PVAMU students have rights that are to be respected. The following student rights and responsibilities are intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which all University student rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which are inherent to an individual not only as a student at Prairie View A&M University but also as a citizen of this country.

**Student Rights**

**ARTICLE I.** Each student has the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and no University rule or regulation or administrative policy should abridge the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the United States Constitution.

**ARTICLE II.** Each student shall be treated on an equal basis, free from illegal discrimination, including harassment, in all areas and activities of the University regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, veteran status, sexual orientation or disabilities.

**ARTICLE III.** A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.

**ARTICLE IV.** Each student shall be free from disciplinary actions by University officials for violations of civil and criminal law off campus, except when such a violation is determined to also be a violation of the provision regarding conduct in the Code of Student Conduct or University regulations.

**ARTICLE V.** Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from substantive violations of University student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process. At all student conduct hearings, an accused student shall be assumed not responsible until proven responsible, and in initial conduct hearings, the burden of proof shall rest with those bringing the charges.

**Student Responsibilities**

**ARTICLE I.** A student accepts the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, guests, faculty and administrators.

**ARTICLE II.** A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published student guidelines, rules and current Code of Student Conduct and to comply with the regulations and the laws of Prairie View A&M University, the Texas A&M University System, the state and the nation.

**ARTICLE III.** A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individual involved and upon the entire University community.

**ARTICLE IV.** A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide a safe environment for living and learning.

**ARTICLE V.** Students using or working in campus facilities during the course of their studies, activities or employment are responsible for becoming familiar with and following all safety procedures.
Code of Student Conduct

ADMINISTRATION OF STUDENT CONDUCT

A. Student Discipline  The Vice President for Student Affairs and Institutional Relations reports to the President of the University and is the senior University administrator responsible for the management and enforcement of the Code of Student Conduct. The Associate Vice President for Student Affairs reports to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Institutional Relations and may take immediate interim disciplinary action when he/she believes the presence of a student on campus poses a continuing danger to persons or property or presents a threat of disrupting the University environment. If the Associate Vice President should take such action, a student conduct hearing will be scheduled as soon thereafter as possible.

Authority is delegated to the senior student conduct administrator, who reports to the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs, to investigate, consistent with rules and regulations, violations of the Code of Student Conduct and after thorough review, render decisions that are consistent with approved disciplinary actions. The senior student conduct administrator shall determine the composition of the Student Conduct Hearing Board and determine who is authorized to hear each case.

B. Conduct Standards  Rules and regulations at the University are set forth in writing to give students general notice of prohibited conduct. They should be read broadly and are not designed to define prohibited conduct in exhaustive terms. Regulations may also be found in other University publications, such as the catalog, residential lease agreements and posted dining hall policies. When changes are necessary, they will be written, approved and the updated documents will be posted on the Student Affairs Website.

Violation of any municipal ordinance, law of the state of Texas or law of the United States may result in disciplinary action. Any disciplinary action imposed by the University may precede and may be in addition to any penalty that is imposed by any off-campus authority.

C. Due Process  Procedures and rights in student conduct proceedings are conducted with fairness to all, but do not include the same protections of due process afforded by the courts. Due process, within these procedures, assures:

1. written notice;
2. a hearing before an objective decision maker;
3. a finding that the PVAMU Code of Student Conduct was violated will not be made without information showing that it is more likely than not that a policy violation occurred; and
4. sanctions will be proportionate to the severity of the violation.

D. Awareness of Policies  Every student, including those who are participating in any program that is University-sponsored, on or off campus, must abide by the rules and regulations governing student conduct. The rules and regulations listed here are available on the Office of Student Affairs webpage or by contacting the Office of Student Conduct.

E. Jurisdiction of the Code of Student Conduct  The PVAMU Code of Student Conduct shall apply to conduct that occurs on the University premises, at PVAMU-sponsored activities, and to off-campus conduct that adversely affects the University community or the pursuit of its objectives. Each student shall be responsible for his/her conduct from the time of application for admission through the actual awarding of a degree, even though conduct may occur before classes begin or after classes end, as well as during the academic year and during periods between terms of actual enrollment. The Code of Student Conduct shall apply to a student’s conduct even if the student withdraws from school while a disciplinary matter is pending. A student conduct administrator shall determine whether the Code of Student Conduct shall be applied to conduct occurring off-campus, on a case by case basis.

