas Workforce Commission office having jurisdiction over the community in which his or her home is located.

## **FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

### **Deferred Payment Arrangements**

Deferred payments may be made through FACTS. There is a \$25 per semester enrollment fee. Expenses will be set up to be deducted from a checking account, savings account or credit/debit card (Discover, MasterCard or American Express). With the exception of down payments, all remaining payments are deducted on the 5th of each month until the balance has been paid in full. If a credit/debit card is used, a convenience fee in addition to the enrollment fee will be assessed. All expenses can be included in this plan such as tuition, fees, books, room and meals. These deferred payment arrangements are interest free. Access this plan at <http://www.panola.edu> via Campus Connect. For additional information or questions about FACTS, please call (903) 693-2035.

### **Refund Policy**

The State of Texas has established a tuition and fee refund policy for Community/Junior and Technical Colleges. Panola College has no ability to vary in any degree from the established policy. Students who officially withdraw from classes will have their tuition and mandatory fees refunded according to the following schedule.

For Coordinating Board approved semester-length courses for which semester-hour credit is awarded:

1. A 100 percent refund is made for courses dropped prior to the first day of class. First day of class means the first day shown on the College calendar and not the first meeting of a particular class.
2. A 70 percent refund is made if the student withdraws during the first fifteen days of a fall or spring semester. A 25 percent refund is made if the student withdraws between the sixteenth and twentieth days of the fall or spring semester. No refund is made after the twentieth class day of the fall or spring semester.
3. A 70 percent refund is made if the student withdraws during the first eight days of an eight-week term. A 25 percent refund is made if the student withdraws on the ninth or tenth day of an eight-week term. No refund is made if the student withdraws after the tenth class day of an eight-week term.
4. A 70 percent refund is made if the student withdraws during the first five days of a five-week summer term. A 25 percent refund is made if the student withdraws on the sixth day of a five-week summer term. No refund is made if the student withdraws after the sixth class day of a five-week summer term.

**NOTE:** Students enrolled in semesters of alternate lengths should consult the Business Office staff for refund schedules.

### **Returned Checks**

All returned checks will result in a \$30 charge. Problems must be settled within ten days of notice to avoid additional collection claims.

**Obligation to the College** Any unpaid balance could be turned over to a collection agency, and any fees incurred will be added to the student's account. Until a student's obligations to the College are met, he or she may be barred from future registration and the student's transcripts of credit will not be released. A "hold" on a student's records may be placed for any of the following reasons:

- Non-payment of tuition and fees.
- Failure to compensate for the loss, destruction, or damage of College property.
- Failure to supply required documentation; enrolling under false pretenses.
- Failure to comply with terms of disciplinary action.
- Any unpaid debt and/or collection fees owed to the College.

# STUDENT SUCCESS

## Academic Advising

Academic Advising is required of all new students, students required to take a developmental course, and students enrolled in a certificate program and/or a Career and Technical field of study in order to register each semester. We recommend that all students seek academic advisement each semester from the academic advisors in the Student Success Center or the faculty advisor assigned in each program or field of study. If a student elects not to seek academic advisement, the College assumes no responsibility for any delay the student encounters in graduating because the student has selected classes which do not meet graduation requirements. Students may be automatically dropped from courses for which they do not have proper prerequisites.

## Bulletin Boards

Students should read the bulletin boards on a regular basis for announcements of importance. Information is posted on bulletin boards throughout the campus. Students are responsible for information posted. The Student Activities Coordinator must approve advertising not associated with College business prior to its being posted.

## Student Center

The Student Center offers students an opportunity to relax in the café, watch television, play billiards or ping pong, or use computers. The Student Center also includes the Panola College Store, cafeteria, and post office.

## Identification (ID) Cards (Panola Card)

New students are issued identification (ID) cards, also known as the Panola Card, in the Student Success Center. Your Panola Card is linked to a checking account at Herring Bank. This will be the default account for all student disbursements from Panola College unless you designate a different account through Campus Connect. Some students may also be required to obtain an ID Badge from the Student Success Center. The Panola Card or ID Badge must be presented for admission to official College functions requiring an ID, the M.P. Baker Library, the Fitness Center, student activities, athletic competitions, dining hall services, etc. Replacement fees for lost or stolen cards will be assessed (see Additional Fees in Expenses section of the General Catalog).

## Motor Vehicle Registration

Any student, faculty member or employee who operates or parks one or more motor vehicles on the campus must register each vehicle with the Student Success Center and affix the parking sticker as prescribed.

## Student Organizations

Panola College recognizes the importance of student involvement in activities as an integral part of the educational process that enriches and develops the student's special interests and needs. Student organizations shall be consistent with the main objectives of the College and student organizations shall abide by appropriate regulations. Please consult the *General Catalog* for specific information concerning clubs and organizations.

## Social Events

Social events are planned by the various clubs and organizations under faculty supervision and coordinated with the Student Activities Coordinator. Yearly social events include a club mixer, Fall Frolic, Spring Fling, dances, movies, and other events scheduled by the various campus organizations.

## Intramural Programs

A complete program of intramural sports is organized for all students who are interested in this type of competition. Intramural sports include basketball, flag football, racquetball, volleyball, billiards, and other special competitions. The Student Activities Coordinator organizes the intramural activities and those students who wish to participate should take note of announcements relative to this program each semester.

## Student Publications

*The Pony Express*, the College newspaper, is prepared and managed by students enrolled in journalism classes or interested in journalism. The publication is a tool for teaching and remains under the supervision of the journalism instructor.

## **Lost and Found**

A lost and found center will be maintained in the College's Business Office. The Vice President of Fiscal Services should be responsible for determining the status of items that remain unclaimed after a six-month period.

## **Fitness Center**

The Panola College Fitness Center offers a variety of opportunities to enhance personal health. The Fitness Center has a fully equipped weight room, a full size gym floor for basketball or volleyball, a yoga/pilates room, and many pieces of equipment to improve your cardiovascular health. The Fitness Center is open to all Panola College students and memberships are available to the community; please contact the Business Office for payment information. Id cards are required for entry into the Fitness Center.

## **Health Services**

The College offers no health care facility on campus. If an accident or emergency occurs on campus, first aid will be administered and, if needed, additional assistance will be requested from the local hospital's emergency service. The cost of any professional service is the responsibility of the student. Students are encouraged to have medical insurance coverage from a company of their choosing. Information concerning a sickness and accident insurance policy available to students and their dependents is available. Inquire in the Business Office.

## **HIV/AIDS and Other Communicable Diseases**

Panola College recognizes that students or employees with communicable diseases, including HIV infection, may wish to engage in as many of their normal pursuits as their condition and ability to perform their duties allow. These pursuits include attending classes or work. As long as these students or employees are able to meet acceptable performance standards, and medical evidence indicates that their conditions are not a threat to themselves or others, the administrators, faculty and staff should be sensitive to their condition and ensure that these individuals are treated consistently and equally with other students and employees.

At the same time, Panola College has an obligation to provide a safe environment for all students and employees. A student or employee with a communicable disease should report the condition to the Vice President of Student Services or to his/her immediate supervisor, as appropriate. The educational pamphlet on HIV infection developed by the Texas Department of Health is distributed to all employees and is available to students upon request.

Every precaution should be taken to ensure that a student's or employee's condition does not present a health or safety threat to others. The fact that a student or employee has a communicable disease does not relieve that individual of the requirement to comply with performance standards as long as he/she is enrolled in classes or remains employed with the College. All efforts will be made to protect the student's or employee's right to confidentiality.

## **Panola College Store**

The Panola College Store is located in the Student Center and is designed to serve both students and faculty. In addition to textbooks and other school supplies, the Panola College Store carries a variety of gift and other items. The Panola College Store hours are posted on-site and on the College's web page. Textbooks are sold throughout the school year; however, textbook "buy-back" is conducted during designated times at the end of each semester.

## **Textbook Refund Policy**

- **NO REFUNDS OR EXCHANGES WITHOUT AN ORIGINAL RECEIPT!!**
- Textbooks can only be returned within ten days of the purchase date.
- Books must be returned in NEW condition for a refund, all textbooks have a 30% restocking fee. Books with writing, highlighting, earmarks, bumped corners, etc., will be refunded at USED retail price. Panola College Store reserves the right to refuse any item for refund based on condition in which the item has been brought back.
- Books purchased shrink wrapped cannot be returned for any reason including class cancellation.
- New or used textbooks with water damage are not returnable.
- DVD's, CD's, and books with computer software or access codes are not eligible for a refund or exchange. No exceptions.

- All shipping fees are non-refundable.
- **ALL FALL & SPRING TEXTBOOK PURCHASES MADE DURING THE LAST TWO WEEKS OF THE RESPECTIVE TERM ARE FINAL. NO REFUNDS WILL BE GRANTED.**

### **General Merchandise**

#### **NO REFUNDS OR EXCHANGES WITHOUT AN ORIGINAL RECEIPT!!**

- Clothing, supplies, and other forms of general merchandise may be refunded or exchanged within ten days of purchase date.
- All original tags must still be attached to clothing items.
- Candy, drinks, and all health & beauty supplies are not eligible for return or exchange.
- Shipping fees and late fees are nonrefundable as well.
- No refund is available for calculators, hardware, software, and assorted computer supplies.
- All laptop and tablets are **non-refundable**.

Defective products must be reconciled with manufacturer according to terms of items warranty.

#### **Online Orders for In-store Pickup:**

Orders are held for 2 weeks or until financial aid charging ends (if paid for with financial aid), whichever comes first. **All order disputes must be made within 24 business hours of receiving the order.**

### **Textbook Loan Scholarship & Outside Scholarship**

- Book Loan Scholarship students must get all books needed by the 12<sup>th</sup> class day. Books must be returned or paid for when a class is dropped or by 3pm on the last day of Buy Back, the last day of finals. Students must be clear after each semester to be allowed to register or receive books for the next semester.
- All scholarships that pay for supplies, students must get supplies needed before the 12<sup>th</sup> class day or they will not be covered by scholarship and will have to be paid for by the student at the time of purchase.

### **Textbook Buy Back**

Book buy back is during finals. There are 4 days of finals which are the 4 days of Buy Back during the fall and spring semesters, check with the College Store on the hours, as those vary. There will be 1 day of Buy Back at the Marshall campus. Please call see our Facebook page for Buy Back details or call the College Store at [903-693-2019](tel:903-693-2019). Buy Back can be done anytime during the semester through our online store, [www.panolacollegestore.com](http://www.panolacollegestore.com)

### **Campus Police**

The campus police department is composed of certified law enforcement officers who have the power to enforce all Texas laws and College regulations on the property owned and operated under the direction of Panola College. The force serves the staff and students by helping to maintain the safety and security of each person and his/her possessions while on campus.

#### **Rate of Speed on Campus**

The maximum rate of speed on campus is 15 miles per hour.

#### **Parking Areas for Students**

Students are required to park between two YELLOW lines, whether it is parallel or diagonal parking. GREEN curbs indicate faculty parking only. YELLOW curbs indicate no parking zones, RED curbs indicate fire zones, and BLUE

curbs are reserved for people with handicapped certification. Student vehicles parked in these areas are subject to removal at the owner's expense. Additional information can be obtained at the Campus Police Department or by calling 903-693-1112.

### **Emergency Messages**

Contact the College Police Department if a need arises to have an emergency message delivered to a student.

### **Student Right to Know**

In compliance with the student right-to-know and campus security act, Panola College compiles specific information on campus crime statistics, campus security policies, and graduation rates. Panola College's police comply and distribute a brochure of pertinent information to students and employees on an annual basis. Federal law also requires that all institutions of higher education disclose graduation rates, on request, to students, applicants, and potential students. Graduation rates for Panola College are compiled and available from the Admissions/Records Department and online at <http://www.panola.edu>.

## **M.P. BAKER LIBRARY**

The Learning Resources Center (LRC), named for M. P. Baker, president of Panola College from 1951-1967, supports the entire instructional program. An expansion and renovation project completed in 2009 increased the size of the library by almost three-fold. The mission of the LRC is to be an academic information resource for the students and faculty of the College. The LRC staff strives to provide services to enhance the whole student and to provide opportunities for students to become lifelong learners.

The holdings of the LRC include a growing collection of books, media and electronic materials to support academic transfer, technical and vocational programs as well as to satisfy the educational, informational and recreational needs of the students and faculty. The LRC subscribes to local, regional and national newspapers, a wide variety of periodicals and other electronic resources. Online services and resources are provided to meet the needs of Distance Learning and other off campus students. Computers are available for student use on campus as well as wireless access for laptop users. Group or individualized orientation and bibliographic instruction classes are provided to students and/or community users. Students are invited to enjoy the many study rooms or quiet reading areas throughout the LRC. The LRC offers various programs and events (i.e., lunchbox lectures, art displays and professional development sessions) as outreach services to provide enrichment opportunities to the College community.

### **Copyrights**

Panola College adheres to intellectual property ownership, including copyrights. The policy states the use of copyrighted materials, and adherence of exclusive rights, fair use, performances and displays and broadcast programs as spelled out under Section 106 & 107, as well as amendment of Section 110 (Teach Act of Title 17 of the U.S. Code).

Copyrights are property rights and are protected by federal statute. Copying, reproducing, distributing (print and or electronic) materials without permission is copyright infringement. Textbooks and other commercial publications used as text or supplementary materials are copyrighted. Copying and disseminating such materials constitute copyright infringement.

Panola College policy states the following prohibitions--

Notwithstanding the fair use guidelines, the following shall be prohibited:

1. Copying of print materials and sheet music to create or replace or substitute for anthologies, compilations, or collective works. This prohibition against replacement or substitution applies whether copies of various works or excerpts are accumulated, or reproduced and used separately.
2. Copying of or from works intended to be "consumable" in the course of study or teaching. These works include workbooks, exercises, standardized tests, test booklets, answer sheets, and like consumable materials.

Copying shall not substitute for the purchase of books, publishers' reprints, or periodicals; be directed by higher authority; or be repeated with respect to the same item by the same teacher from term to term.



### **Copyright Agreement and Release**

*As a student at Panola College, I hereby agree to adhere to the Copyright Laws of the United States and Copyright policies of Panola College. I understand and agree that my voice, image, and physical presence may be transmitted, photographed, printed, and/or electronically recorded in classroom activities during participation at College-related events and activities and hereby release any claims for the use of such.*

## **STANDARDS OF STUDENT CONDUCT, RIGHTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students are expected to conduct themselves as responsible citizens. Faculty, staff, and administrators have the authority to establish and maintain standards of conduct for students. This authority not only extends to the classroom, residence halls, and all on-campus activities but also all College-sponsored, off-campus activities. Any student who fails to conduct himself/herself responsibly with respect to persons and property may be withdrawn from school. The College may drop a student from a class or from all classes for any breach of conduct. Students who are removed from a class or classes can seek appeal by due process.

### **Acquaintance with Policies, Rules, and Regulations**

The standards of student conduct are subject to change by action of the College administration. Each student is expected to be fully acquainted with all published policies, rules, and regulations of the College. Copies of the *General Catalog*, *Schedule of Classes*, and *The Pathfinder* are available online at the Panola College website <http://www.panola.edu>. Board policy is available online. Each student is responsible for compliance with these policies, rules, and regulations. Students are also responsible for compliance with all federal, state, and local laws.

### **Student Conduct**

While a student may receive lesser penalties for these offenses, it should be understood that dismissal from the College is possible in those cases warranting the maximum punishment. While it is not possible to list all behaviors inconsistent with membership in a scholarly community, the regulations listed in this section do identify the behavior that can lead to suspension from the College.

Some of the offenses described below are crimes in Texas and may be prosecuted independently of any disciplinary action taken by Panola College. Neither intoxication nor the use of any other drug shall serve as a defense or mitigate the seriousness of an offense. All student organizations are subject to the same regulations as those that apply to individuals. Violation of these policies will subject the organizations and/or individuals involved to appropriate discipline.

All students shall obey the law, show respect for properly constituted authority, and observe correct standards of conduct.

### **Violation of Policy**

Violations of a College policy, rule, or regulation may result in disciplinary action.

### **Directive of a College Official**

Failure to comply with the directive of a College official acting in the performance of his/her duties may result in disciplinary action.

### **Official Summons**

Students should respond as promptly as possible to an official summons requesting their presence at an interview. Ignoring an official summons will subject the student to disciplinary action.