F. Notification of Outcomes  The outcome of an administrative hearing or a student conduct board hearing is part of the educational record of the accused student, and is protected from release under federal law, FERPA. However, Prairie View A&M University observes the legal exceptions as follows:

1. Complainants in non-consensual sexual contact/intercourse incidents have an absolute right to be informed of the outcome and sanctions of the hearing and any subsequent appeals, in writing, without condition or limitation.
2. Complainants in sexual exploitation/sexual harassment complaints have a right to be informed of information regarding sanctions that personally identifies and is directly pertinent to them, such as the imposition of a restriction on physical contact between the complainant and the accused student. Otherwise, information on the outcome and sanction cannot be shared.
3. Prairie View A&M may release publicly the name, nature of the violation and the sanction for any student who is found in violation of a PVAMU policy that is a non-forcible sex offense or a “crime of violence,” including: arson, burglary, robbery, criminal homicide, sex offenses, assault, destruction/damage/vandalism of property and kidnapping/abduction. PVAMU may release this information to the complainant in any of these offenses regardless of the outcome, but complainants are cautioned that FERPA does not permit them to re-release this information to others.
4. The University may, in its discretion, send notice or copies of disciplinary documents to the parents or legal guardians of students involved in disciplinary matters. The University may also contact parents or legal guardians of students involved in alcohol or drug violations if the student is under 21 at the time of the violation.

G. Auxiliary Aids and Services  Student with disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act requiring special accommodations should notify the Office of Student Conduct and the Office of Disability Services in writing at least three (3) calendar days prior to scheduled hearing.

H. Definition of Terms Applied to the Code of Student Conduct

1. Accused Student: any student accused of allegedly violating this Code of Student Conduct.
2. Alleged: according to allegation, or to assert without proof.
3. Appeal: to request a review of a disciplinary decision.
4. Business Day: the official operating hours of the University, usually from 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday.
5. Campus, University or Institution: Prairie View A&M University has a main campus located in Prairie View, Texas, and other locations, including the Northwest Houston Center and the College of Nursing.
6. Complainant: any person who submits a charge alleging that a student violated this Code of Student Conduct. When a student believes that she/he has been a victim of another student’s misconduct, the student who believes she/he is a victim will have the same rights under this Code of Student Conduct as are provided to the complainant, even if another member of the community submitted the charge itself.
7. Disciplinary Actions: the proceedings that are used to determine if the Code of Student Conduct has been violated.
8. Disciplinary Hold: A hold placed on a student’s record preventing any enrollment activity. To clear this hold, students must contact the Office of Student Conduct. Students may be required to submit evidence supporting their ability to function properly in a university environment.
9. **FERPA**: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 is a federal regulation that guarantees students or their parents access to all educational records that pertain to them and protects the privacy of these records. Upon reaching the age of 18 or enrolling in an institution of higher education, the student is the primary owner of the record. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. Students are entitled to inspect and review their own educational records as well as to request that the school correct records they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. Students may waive their rights under FERPA through a signed document and can rescind the waiver of those rights at any time. This form is available by contacting the Office of the Registrar.

10. **Good Standing**: refers to a student who is not presently under a penalty - suspension or expulsion - as a result of violating the Code of Student Conduct.

11. **Group**: a number of persons who are associated with one another and operate as an organization but who have not complied with University requirements for registration as an official University organization.

12. **Organization**: a number of persons who have complied with University requirements for registration as a recognized student organization.

13. **Paraphernalia**: any object that contains the residue of alcohol or an illegal drug or any object that is used in the consumption or distribution of an illegal drug.
   a. Examples include but are not limited to: a beer pong and empty alcoholic containers;
   b. marijuana pipes, bongs or blow tubes;
   c. scales used in measuring quantities of an illegal drug; or plastics bags used to package prescription or manufactured pills or other illegal drugs.