### **Tobacco Policy**

The College District is a tobacco-free institution committed to providing its students and employees a safe and healthy environment. The use of all tobacco products and any electronic smoking or vapor emitting device shall be prohibited on all property owned or operated by the College District. This shall include buildings, grounds, sidewalks, and streets. This policy shall also apply to vehicles owned or operated by the College District. Notice of this tobacco-free policy shall be displayed at all College District locations.

### **Children on Campus**

Panola College occasionally offers classes and activities for children. At all other times children may not remain unattended on campus, nor may children attend classes.

## College Keys

Possession of or making use of College keys, for unauthorized purposes, is prohibited.

## Alcohol

The use of intoxicating beverages shall be prohibited in classroom buildings, laboratories, auditoriums, library buildings, museums, dormitories, faculty and administrative offices, intercollegiate and intramural athletic facilities, and all other public campus areas. State law shall be strictly enforced at all times on all property controlled by the College District in regard to the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages.

## Controlled Substances

No student shall possess, use, transmit, or attempt to possess, use, or transmit or be under the influence of (legal intoxication not required), any of the following substances on school premises during any school term or off school premises at a school-sponsored activity, function, or event:

- a. Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, barbiturate or steroids.
- b. Any spray glue, aerosol paint, or any other volatile chemical substance for the purpose of inhalation.
- c. Any other intoxicant, or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior altering drugs. The transmittal, sale, or attempted sale of what is represented to be any of the above-listed substances is also prohibited under this policy.

A student who uses a drug authorized by a licensed physician through a prescription specifically for that student's use shall not be considered to have violated this rule.

## Crimes of Violence

"Crimes of violence" as defined in Appendix A to Title 34, Part 99, of the Code of Federal Regulations, include:

1. Arson: Any willful or malicious burning or attempt to burn, with or without intent to defraud, a dwelling house, public building, motor vehicle or aircraft, personal property of another, etc.
2. Assault Offenses: An unlawful attack by one person upon another. Note: By definition there can be no "attempted" assaults, only "completed" assaults.
3. Burglary: The unlawful entry into a building or other structure with the intent to commit a felony or a theft.
4. Criminal Homicide: Manslaughter by Negligence: The killing of another person through gross negligence.
5. Criminal Homicide: Murder and Non-negligent Manslaughter: The willful (non-negligent) killing of one human being by another.
6. Destruction/Damage/Vandalism of Property: To willfully or maliciously destroy, damage, deface, or otherwise injure real or personal property without the consent of the owner or the person having custody or control of it.
7. Kidnapping/Abduction: The unlawful seizure, transportation, or detention of a person, or any combination of these actions, against his or her will, or of a minor without the consent of his or her custodial parent(s) or legal guardian. Note: Kidnapping/abduction includes hostage taking.
8. Robbery: The taking of, or attempting to take, anything of value under confrontational circumstances from the control, custody, or care of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence or by putting the victim in fear. Note: Carjacking is a robbery offense where a motor vehicle is taken through force or threat of force.
9. Sex Offenses, Forcible: Any sexual act directed against another person, forcibly or against the person's will where the victim is incapable of giving consent.
  - a. Forcible rape (except "statutory rape"). The carnal knowledge of a person, forcibly or against that person's will, or both; or not forcibly or against the person's will where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his or her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity (or because of his or her youth).
  - b. Forcible sodomy. Oral or anal sexual intercourse with another person, forcibly or against that person's will or both; or not forcibly or against the person's will where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his or her youth or because of his or her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.
  - c. Sexual assault with an object. To use an object or instrument to unlawfully penetrate, however slightly, the genital or anal opening of the body of another person, forcibly or against the person's will where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his or her youth or because of his or her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity. Note: An "object" or "instrument" is anything used by the offender other than the offender's genitalia. Examples are a finger, bottle, handgun, stick, etc.
  - d. Forcible fondling. The touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, forcibly or against that person's will, or both; or not forcibly or against the person's will where

the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his or her youth or because of his or her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity. *Note:* Forcible fondling includes “indecent liberties” and “child molesting.”

10. Non-forcible Sex Offenses (Except “Prostitution Offenses”): Unlawful, non-forcible sexual intercourse.
  - a. Incest: Non-forcible sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.
  - b. Statutory rape: Non-forcible sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent.

## **Destruction of Property**

Any student, student organization, or group of students participating in activities that destroy, deface, or remove College property, or property of other students or visitors, will be held liable for full damages and will face disciplinary action.

## **Disruptive Behavior**

Interference with teaching, research, administration, or the District’ subsidiary responsibilities through “disorderly conduct” or “disruptive behavior,” is prohibited. Violations of the Penal Statutes of Texas or of the United States occurring on District property or in connection with District-sponsored activities may also constitute violations of the District’s rules and regulations when such violations affect the educational process and goals of the District.

## **Disruptions/Demonstrations**

A person commits an offense if the person, alone or in concert with others, intentionally engages in disruptive activity on the campus or property of the College. Disorderly conduct shall include behavior of a boisterous and tumultuous character such that there is a clear and present danger of alarming persons where no legitimate reason for alarm exists; interference with the peaceful and lawful conduct of persons under circumstances in which there is reason to believe such conduct will cause or provoke a disturbance; violent and forceful behavior at any time, such that there is a clear and present danger that free movement of other persons will be impaired; behavior involving personal abuse or assault when such behavior creates a clear and present danger of causing assaults or fights; violent, abuse, indecent, profane, boisterous, unreasonably loud, or otherwise disorderly conduct under circumstances in which there is reason to believe that such conduct will cause or provoke a disturbance; willful and malicious behavior that interrupts the speaker of any lawful assembly or impairs the lawful right of others to participate effectively in such assembly or meeting when there is reason to believe that such conduct will cause or provoke a disturbance; willful and malicious behavior that obstructs or causes the obstruction of any doorway, hall, or any other passageway in a College building to such an extent that the employees, officers, and other persons, including visitors, having business with the College are denied entrance into, exit from, or free passage in such building.

## **Distribution of Literature on Campus**

Distribution of non-commercial literature or leaflets by organizations chartered by the College or individual students is permitted in areas designated for this purpose. Prior to posting a sign on College-controlled property, a student or registered student organization must contact the Student Activities Coordinator and follow the procedure pertaining to this activity. Literature and materials for distribution on College-controlled property must not contain: 1) Writings which are libelous, obscene, or in violation of federal, state, or local laws; 2) Material which attempts to exploit for commercial purposes the name, image, or reputation of Panola College through the sale of subscription copies or advertising space.

## **Disturbances**

Students creating disturbances on College-controlled property or at a College activity resulting in the disruption of normal activities and order will be subject to disciplinary action. Disruptive behavior in a classroom or residence hall is judged to be a disturbance. The instructor has responsibility for control of the classroom and may take steps to ensure an orderly environment in which learning may occur unimpeded. Such steps taken by the instructor should be taken after consultation with the appropriate instructional Vice President.

## **Dress Code**

Students’ dress or grooming may not materially and substantially interfere with normal school operations. Students are expected to follow accepted standards of common decency in their mode of dress. Health regulations require acceptable foot coverage be worn in public places. All Health Science and other Career and Technical students should inquire of their teachers regarding departmental dress codes.

## **False Bomb Threats**

Occasionally, false bomb threats are called in at institutions of higher education. Under current law in Section 42.06(b) of the Penal Code, "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, or power supply or other public service in which event the offense is a state jail felony.

## **False Testimony**

Giving false testimony or evidence will result in disciplinary action.

## **Falsification of Records**

Any student who engages in forgery or who otherwise furnishes false or misleading information on admission, registration, personal identification on any form used by the College, or who alters any College record in any manner is subject to disciplinary action.

## **Fighting**

Disputes and differences of opinions should be handled in a mature and responsible manner. Students who resort to physical violence over such matters raise a question concerning their suitability as College students. The parties involved in a fight will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Gambling**

Any student who participates in gambling on College-controlled property will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Harassment**

The College prohibits any harassment related to a person's race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, disability or genetic information. [Discrimination Grievance Procedure] This information is found on the Panola College website under Student Success.