14. **Published Policies**: all University rules and regulations, policies and procedures produced as a result of approval of The Texas A&M University Board of Regents or President of the University.

15. **Records**: all evidence produced as a written statement, a document or a report, or produced as a result of a tape recording or computer entry.

16. **Referral**: an official written or verbal request made by a University official to report to the Office of Student Conduct or other offices.

17. **Sanctions**: any penalty that is determined to be an appropriate and just response to violations of the Code of Student Conduct.

18. **Student**: any person admitted to the University, pursuing undergraduate, graduate or professional studies, whether full-time or part-time and who is either currently enrolled, was enrolled the previous semester or who registered for a future semester. This could include students who have been placed on suspension or academic probation, or who have been dismissed from the University.

19. **Student Conduct Hearing Board**: a group authorized to determine whether a student has violated the Code of Student Conduct and to recommend sanctions that may be imposed when a violation has been committed.

20. **Temporary Sanctions**: any interim penalty that is determined to be an appropriate and just response to violations of the Code of Student Conduct. Temporary sanctions are effective immediately without prior notice.

21. **University**: Prairie View A&M University, PVAMU, PV or Prairie View.

22. **University Official**: any administrator, faculty member, staff, including community assistants, learning community coordinators, graduate assistants or other authorized individuals employed by the University.

23. **University Premises**: buildings or grounds owned, leased, operated, controlled or supervised by the University.

24. **University Property**: possessions that are within the control, possession, use or ownership of the University.

25. **University-Sponsored Activity**: any activity on or off campus that is initiated, aided, authorized or supervised by the University.

26. **Weapon**: any object or substance designed to inflict a wound, cause injury, or incapacitate, including, but not limited to, all fire arms, pellet guns, knives, razors, paint ball guns, clubs, brass knuckles and explosives.

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**PROHIBITED CONDUCT**

The following are examples of prohibited conduct. This list is not designed to be all-inclusive or exhaustive. Any student found to have committed or to have attempted to commit the following misconduct is subject to the disciplinary sanctions outlined in this document.

A. **Acts of Dishonesty** include but are not limited to:
   1. Cheating, Plagiarism or Other Forms of Academic Dishonesty
   2. Furnishing False Information to any University Official, Faculty Member or Office
   3. Forgery, Alteration or Misuse of any University Document, Record or Instrument of Identification: Includes signing of another student's name, using another student's identification card (Panther Card), credit card, or other personal documents, affixing the signature of a University official to any document circumventing the procedural process of the University or gaining an unfair advantage.
   4. Misuse of Student Identification Card and Meal Card: University-issued identification may be required to enter the dining hall or other designated facilities and events. This identification must be used by the person to whom it is issued, is non-transferable and must be used for the purpose for which it was issued. Students are not allowed to use another student's identification card (Panther Card) for any reason. If your card is lost or stolen, report it to the Prairie View A&M University Department of Public Safety and the Office of Auxiliary Services immediately. Students are required to present their identification card (Panther Card) when it is requested by any University Official.

B. **Alcoholic Beverage Violations** include drinking or having in possession any alcoholic beverage in any University-owned or leased facility, on its grounds not approved for such activity. PVAMU has zero tolerance for students using alcoholic beverages on campus. The possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages is controlled by state statues, city ordinances and University regulations. All members of the University community are expected to obey these laws and regulations. The University desires to provide an environment where driving while intoxicated or alcohol consumption by underage students is neither encouraged nor made available.

C. **Breaching Campus Safety or Security** includes but is not limited to:
   1. Unauthorized access to University facilities or unauthorized possession of, use of or duplication of master keys or access cards to University offices or residential facilities; and unauthorized occupancy of or entry into locked or off-limit University buildings. This includes burglary and trespassing. No propping open exterior residence facility doors is allowed.
   2. Tampering with fire alarms, extinguishers and emergency safety systems. This includes tampering with any emergency system, pulling alarms, using extinguishers and covering smoke detectors, all of which are prohibited.
   3. Obstruction of the free flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic on University premises or at University-sponsored or supervised functions.