Sexual harassment or abuse is verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an employee, student, or group of employees or students because of his or her gender and that:

1. Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment; or
2. Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance of duties or studies; or
3. Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment or academic opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes (1) epithetic slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts that relate to gender and (2) written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of gender and that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, or elsewhere on College premises, or is circulated in the workplace.

Employees and students shall not engage in conduct constituting sexual harassment. College officials or their agents shall investigate all allegations of sexual harassment and officials shall take prompt and appropriate disciplinary action against employees or students found to engage in conduct constituting sexual harassment.

An employee or student who believes that he or she has been or is being subjected to any form of sexual harassment shall bring the matter to the attention of a College Vice President or an immediate supervisor in accordance with the procedures in the College's complaints policy. Bad faith allegations or use of the policy for purposes unrelated to its clear intent are expressly prohibited and could result in expulsion.

## **Hazing**

Hazing of any kind is prohibited. [Education Code, Chap. 37; Texas Penal Code] Hazing is a criminal offense in the State of Texas. Hazing means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off school property directed against a student, by one person alone or acting with others, that endangers the mental or physical health or the safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include other students. 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 occurs, or intends to

attend an educational institution during any of its regular sessions after a period of scheduled vacation. Hazing with or without the consent of a student; a violation of that prohibition renders both the person inflicting the hazing and the person submitting to the hazing subject to appropriate discipline. (See FLBC)

Initiations by organizations may include no feature that is dangerous, harmful, or degrading to the student; a violation of this prohibition renders the organization subject to appropriate discipline.

The term includes, but is not limited to:

1. Any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electric shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body, or similar activity.
2. Any type of physical activity, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, calisthenics, or other 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.
3. Any activity involving consumption of a food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug or other substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
4. Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects the student to extreme mental stress, shame, or humiliation, or that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages, the student from entering or remaining registered in an educational institution or that may reasonably be expected to cause a student to leave the organization or the institution rather than submit to acts described above.
5. Any activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that involves a violation of the Penal Code.

#### **Personal Hazing Offense**

- A. A person commits an offense if the person commits any of the following:
  1. Engages in hazing.
  2. Solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing.
  3. Recklessly permits hazing to occur.
  4. Has firsthand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident involving a student in an educational institution, or first-hand knowledge that a specific incident has occurred, and knowingly fails to report that knowledge in writing to the President or designee.
- B. The offense of failing to report is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed \$1,000, confinement in county jail for not more than 180 days, or both such fine and confinement.
- C. Any other offense under this section which does not cause serious bodily injury to another is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not less than \$500 nor more than \$1,000, confinement in county jail for not less than 90 days not more than 180 days or both such fine and confinement.
- D. Any other offense under this section which causes serious bodily injury to another is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not less than \$1,000 nor more than \$5,000, confinement in county jail for not less than 180 days not more than one year, or both such fine and confinement.
- E. Any other offense under this section, which causes the death of another, is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not less than \$5,000 nor more than \$10,000, confinement in county jail for not less than one year nor more than two years, or both such fine and confinement.

#### **Organization Hazing Offense:**

- A. An organization commits an 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.
- B. An offense under this section is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not less than \$5,000 not more than \$10,000 or if a court finds that the offense caused personal injury, property damage, or other loss, the court may sentence the organization to pay a fine of not less than \$5,000 nor more than double the amount lost or expenses incurred because of such injury, damage, or loss.

#### **Consent Not A Defense:**

It is not a defense to prosecution of an offense under this subchapter that the person against whom the hazing was directed consented to or acquiesced in the hazing activity.

#### **Immunity from Prosecution:**

Any person reporting a specific hazing incident involving a student in an educational institution to the Vice President of Student Services or other appropriate official of the institution is immune from liability, civil or criminal, that might

otherwise be incurred or imposed as a result of the report. Immunity extends to participation in any judicial proceeding resulting from the report. This section does not protect a person reporting in bad faith or with malice.

**Offenses in Addition to Other Penal Provisions:**

This subchapter does not affect or repeal any law of this state. Nothing in this subchapter shall limit or affect the right of an educational institution to enforce its own penalties against hazing.

**Indecent Conduct**

The College prohibits conduct which is indecent, lewd, or obscene (includes, but is not limited to indecent exposure, public urination, and public nudity). Punishment of probation, fine, or suspension will be given due to the severity of the incident.

**Institutional Name (Use of)**

No student organization or individual student may use the institutional name in solicitation of gifts from persons or agencies off campus without the written permission of the President. The President grants permission for the solicitation of advertising or the acceptance of paid advertising.

**Loitering**

Loitering is not permitted in or around residence halls or other buildings on campus after 11:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday or after 12:00 Midnight Friday and Saturday.

**Pet Policy**

For hygienic and safety purposes pets are not permitted in Panola College Residence halls. This includes but is not limited to animals, reptiles, fish, insects, spiders, birds, and rodents.

**Panola College Animals on College Property:** Panola College seeks to uphold federal, state, and local laws and regulations; ensure the health and safety of its community; preserve the integrity of its grounds, buildings, and other property; and support a healthful educational environment that respects the rights of all individuals, therefore pets are not allowed on campus, except for the instances described and permitted in the following information. Service animals are welcome in all buildings on campus and may attend any class, meeting, or other event. Individuals with documented disabilities residing on campus may request as an accommodation that a service or therapy animal be allowed to reside in the campus residence; however, therapy animals are not permitted anywhere outside of the individual’s assigned living space except as otherwise provided by this policy. All students requesting to have a service/therapy animal in the residence halls must initiate the approval process with the Disability Services Coordinator at Panola College for reasonable accommodations in residence halls. Reasonable documentation will be required for approval of the person’s disability and that the accommodation is needed. The student must provide documentation from a physician, psychiatrist, social worker, or other mental health professional that the animal provides support that alleviates at least one of the identified symptoms or effects of the existing disability. All students must comply with all requirements for approval by Disability Services. Reasonable behavior is expected from the animals while on campus. If the animal exhibits unacceptable behavior, the handler is expected to employ the proper training techniques to correct the situation. Consideration of others must be taken into account when providing for the maintenance and hygiene of service animals. Additionally, specific guidelines have been established concerning service and therapy animals living in a campus residency environment.

**Section I: Definitions**

A. Handler: A person with a disability using a service animal; a person who has received approval for a therapy animal accommodation; or a person in possession of an animal for recreation on campus.

B. Service Animal: Any animal that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler’s disability. The crime deterrent effects of an animal’s presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purpose of this definition.

C. Therapy Animals: An animal that works, provides assistance, or performs tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability or provides emotional support or therapeutic benefits that alleviate one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of a person’s disability; however, the animal is not required to be individually trained or certified to perform such task. Therapy animals include “emotional support animals” and “assistive animals” used to support individuals with mental disabilities. These animals may provide crime deterrent effects or emotional support, well-being or comfort.

D. Recreational Animals: A domestic animal used for sport, companionship, or other non-service/assistance functions. Recreational animals are not allowed inside college facilities.

E. Unauthorized Animal: Any animal not controlled by a leash or harness, unless the animal is a service animal and the handler is unable because of disability to use a leash or harness or if the lease or harness restricts the service animal to function

appropriately as such. Also, any animal that exhibits violent, uncontrollable, aggressive, or unhealthy behavior, including service and therapy animals.

## ***Section II: Service Animals***

### **A. College Responsibility**

a. Allow service animals to accompany the handler to all areas of the facility where the handler is normally allowed to go. A handler may not be segregated from other similar members of the campus community, except where there is real danger to the animal. Exceptions to the exclusions will be reviewed on a case-by case basis.

b. Not to pet, feed, or deliberately startle/disturb a service animal.

c. Not to separate, or attempt to separate, service animals from their handlers.

d. Provide handlers living on campus with an area for relieving and grooming their animals.

### **B. Inquiries**

a. When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, the handler may be asked if the animal is a service animal required for a disability and/or what work or task the animal has been trained to perform. If a student's answers to the two inquiries permitted by the ADA do not provide the information necessary for the institution to make a decision that the animal is a service animal, the institution may require additional information.

b. If it is a disability and animal's duties are obvious, staff may not ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require certification of the dog's training, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

c. Use of animals other than dogs as service animals will be reviewed based on the inquiries and exceptions listed below and allowed by law.

### **C. Service Animal in Training**

a. Individuals who desire an accommodation for a service animal in training must also abide by all relevant provisions of this policy.

b. An animal being trained to be a service animal will be treated as a fully trained animal when accompanied by a handler and identified as such.

### **D. Exceptions**

a. Service animals may be denied or removed if:

i. The animal is out of control and its handler does not take effective action to control it;

ii. The animal is not housebroken (i.e., trained so that, absent illness or accident, the animal controls its waste elimination);

iii. The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level by a reasonable accommodation.

## ***Section III: Therapy Animals***

### **A. Inquiries**

a. Requests for therapy animals may be made by individuals with documented disabilities residing on campus or commuters taking classes on Panola College campuses.

b. If the animal does not meet the definition of service animal, the resident must engage in a reasonable accommodation request with the Disability Services Coordinator.

c. Residence Life or Disability Services may ask individuals who have disabilities that are not readily apparent or known to the college official to submit reliable documentation of a disability and their disability-related need for a therapy animal within the residence hall. The individual is not required to disclose medical information that is overly intrusive and invasive in order to receive an accommodation.

d. A person qualifies for reasonable accommodation if:

i. The person has a documented disability;

ii. The animal is necessary to afford the person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy the residence halls; and

iii. There is an identifiable relationship between the disability and the assistance the animal provides.

### **B. Exceptions**

a. Therapy animals may be denied or removed if:

i. The specific therapy animal would impose an undue financial and administrative burden or would fundamentally alter the nature of the residence halls and/or classroom.

ii. The specific therapy animal in question poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by another reasonable accommodation, or

iii. The specific therapy animal in question would cause substantial physical damage to the property of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by another reasonable accommodation.

## ***Section IV: Handler or Owner Responsibility***

### **A. Authorized Animals**

- a. Handlers must abide by all state laws, city ordinances related to animals in the city of Carthage, Marshall, or Center, and Panola College guidelines, including but not limited to:
  - i. All animals in the city must have a valid license and tag issued if the city deems necessary. Annual renewal of the license and tag may be required annually.
  - ii. The handler is required to provide a collar or harness for the license and vaccination tags to be affixed. Handler shall see that the animal wears the collar and tags at all times.
- b. Handler is liable for damages caused by the service animal, therapy animal, or recreational animal.
- c. Handler is responsible for the care and supervision of a service animal, therapy animal, or recreational animal.
- d. Handler must have full control of the animal at all times. Animals may not run at large; a leash or harness is required unless the handler is unable because of disability to use a leash or harness or it restricts the animal's ability to function appropriately.
- e. Disturbing animal vocalization must be kept to an absolute minimum.
- f. Handlers must relieve animals in designated locations designated behind the current campus laundry mat on the grass. All feces must be picked up and sealed in a sealed container and disposed of in an outdoor trash can.
- g. Handler must observe housing and food service establishment guidelines. Therapy animals are not permitted in dining hall or any other buildings on campus.
- h. All service/therapy animals must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. Animal's cleanliness is mandatory in the campus environment.
- i. Vaccinations must be current and based on a veterinarian's recommendations. Handler must provide evidence of updated vaccinations and licensure, where common and applicable to the type of animal registered. Evidence of such compliance must be provided to the Disability Services Coordinator annually.
- j. Daily grooming and occasional baths (at a vet, pet care establishment, or a family home) should be undertaken to keep the service animal's odor to a minimum.
- k. Parasite control is essential and adequate preventative measures must be taken. If a parasite problem develops, it must be dealt with immediately and in an effective manner. In the event a parasite problem is not eliminated by the handler, the college will exterminate the property and assess the handler the standard extermination fee.

**B. Unauthorized Animals**

- a. In the event an unauthorized animal is discovered on or in college property, except residence halls, the College Police Department should be notified immediately. The responding officer may take appropriate action, up to and including ordering the handler or owner to remove the unauthorized animal from college property or by contacting the Carthage Animal Control Officer who will take possession of the animal and remove it from campus.
- b. In the event an unauthorized animal is discovered in a college residence hall, the appropriate residence hall staff shall be notified immediately. The residence hall staff will attempt to contact the owner/handler of the unauthorized animal for removal. If the owner/handler cannot be contacted, the residence hall staff will contact the College Police Department for removal as indicated in this policy.

***Section V: Residence Life and Food Service Guidelines***

- A. Occupants of campus housing are not permitted to keep pets.
- B. Service animals are permitted to accompany the individual with a disability to all areas of the facility where persons are normally allowed to go.
- C. Therapy animals are not permitted anywhere outside of the individual's assigned living space or classrooms; exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis from Residence Life or Disability Services.
- D. Service/therapy animals should be kept under control. Animals should always be on a leash except where in the student's room with the door closed unless the leash restricts the service animal's ability to function appropriately.
- E. Animal food should be kept in a covered storage container to deter pests.
- F. Animal's paws must be kept off tables, trays, and food service counters at all times.

**Probation Violation**

Any student on disciplinary probation can be suspended, while on probation, if he/she commits the same offense or another offense.

**Prohibited Weapons**

A student shall not knowingly, intentionally, or recklessly go onto school property or to a school-sponsored activity with any prohibited weapon, as defined below, unless pursuant to written regulations or written authorization of the College. This prohibition shall not normally apply to school supplies such as pencils, compasses, scissors, and the like, unless those instruments are used in a menacing or threatening manner. Students found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension.



Prohibited weapons include but are not limited to:

1. A firearm, which is not covered in the Panola College Campus Carry Regulations, (any device designed, made, or adapted to expel a projectile through a barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance or any device readily convertible to that use).
2. An illegal knife (knife with a blade over 5 ½ inches, hand instrument designed to cut or stab another by being thrown, dagger, Bowie knife, sword, spear).
3. An explosive weapon (any explosive or incendiary bomb, grenade, rocket, or mine that is designed, made or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury, death, or substantial property damage, or for the principal purpose of causing such a loud report as to cause undue public alarm or terror, and includes a device designed, made or adapted for delivery or shooting an explosive weapon).
4. A machine gun (any firearm that is capable of shooting more than two shots automatically without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger).
5. A short-barrel firearm (rifle with a barrel length of less than 16 inches or a shotgun with a barrel length of less than 18 inches, or any weapon made from a rifle or shotgun that, as altered, has an overall length of less than 26 inches).
6. A switchblade knife (any knife with a blade that folds, closes, or retracts into the handle or sheath and that opens automatically by pressing a button or by the force of gravity or centrifugal force).
7. Knuckles (any instrument consisting of finger rings or guards made of a hard substance that is designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with a fist enclosed in the knuckles).
8. "Live" ammunition.
9. A chemical dispensing device (device other than a small chemical dispenser sold commercially for personal protection, that is designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of causing an adverse psychological or physiological effect on a human being).
10. A zip gun (a device or combination of devices that was not originally a firearm and is adapted to expel a projectile through a smooth-bore or rifled-bore barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance).
11. A club (an instrument specially designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with the instrument, including a blackjack, nightstick, mace, and tomahawk).
12. Fireworks, throwing stars, and other martial arts weapons are prohibited.

**No weapons of any kind, whether operable or not, are allowed in the residence halls.** College personnel may inspect lockers and cars parked on College premises if there is reasonable cause to believe they contain weapons.

## **PANOLA COLLEGE CAMPUS CARRY REGULATIONS**

### **Definitions:**

**Handgun** – any firearm that is designed, made, or adapted to be fired with one hand.

**Concealed Handgun** – the presence of a handgun is not openly discernible to the ordinary observation of a reasonable person.

1. Open carry of a handgun is NOT permitted by a license holder on Panola College owned or leased locations (including all buildings, driveways, streets, sidewalks or walkways, and parking areas of the institution) regardless of whether the handgun is holstered. Only licensed peace officers are authorized by law to open carry firearms on campus.
2. A license holder, under Chapter 411 of the Texas Government Code, may carry a concealed handgun while on Panola College owned or leased locations unless prohibited by state or federal law or by the exceptions described by the regulations.
3. A license holder will not be subject to prejudice for lawfully expressing the right to carry.
4. Panola College expects license holders to store lawfully the handgun when going to a place on campus where concealed carry is prohibited. The college will not provide general storage.