D. **Destroying, Damaging or Littering on University, State or Personal Property** is prohibited.

E. **Disorderly Conduct, Inciting Riots and Disturbances** includes but is not limited to conduct (physical, verbal, graphic, written, digital or electronic) that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive so as to threaten an individual or limit the ability of an individual to work, study or participate in activities of the University. All students are required to exhibit good behavior and the highest moral standards are expected at all times to ensure an atmosphere of proper decorum and respect for the University community and its inhabitants.
F. Disruptive Activity that interferes with teaching, research, administration, disciplinary proceedings, other University missions, processes or functions including public-service functions, or other University activities is prohibited.

Disruptive activities may include but are not limited to:
1. Any act that deliberately interferes with the academic freedom or the freedom of speech of any member or guest of the University community.
2. Classroom behavior that seriously interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program. (see Civility in the Classroom)
3. Leading or inciting others to disrupt scheduled or normal activities on University premises.
4. Conduct that is disorderly, lewd or indecent.

G. Endangerment. PVAMU has zero tolerance for physical abuse.
1. Physical violence toward another person or group.
2. Action(s) that endanger the health, safety or welfare of self or others.
3. Interference with the freedom of another person or group to move about in a lawful manner.
4. No student shall threaten or intimidate any member of the University community. If at any time students feel threatened or intimidated, they should report the incident to the proper authorities.

H. Explosives, Fire Arms or Weapons possession, storage or display on campus, or at activities sponsored by the University is prohibited, including explosives, pistols, revolvers, rifles, shotguns, bb or pellet guns, slingshOTS, martial arts devices, knives, clubs or any missile projecting weapon. Facsimiles and dancing canes may not be used in a manner that is injurious or dangerous to others. If you are aware of someone in possession of a prohibited item and have not reported it to the proper authorities, you are also in violation of the Code of Student Conduct.

I. Failure to Appear for a University conduct proceeding, to respond to allegations or to appear as a witness when reasonably notified to do so is unacceptable. This includes conduct hearings, University investigations and appeal hearings.

J. False Reporting includes, but is not limited to, intentionally making a false warning of fire, explosion, bomb threat or other emergency when no emergency is present.

K. Gambling of any kind is strictly forbidden on campus, at University-sponsored activities or in any vehicle retained by the University to transport students to and from a University-related event.

L. Harassment is conduct (physical, verbal, graphic, written or electronic) that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to threaten an individual or limit the ability of an individual to work, study or participate in the activities of the University. Harassment of employees or students violates an individual’s rights and is inconsistent with the University’s policies of equal employment and academic opportunity without regard to age, sex, sexual orientation, alienage or citizenship, religion, race, color, national or ethnic origin, disability, veteran or marital status.

1. Sexual Harassment: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, submission to which is a condition of a person’s exercise or enjoyment of any right, privilege, power or immunity, either explicitly or implicitly. Sexual harassment may range from unthinking, intentional and sometimes unintended verbal denigration of a person on the basis of any physical or mental condition or capability. Examples of sexual harassment are: offensive sexual flirtations, advances or pressure for sexual activity, unwanted touching, pinching or unnecessary brushes; unwanted exposure to sexual graffiti, photographs or suggestive objects; sexual innuendoes or statements made at inappropriate times or disguised as humor or obscene gestures; disparaging remarks about one’s gender or any offensive or abusive physical contact.

2. Racial and Ethnic Harassment: any repeated conduct that is directed at a person or group of persons because of race, color, ethnicity or national origin. Even if the actions are not directed at specific persons, a hostile environment can be created when the conduct is severe, persistent or pervasive as to substantially interfere with the person’s education, work or activities on campus.

3. Stalking: nonconsensual communication, including face-to-face, telephone calls, voice messages, electronic mail, written letters/notes, unwanted gifts, etc.

4. Retaliation: harassment of a complainant or other person alleging misconduct, including, but not limited to, intimidation and threats.