5. A license holder may be asked to show proof of license to a college police officer but no other college employee may ask to see the license.
6. A license holder may transport and store a concealed handgun in a locked, privately owned vehicle while on Panola College owned or leased locations.
7. A license holder who carries a concealed handgun on his or her person must secure the handgun in a holster that covers the trigger guard.
8. A license holder may not carry a handgun if he or she is intoxicated.
9. A license holder may not carry a handgun on the premises where a high school, collegiate, or professional sporting event or interscholastic event is taking place, unless the license holder is a participant in the event and a handgun is used in the event.
10. A license holder may not carry a handgun into a polling location on campus.
11. A license holder may not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly carry a handgun into the Sid B. Turner Memorial Chapel during a religious service.
12. The concealed carry of a handgun into formal disciplinary or appeals hearings is prohibited.
13. License holders who reside in or visit campus housing may carry a concealed handgun. Handguns must be either concealed on the license holder's person, stored in a locked vehicle, or stored in a locked safe inside the resident's room.
14. An employee of the college who is a license holder may store a handgun in a locked drawer in his or her assigned office.
15. These regulations will be enforced through the involvement of police in criminal infractions. Penalties may include a Class C citation and an offense report and/or arrest.
16. These regulations will be distributed widely to faculty, staff, and students through the college's website, The Pathfinder (student handbook), and faculty/staff handbooks.
17. Panola College will comply with the placement of required signage as described by Texas Government Code section 30.06.
18. An ad hoc committee appointed by the president may review these regulations based on requests filed by college departments.
19. The Panola College president may amend these rules as necessary for campus safety.

## **Scholastic Dishonesty**

Scholastic dishonesty shall include, but not be limited to cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion.

Cheating on a test shall include:

- a. Copying from another student's test
- b. Using test materials not authorized by the person administering the test
- c. Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test without permission from the test administrator
- d. Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, or soliciting, in whole or in part, the contents of an unadministered test.
- e. The unauthorized transporting or removal, in whole or in part, of the contents of the un-administered test.
- f. Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for one's self, to take a test.
- g. Bribing another person to obtain an un-administered test or information about an un-administered test.

Plagiarism shall be defined as the appropriating, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's own written work.

Collusion shall be defined as the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of course requirements.

Electronic Devices – Students should have all cell phones, MP3 players, and other electronic devices turned off at all times when in the classrooms, recital, computer lab piano lab, and library.

## **Searches**

The College respects the right of students to privacy and security against arbitrary invasion of their person or property. However, College officials have a limited right to search students or their property when in the interest of the overall welfare of other students or when necessary to preserve the good order and discipline of the school. Stolen items and items which are forbidden by Board policy or law may be impounded and may be used as evidence in internal College disciplinary proceedings against the student. [FLC]

## **Selling, Peddling or Soliciting on College-Controlled Property**

Unauthorized selling, peddling, or soliciting is prohibited by the College. Vendors who desire to offer their wares for sale on College-controlled property must obtain approval from the Vice President of Fiscal Affairs.

**Stealing** Any student who steals will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Unauthorized Entry**

Unauthorized entry into or use of College-controlled property is prohibited. Unauthorized entry will be turned over to the campus police and will be handled according to state or federal laws.

## **Unlawful Assembly**

Panola College recognizes that the freedom to assemble is indispensable in a College community that exists for the transmission of knowledge, the expression of ideas, the pursuit of truth, and the overall development of students. It is the College's responsibility and intention to be firm in establishing and enforcing reasonable rules and regulations to insure that such activities of students and non-students do not disrupt the normal and essential operations of this institution. Unlawful assembly is defined as the congregation by students or others on College-controlled property in doorways, hallways, classrooms, and other facilities so as to prevent students, faculty, or administrative officials from entering or leaving classes, offices, or any other facility. Preventing persons from pursuing their lawful occupation is a criminal violation of the statutes of Texas. Students who participate in such activities will be subject to disciplinary suspension and prosecution under the laws of Texas. Persons not connected with Panola College will be referred to the local law enforcement authorities for possible prosecution.

## **Violation of Law**

Arrest and/or conviction for violation of federal, state, or local law (either on or off College property) may result in disciplinary action where, in the judgment of the College officials, the individual represents a potential threat to the safety and security of the College community. The College reserves the right to refuse acceptance to prospective or former students who have criminal records including conviction of a felony, offenses involving moral turpitude, or other offenses of serious character.

# **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Members of the College community have the right to expect to be safe and secure in their persons and property. Conduct that, in the judgment of College officials, endangers the health, safety, or security of the College community, or of visitors, may subject the student to disciplinary action, including removal from College-controlled property.

## **Hoverboards/skateboards/spray paint**

The use, possession, storage, or charging of hoverboards/skateboards in College-owned or managed buildings is prohibited. The use of unsupervised spray painting is prohibited on the campus of Panola College.

## **Emergency Evacuation**

If the fire alarm sounds, students are to evacuate the building IMMEDIATELY, following the instructions below:

1. If your door is hot to the touch, DO NOT OPEN IT.
  - \*Roll up a towel and place it at the base of the door to prevent smoke penetration.
  - \*Go to the window and crawl through or crack it open. Stay there until help arrives. Do not jump from an upstairs window unless it is the last resort.

2. If the door is cool, open it slowly. Proceed down the hall to the nearest exit. If the hall is filled with smoke, stay low to the floor and crawl to the nearest emergency exit.

## Residence Hall Emergency Evacuation

When evacuating the Residence Halls, all residents will immediately proceed to the laundry parking lot to await further instruction.

## Emergency Illness or Accident

Panola College provides no health facilities for treatment of illness or injury. In the event of an emergency, the individual should go to the emergency room of the local hospital. For residents of the Residence Halls, if possible, notify the Residence Hall Supervisor. If an emergency occurs that requires local authorities, ambulance, or the fire department, call 9-1-1.

Police/Fire Ambulance	9-1-1
Campus Police	903-693-1112 903-693-1111
Residence Life Coordinator	903-693-1176 903-693-1103
Residence Life Cell Phone	281-748-3172

## Fire Fighting Equipment

Damage to, tampering with, unauthorized use, possession, or alteration of firefighting equipment (fire alarm boxes, fire extinguisher, smoke detectors, etc.) safety devices, exit signs, or campus security property is prohibited. Fire extinguishers are installed in all residence halls. If an extinguisher is maliciously discharged, a fee for refilling the extinguisher and for clean-up will be assessed and disciplinary action will be taken. Unauthorized use of the fire exits is prohibited by the fire code. Violations will be turned over to the Campus Police or City Fire Marshal to be handled according to public laws.

## Fire Prevention

Students should take responsibility to ensure Residence Halls are free of fire hazards. **Open flames such as candles, incense, matches, or lighters are prohibited due to their potential as fire hazards.** Irons and other appliances should never be left on when the room is unoccupied. Wall plugs that increase the available number of outlets are prohibited. Electrical outlets should not be overloaded. These items may be removed from student's rooms without notification. Items may be returned at the end of the semester in which they were found.

## Discipline and Penalties

When an employee of the College District receives information that a student has allegedly violated the standard of student conduct, a College District policy, or administrative rule, the lowest level Administrator shall investigate and confer with the student and may:

- 1) Dismiss the allegation or
- 2) Assess a sanction.

## Disciplinary Sanctions

- a. Formal warning: A formal notice, either written or verbal, that a violation has occurred and a future violation shall be dealt with more severely.
- b. Disciplinary probation: Implies that the individual's standing with the College District is in jeopardy and further negligent or willful violations shall normally result in suspension or expulsion.
- c. Withholding of grades, official transcripts, or degree to the extent permitted by FERPA (20 U.S.C. and 1232g).
- d. Restitution: Compensation for loss, damage, or injury to the appropriate party in the form of money, service, or material replacement
- e. A monetary fine
- f. Community Service: Performance of a specified number of hours or tasks designated to benefit the community and help the student understand why his or her behavior was inappropriate. This sanction shall be fulfilled whether on or off campus. On-campus service shall be in a designated department.

- g. Class or workshop attendance or education project: completion of a class or project that could help the student understand why his or her behavior was inappropriate.
- h. Removal from specific courses or activities.
- i. Restriction from entering specific College District areas and/or all forms of contact with certain persons.
- j. Suspension: Separation from the College District for a specified period of time or until certain conditions are met.
- k. Expulsion: Permanent separation from the College District.
- l. Revocation of degree or withdrawal of diploma.
- m. Additional sanctions as listed in *Residence Life Handbook* or as appropriate.

### **Emergency Suspension**

A Vice President or designee of the College President may take immediate disciplinary action, including suspension pending a hearing, against a student for policy violations if the continuing presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process.

### **Suspended Students**

No former student who has been suspended for disciplinary reasons from the College District shall be permitted on the campus or other facilities of the College District during the period of suspension without the prior written approval of the College President or a designated representative.

**NOTICE: The student will be informed of sanction(s) in writing and will be informed of the appeal process. If a student accepts the recommended sanction, he/she must sign a statement indicating understanding of the sanction and shall automatically waive all further rights to procedures for appeal.**

## **ACADEMIC AND DISCIPLINARY COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS**

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES: INFORMAL PROCESS**

The College District encourages students to discuss their concerns through informal conferences with the appropriate instructor or other campus administrator.

Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level. If an informal conference regarding a complaint fails to reach the outcome requested by the student, the student may initiate the formal process described below by timely filing a written complaint.

Even after initiating the formal complaint process, students are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns. A student whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time. The process described in this policy shall not be construed to create new or additional rights beyond those granted by law or Board policy, nor to require a full evidentiary hearing or “mini-trial” at any level.

Neither the Board nor any College District employee shall unlawfully retaliate against any student for bringing a concern or complaint.

This policy shall apply to all student complaints except as provided below.

**EXCEPTIONS:** This policy shall not apply to:

1. Complaints for forced withdrawal from developmental courses in accordance with state law.
2. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on race, color, gender, national origin, disability, or religion. [See FDE of the *Board Policy Manual*]
3. Complaints concerning retaliation relating to discrimination and harassment. [See FDE of the *Board Policy Manual*]
4. Complaints concerning a commissioned peace officer who is an employee of the College District. [See CHA of the *Board Policy Manual*]

Complaint forms may be filed by hand-delivery, fax, or U.S. mail. Hand-delivered filings shall be timely filed if received by the appropriate administrator or designee by the close of business on the deadline. Fax filings shall be timely filed if they are received on or before the deadline, as indicated by the date/time shown on the fax copy. Mail filings shall be timely filed if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline and received by the appropriate administrator or designated representative no more than three days after the deadline.

*At Levels One, Two, and Three “response” shall mean a written communication to the student from the appropriate administrator. Responses may be hand-delivered or sent by U.S. Mail to the student’s mailing address of record or sent electronically. Mailed responses shall be timely if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline.*

*“Days” shall mean College District business days. In calculating time lines under this policy, the day a document is filed is “day zero.” The following day is “day one.”*

*“Representative” shall mean any person or organization designated by the student to represent the student in the complaint process.*

*The student may designate a representative through written notice to the College District at any level of this process. If the student designates a representative with fewer than three days’ notice to the College District before a scheduled conference or hearing, the College District may reschedule the conference or hearing to a later date, if desired, in order to include the College District’s counsel. The College District may be represented by counsel at any level of the process.*

Complaints arising out of an event or a series of related events shall be addressed in one complaint. A student shall not bring separate or serial complaints arising from any event or series of events that have been or could have been addressed in a previous complaint.

All time limits shall be strictly followed unless modified by mutual written consent.

If a complaint form is not timely filed, the complaint may be dismissed, on written notice to the student, at any point during the process. The student may appeal the dismissal by seeking review in writing within three business days from the date of the written dismissal notice, starting at the level at which the complaint was dismissed. Such appeal shall be limited to the issue of timeliness.

Each party shall pay its own costs incurred in the course of the complaint.

Complaints under this policy shall be submitted in writing on a form provided by the College District.

Copies of any documents that support the complaint should be attached to the complaint form. If the student does not have copies of these documents, copies may be presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted by the student unless the student did not know the documents existed before the Level One conference.

A complaint form that is incomplete in any material aspect may be dismissed, but may be re-filed with all the required information if the re-filing is within the designated time for filing a complaint.

## **FORMAL COMPLAINT/APPEALS PROCESS:**

### **LEVEL 1: FILE A FORMAL COMPLAINT OR APPEAL WITH THE EMPLOYEE/INSTRUCTOR**

A student wishing to file a formal academic or disciplinary complaint or appeal shall use the form provided by the College District (Student Complaint/Appeal form). The form shall be filed with the instructor or employee involved no later than five days after the complaint or receipt of the disputed grade or discipline. If the complaint is not filed with the appropriate administrator/employee, the receiving administrator/employee must note the date and time the complaint form was received, and immediately forward the complaint form to the appropriate administrator.

The appropriate administrator shall investigate as necessary and hold a conference with the student within three business days after receipt of the written complaint. The administrator may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

The administrator shall provide the student a written response within three business days following the conference. The written response shall set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the administrator may consider information provided at the Level One conference and any relevant documents or information the administrator believes will help resolve the complaint.

**LEVEL 2: APPEAL TO DEAN OR VICE-PRESIDENT OF STUDENT SERVICES:** If the student did not receive the relief requested at Level One or if the time for a response has expired, the student may request a conference with the appropriate dean or Vice President to appeal the Level One decision.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the District, within three business days of the date of the written Level One response or, if no response was received, within three business days of the Level One response deadline.

After receiving notice of the appeal, the Level One administrator shall prepare and forward a record of the Level One appeal to the Level Two administrator. The student may request a copy of the Level One record.

The Level One record shall include:

1. The original complaint form and any attachments.
2. All other documents submitted by the student at Level One.
3. The written response issued at Level One and any attachments.
4. All other documents relied upon by the Level One administrator in reaching the Level One decision.

The Level Two administrator shall hold a conference within three business days after the appeal notice is filed. The conference shall be limited to the issues presented by the student at Level One and identified in the Level Two appeal notice. At the conference, the student may provide information concerning any documents or information presented at Level One. The Level Two administrator may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

The Level Two administrator shall provide the student a written response within three business days following the conference. The written response shall set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the Level Two administrator may consider the Level One record, information provided at the Level Two conference, and any other relevant documents or information the Level Two administrator believes will help resolve the complaint.

Recordings of the Level One and Level Two conferences, if any, shall be maintained with the Level One and Level Two records.

**LEVEL 3: APPEAL TO APPEALS COMMITTEE:** If the student did not receive the relief requested at Level Two or if the time for a response has expired, the student may request an appeal hearing from the appropriate vice president to appeal the Level Two decision.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the College District, within three business days of the date of the written Level Two response or, if no response was received, within three business days of the Level Two response deadline.

After receiving notice of the appeal, the Level Two administrator shall prepare and forward a record of the Level Two complaint to the Level Three administrator. The student may request a copy of the Level Two record.

The Level Two record shall include:

1. The Level One record.
2. The written response issued at Level Two and any attachments.
3. All other documents presented at Level Two.

The Level Three administrator shall convene an appeals committee within three business days after the appeal notice is filed. The conference shall be limited to the issues presented by the student at Level One and identified in the Level Three appeal notice. At the conference, the student may provide information concerning any documents or information relied on by the administration for the Level Two decision. The Level Three administrator may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

The Level Three administrator shall provide the student a written response within three business days following the conference. The written response shall set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the appeals committee may consider the Level One and Level Two record, information provided at the Level Three conference, and any other relevant documents or information the Level Three administrator believes will help resolve the complaint.

Recordings of the Level One, Level Two, and Level Three conferences, if any, shall be maintained with the Level One, Level Two, and Level Three records.

The Appeals Committee shall consist of three instructors, one from each division (Academic, Technical, and Health Science) appointed biennially by the Vice President of Instruction, one administrator appointed by the College President, and one student appointed by the Vice President of Student Services. The chair will be designated by the Vice President of Instruction.

The chairperson of the appeals committee shall be given the written appeal from LEVEL 1/LEVEL 2 and shall set the time for the committee to hear the appeal. The hearing shall be conducted on the College District campus and attended only by those persons authorized by the chair of the appeals committee.

**NOTICE:** The chair of the appeals committee shall notify the student of the date, time, and place for the hearing. The notification shall advise the student of his/her rights:

1. To have an advisor present at the hearing (the person may not present the case, question witnesses, or address the committee)
2. To call witnesses and request copies of evidence
3. To have the hearing tape recorded
4. To ask questions of each witness
5. In the case of Disciplinary appeal:
  - a. to have the complaint described in sufficient detail to enable the student to prepare a defense
  - b. to have the disciplinary sanction restated.