M. Hazing is defined as prohibited acts committed for the purpose of initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in a group or organization; or as part of any activity of a recognized student organization or student group. Prohibited behavior includes any act that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student, that destroys or removes public or private property; performing personal chores or errands, discomfort that may demean, disgrace or degrade a person regardless of location, intent or consent of participation, and assisting, directing, or in any way causing others to participate in degrading behavior and behavior that causes ridicule, humiliation or embarrassment; engaging in conduct that tends to bring the reputation of the organization, group or University into disrepute for the purpose of initiation or admission into, affiliation with, or confirming any for affiliation or continued membership in a student organization regardless of an individual’s consent to participate in the activity.

Previously relied upon “traditions,” (including any other group or organization activity, practice or tradition) intent of such acts, or coercion by current or former members of such groups or former students will not suffice as a justifiable reason for participation in such acts. It is not a defense that the person (or group) against whom the hazing was directed consented to, or acquiesced to, the behavior in question. The actions of either active or associate members (pledges) of an organization may be considered hazing.

Examples of such behavior include but are not limited to:
• Misuse of authority by virtue of one’s class rank or leadership position
• Striking another student by hand or with any instrument
• Any form of physical bondage of a student
• Taking of a student to an outlying area and dropping him/her off
• Forcing a student into a violation of the law or a University rule, such as indecent exposure, trespassing, violation of visitation, etc.
• Having firsthand knowledge of the planning of such activities or firsthand knowledge that an incident of this type has occurred and failing to report it to appropriate University officials is also a violation under this section.

The hazing rule is not intended to prohibit the following conduct:

a. Customary public athletic events, contests or competitions that are sponsored by the University or the organized and supervised practices associated with such events; or

b. Any activity or conduct that furthers the goals of a legitimate educational curriculum, a legitimate extracurricular program or a legitimate military training program as defined and approved by the University.

Hazing is also a violation of Texas state law. See the Texas Education Code, sections 37.151 and 51.936 and Appendix C

N. Hindering, Obstructing or Interfering with the implementation of the Code of Student Conduct is prohibited.

O. Illegal Drugs and Controlled Substances including manufacturing, possessing, having under control, selling, transmitting, use or being party thereto to any illegal, unprescribed or dangerous drug, controlled substance or drug paraphernalia on University premises or in University-sponsored activities is prohibited.

P. Insubordination includes failure to comply with oral or written instruction from duly authorized University officials acting within the scope of their job duties or law enforcement officers acting in performance of their duties.
Q. Loitering on University-owned or controlled property, including buildings and parking lots is prohibited. Loitering on University premises is defined as lingering idly or aimlessly in any area of the campus without official authority. Hanging around in clusters or wandering aimlessly about campus (especially around residence halls and parking lots) in such a manner as to block the egress to and from buildings, disrupt the flow of traffic or create or cause unusually loud and disturbing noises, between the hours of 11 pm and 6 am in violation of the Code of Student Conduct. The University Police Department will respond to loitering complaints and request that the offending behavior desist. Persons refusing to cooperate or repeatedly loitering will be cited for violation of the loitering policy and reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Offenders will be subject to disciplinary action.

R. Misuse of Computing Resources through Failure to Comply with Laws, Copyrights, License Agreements, and Contracts Governing Network, Phone, Software and Hardware. Use is prohibited. Abuse of the University computer use policy includes but is not limited to:

1. Any use deemed commercial or for-profit.
2. Any use that likely, intentionally or negligently causes unauthorized network disruption, system failure, or data corruption including failure to protect your password or use of your account.
3. Any use related to achieving, enabling or hiding unauthorized access to network resources, PVAMU-owned software or other information belonging to PVAMU, either within or outside the PVAMU network.
4. Any use related to sending/receiving electronic mail that includes, but is not limited to, the following: solicitation or commercial use, forging any portion of an electronic mail message, spamming (bulk unsolicited e-mail), sending unwanted messages to unwilling recipients, or invasion of privacy. Additionally, willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cellphones and other electronic or digital devices is prohibited. It can be referred to as “cyber bullying,” “electronic bullying,” “e-bullying,” “sms bullying,” “mobile bullying,” “online bullying,” “digital bullying” or “Internet bullying.”
5. Use of another individual’s identification; network, e-mail or other university based account; or related passwords. Including charging any long distance telephone calls or messages to any telephone on University premises or University-related premises without proper authorization.
6. Unauthorized transfer or entry into a file, to read, use or change the contents; or for any other reason.
7. Use of computing facilities or network resources to send obscene, harassing, threatening messages or computer viruses or worms.
8. Any use that violates Prairie View A&M University policies, procedures and contractual agreements.
9. Any use that violates local, state or federal laws.
10. Illegal downloading, file sharing and digital piracy is prohibited. All of these activities are a violation of the Code of Student Conduct and students will be held accountable. These unethical acts are considered theft as well as a violation of our network policies. Students involved could lose network privileges, face disciplinary sanctions and may be held criminally liable.

S. Off-Campus Misconduct. When a student is alleged to have violated this Code of Student Conduct by an offense committed away from University premises, the University reserves the right to investigate and adjudicate. The University may take action in situations occurring off University premises involving: student misconduct demonstrating flagrant disregard for any person or persons; or when a student’s behavior is judged to threaten the health, safety or property of any individual or group; or any other activity that adversely affects the University community or the pursuit of its Code of Student Conduct objectives. This action may be taken for either affiliated or non-affiliated activities.

T. Providing False or Misleading Information includes:

1. Lying, deceiving or furnishing false or misleading information for the purpose of causing another person or University official to act or refrain from acting. This includes giving a false address or failure to maintain a current mailing address.
2. Forgery, alteration or misuse of any document, record, material, file or instrument of identification, including falsification of University records.
3. Deliberately or purposefully providing false or misleading verbal or written information about another person that results in damage to the person’s reputation.

U. Selling and Soliciting by an individual, group or organization acting as a vendor, sales agent or in any manner set up a business enterprise on University premises without the permission of the Assistant Vice President of Auxiliary Enterprises is prohibited. To safeguard privacy and prevent exploitation, no room-to-room solicitation is permitted in residential facilities.

V. Sexual Misconduct is any act of a sexual nature perpetrated against an individual without consent or when an individual is unable to freely give consent regardless of personal relationship.

1. Sexual Assault and Rape: sexual assault is the oral, anal or vaginal penetration by sexual organ of another or anal/vaginal penetration by any means against the victim’s will or without his/her consent. An individual who is mentally incapacitated, unconscious or unaware that the sexual assault is occurring is considered unable to give consent. The type of force employed may involve physical force, coercion, intentional impairment of an individual’s ability to appraise the situation through the administering of any substance or threat of harm to the victim.
2. Sexual Abuse: attempting or making sexual contact, including, but not limited to, inappropriate touching or fondling against the person’s will, or in circumstances where the person is physically, mentally or legally unable to give consent.

W. Theft or unauthorized removal or stealing of public or private property or unauthorized use or acquisition of services on University premises or at University-sponsored activities is prohibited. This includes knowingly possessing stolen property.

X. Unauthorized Use of University Name or Likeness by students is prohibited. Permission must be obtained, in writing, from the Office of Public Relations to use any of the University branding images. Use without permission constitutes misrepresentation of the University and may equate to fraud.

Y. Violation of Any Federal, State or Local Law

Z. Violation of Published University Rules includes but is not limited to lease agreements, parking rules and regulations, rules relating to the use of student identification cards, entry and use of University facilities and dining hall conduct.

AA. Violation of Residential Hall Policies published in the Residential Lease Agreement is prohibited.

BB. Visitors or Guests of students must adhere to the Code of Student Conduct and University policies. In instances where guests violate rules or policies, the student host may be held responsible.

1. Whether a visitor is a student, non-student or non-identified guest, the student host may be held responsible for violations of the Code of Student Conduct and University policies.
2. Responsibility under these rules may occur even if the host is not a participant in the activity or has left the visitor(s) alone.