**PROCEDURE:** The appeals hearing shall proceed as follows:

1. The chair shall inform the student of his/her rights.
2. The chair shall read the student's request for formal review, and the appeal from the form used at LEVEL 2.
3. The designated official(s) shall present the College District's case.
4. The student shall present his or her appeal. No additional documents may be presented other than those used at Level 1 and Level 2 unless the student did not know they existed.
5. Either side may offer rebuttal and any member of the committee may ask questions.
6. The appeals committee will take the matter under advisement in closed session (without student and officials present)
7. The committee shall decide whether an error was made in calculating a grade or whether the student is guilty or innocent of a charge (such as cheating, or possession of drugs). The decision shall be determined by a majority vote of the committee and they may take the matter under advisement for 24 hours before rendering a decision.
8. The chair of the academic appeals committee shall inform the student and the appropriate Vice President in writing as to the decision of the committee. The Vice President will inform the involved employees of the decision.

**EVIDENCE:** Evidence shall be handled according to the following:

1. Legal rules of evidence do not apply; the committee chair may admit evidence that is commonly accepted by reasonable persons in the conduct of their affairs. The chair may exclude irrelevant, immaterial, and unduly repetitious evidence.
2. At the hearing, the College district shall be required to prove by a preponderance of the evidence that the charges are true. This is known as the greater weight of the credible evidence, not reasonable doubt as in criminal cases.
3. A student shall not be compelled to testify.
4. The appeals committee shall decide the issue to uphold or deny the student request solely on the basis of the evidence presented at the hearing.
5. A tape recording shall be made of the hearing. If needed for an appeal, transcripts will be made at the written request of the student or the College. The cost shall be borne by the one requesting the transcription.

**LEVEL 4: APPEAL TO THE COLLEGE PRESIDENT:** Within three business days of receiving notice of the committee's decision, either or both parties may petition in writing the College President (Level Four) to review the decision. The petition(s) shall state with particularity why the decision is believed to be incorrect or unfair. The College President will hold a conference with the involved parties to discuss the appeal.

Within five business days of receiving the petition, the College President may act to affirm, modify, remand, or reverse the decision. If no action is taken within five business days, the committee's decision will thereby be affirmed and final.





**Panola College  
STUDENT  
COMPLAINT/APPEAL FORM**

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Student email: \_\_\_\_\_@students.panola.edu

Date of Occurrence: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Appeal:  Disciplinary sanction

Course (specify course or department)

Describe situation (may use additional pages):

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State what remedy you are requesting:

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**Appeals at all levels will be limited to the information on this form and original attachments**

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student

Student Name:

ID#:

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## Progression of Student Grievance

**Note: To persons handling this form, please ensure student response in shaded boxes at each level.**

LEVEL 1: Instructor/Employee	Received by:	Date:
Student has <b>5 days</b> to appeal to Level 2	<i>*Student wishes to receive response letter</i> Via: <input type="checkbox"/> email <input type="checkbox"/> certified letter <input type="checkbox"/> pickup	Student Initials: _____ Date:
	Written Response sent by:	Date: Via: <input type="checkbox"/> email <input type="checkbox"/> certified letter <input type="checkbox"/> pickup
	Student Response: <input type="checkbox"/> Resolved <input type="checkbox"/> Progress to LEVEL 2	Student Initials: _____ Date:
LEVEL 2: Department Chair/Division Dean	Received by:	Date:
Student has <b>3 days</b> to appeal to Level 3	<i>*Student wishes to receive response letter</i> Via: <input type="checkbox"/> email <input type="checkbox"/> certified letter <input type="checkbox"/> pickup	Student Initials: _____ Date:
	Written Response sent by:	Date: Via: <input type="checkbox"/> email <input type="checkbox"/> certified letter <input type="checkbox"/> pickup
	Student Response: <input type="checkbox"/> Resolved <input type="checkbox"/> Progress to LEVEL 3	Student Initials: _____ Date:
LEVEL 3: Vice President /Appeals Committee	Received by:	Date:
Student or faculty has	<i>*Student wishes to receive response letter</i> Via: <input type="checkbox"/> email <input type="checkbox"/> certified letter <input type="checkbox"/> pickup	Student Initials: _____ Date:
	Written Response sent by:	Date: Via: <input type="checkbox"/> email <input type="checkbox"/> certified letter <input type="checkbox"/> pickup
3 days Appeal to Level4	Student Response: <input type="checkbox"/> Resolved <input type="checkbox"/> Progress to LEVEL 4	Student Initials: Date:
<b>LEVEL 4: College President</b>	Received by:	Date:
	<i>*Student wishes to receive response letter</i> Via: <input type="checkbox"/> email <input type="checkbox"/> certified letter <input type="checkbox"/> pickup	Student Initials: _____ Date:
No further appeal	Written Response sent by:	Date: Via: <input type="checkbox"/> email <input type="checkbox"/> certified letter <input type="checkbox"/> pickup

\*By initialing, the student agrees to the three day time frame from the date the letter is sent via email, or the date the certified letter is signed for.

Days shall mean College District business days. In calculating time lines under this policy, the day a document is filed is "day zero". The following day is "day one".

## **Appendix:**

Panola College is required by federal and state law to provide the following information on certain diseases, the Panola College Alcohol and Drug Policy, and campus safety to all incoming students.

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT BACTERIAL MENINGITIS**

This information is being provided to all new College students in the state of Texas. Bacterial Meningitis is a serious, potentially deadly disease that can progress extremely fast – so take utmost caution. It is an inflammation of the membranes that surround the brain and spinal cord. The bacteria that causes meningitis can also infect the blood. This disease strikes about 3,000 Americans each year, including 100-125 on College campuses, leading to 5-15 deaths among College students every year. There is a treatment, but those who survive may develop severe health problems or disabilities.

#### **WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?**

- High fever
- Lethargy
- Stiff neck
- Rash or purple patches on skin
- Severe headache
- Nausea
- Light sensitivity
- Vomiting
- Seizures
- Confusion and sleepiness

There may be a rash of tiny red-purple spots caused by bleeding under the skin. These can occur anywhere on the body.

The more symptoms, the higher the risk, so when these symptoms appear, seek immediate medical attention.

#### **HOW IS BACTERIAL MENINGITIS DIAGNOSED?**

- Diagnosis is made by a medical provider and is usually based on a combination of clinical symptoms and laboratory results from spinal fluid and blood tests.

Early diagnosis and treatment can greatly improve the likelihood of recovery.

#### **HOW IS THE DISEASE TRANSMITTED?**

- The disease is transmitted when people exchange saliva (such as by kissing, or by sharing drinking containers, utensils, cigarettes, toothbrushes, etc.) or come in contact with respiratory or throat secretions.

#### **WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF THE DISEASE?**

- Death (in 8 to 24 hours from perfectly well to dead)
- Gangrene
- Permanent brain damage
- Coma
- Kidney failure
- Convulsions
- Learning disability
- Limb damage (fingers, toes, arms, legs) that requires amputation
- Hearing loss, blindness

#### **CAN THE DISEASE BE TREATED?**

- Antibiotic treatment, if received early, can save lives, and chances of recovery are increased. However, permanent disability or death can still occur.
- Vaccinations are available and should be considered for:
- Those living in close quarters.

- College students twenty-nine years old or younger.
- Vaccinations are effective against four of the five most common bacterial types that cause 70% of the disease in the U. S. (but do not protect against all types of meningitis).
- Vaccinations take seven-ten days to become effective, with protection lasting three-five years.
- The cost of vaccine varies so check with your health care provider.
- Vaccination is very safe – most common side effects are redness and minor pain at the injection site for up to two days.
- Vaccination may be available at your health care provider or local or regional Texas Department of Health office.

**HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION?**

- Contact your own health care provider.
- Contact your local or regional Texas Department of Health office at 903-693-9322 (Carthage).
- Contact websites: [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo) or [www.acha.org](http://www.acha.org)

Source: Chapter 51, Education Code, Section 51.9191; Chapter 38, Education Code, Section 38.0025.  
Senate Bill 31; Fall 2001.