

Pine Technical and Community College Policy

3.PTCC.6 Student Code of Conduct

Chapter: 3 – Educational Policies

Date: 09/04/2025

Part 1: Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to clearly define the rights and responsibilities of students at the College. As both citizens and members of the College community, students are entitled to certain rights and are expected to uphold specific responsibilities. This policy supports the College’s commitment to fostering an academic environment that promotes intellectual, personal, social, and ethical development.

The College aims to prepare students for success in their chosen career paths by encouraging active participation and cooperation. To maintain a respectful and productive learning environment, students are expected to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations as well as the rules established by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.

This policy also outlines the College’s approach to student conduct, emphasizing fairness and education over punishment. Most disciplinary matters are intended to be resolved informally and constructively. Allegations of discrimination or harassment are addressed through a separate, formal process in accordance with College Procedure 1B.PTCC.1.1.

Part 2: Jurisdiction and Scope of Authority

The College reserves the right to take appropriate action to ensure the safety, well-being, and integrity of its community—including students, faculty, staff, guests, facilities, and programs. All members of the College community and their guests must comply with local, state, and federal laws and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system policies.

When a violation of civil or criminal law involves College interests, the College may initiate disciplinary proceedings independently of any legal action taken by civil or criminal authorities.

This Code of Conduct applies to behavior that occurs:

- On College property;
- At College-sponsored events or activities;
- At events sponsored by college-recognized clubs or organizations, whether on or off campus;
- In digital spaces, including public social media platforms.

In addition, the College may hold students accountable for conduct that occurs off campus when such behavior:

- Involves hazing;
- Occurs during a College-sanctioned or sponsored activity;
- Involves a victim who is a member of the College community;
- Constitutes a felony under state or federal law;
- Negatively impacts the College’s educational mission, research, services, or public image.

Part 3. Student Rights and Responsibilities

In addition to the fundamental rights guaranteed to all citizens by the Constitution, students at the College are entitled to specific rights that support their academic experience

The term “student” includes all persons who

- Are enrolled in one or more courses, either credit or non-credit.
- Withdraw, transfer, or graduate, after an alleged violation of the student conduct code.
- Are not officially enrolled for a particular term but who have a continuing relationship with the College.
- Have been notified of their acceptance for admission or have initiated the process of application for admission and financial aid.

Freedom to Learn

Students have the right to academic freedom, which encompasses both the freedom to teach and the freedom to learn—core principles that are essential to a thriving educational environment.

The freedom to learn is supported by the creation of respectful, inclusive, and equitable conditions in the classroom, across campus, and within the broader community. With these rights comes the responsibility for students to exercise their freedoms in a manner that respects the rights of others and upholds the values of the College.

Students are expected to engage in the academic community with integrity, accountability, and a commitment to mutual respect, contributing to an environment where all members can learn and grow.

Freedom of Expression

Students and student organizations have the right to explore, discuss, and express ideas and opinions on topics of interest, both publicly and privately. They are free to support causes through peaceful and orderly means, provided their actions do not interfere with the College's normal operations.

Within the classroom, students are encouraged to think critically and may respectfully challenge ideas or perspectives presented in their courses. While students may reserve personal judgement on matters of opinion, they are still responsible for mastering the required content of any course in which they are enrolled.

This balance of freedom and responsibility is essential to maintaining a respectful and intellectually vibrant academic environment.

Freedom of Association

Students have the right to form and join organizations that support their shared, lawful interests. These organizations must operate in accordance with college policies and procedures.

The College may grant official recognition or registration to student organizations that meet institutional requirements. However, recognition may be withheld or revoked if any organization violates College policies or fails to comply with applicable regulations.

This right to associate freely is an important part of student life and contributes to a vibrant and engaged campus community.

Student-Sponsored Forums

Students have the right to assemble, invite speakers, and engage in open discussions on topics of their choice. These forums are an important part of academic freedom and student expression.

To ensure that such events do not disrupt the normal operations of the College or infringe on the rights of others, the College may establish reasonable guidelines regarding the time, place, and manner of assemblies. These guidelines are intended to support safety and order – not to censor content or viewpoints.

In rare cases, the College President may prohibit a forum if, in their judgement, the event poses a serious risk of physical harm to individuals or property. Before making such a decision, the President will make every reasonable effort to consult with the Student Senate.

Student Publications

Student-funded publications are an important platform for free expression and journalistic independence. These publications shall be free from censorship and prior approval of content. Editors and managers have the right to establish their own editorial standards and news coverage policies without interference.

To protect editorial freedom, editors and managers may not be arbitrarily suspended or removed due to disagreement with the content or viewpoints expressed, whether by students, faculty, administrators, or the public. Additionally, the allocation of student fees shall not be used as a tool to influence or control editorial decisions.

All student publications must clearly state on the editorial page that the views expressed are those of the publications' contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the College, the Minnesota State system, or the student body.

Student Policies

Students have the right to be informed of the policies that outline their rights, responsibilities, and expectations as members of the College community. To support transparency and accountability, all student-related policies shall be made easily accessible through official College resources, such as the College website, student handbook, or campus offices.

Ensuring that students can readily access this information empowers them to make informed decisions and actively participate in the College community.

Preponderance of Evidence

In all disciplinary proceedings under this Code of Conduct, the College will apply the **preponderance of evidence** standard when determining whether a violation has occurred. This means that a decision will be based on whether the evidence shows that it is more likely than not that a violation took place.

In practical terms, this standard is met if the evidence indicates there is a greater than 50% chance that the alleged conduct occurred. This approach ensures fairness while maintaining the integrity of the College's disciplinary process.

Catalog and Course Information

Students have the right to receive accurate and timely information about courses prior to enrollment. Course catalog descriptions will reflect the most current information available at the time of publication. Whenever possible, class schedules will include the names of the faculty assigned to teach each course.

Student Academic Standing Information

Students are entitled to clear and accessible information regarding the academic standards required to maintain a good standing. This includes general academic requirements, criteria for academic progress, and graduation requirements. Students should be able to determine their individual academic standing based on this information.

Academic Evaluation

Student academic performance will be assessed solely based on academic criteria, as outlined in course syllabi, the catalog, and the student handbook. Students are protected from biased or arbitrary grading and will not be evaluated based on personal beliefs or behavior unrelated to academic performance. Students have the right to review graded exams, papers, and other assignments used in determining their final grade.

Student Property Rights

Students retain ownership of their academic work, including term papers, essays, and projects. These materials will be returned upon request within a reasonable timeframe, once they are no longer needed for evaluation—unless the student has given written permission for the College to retain them.

Student Review and Consultation

Students have the right to participate in institutional decision-making processes in accordance with Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Policy 2.3 and Procedure 2.3.1. This includes appropriate involvement in discussions and decisions that affect student life, academics, and campus policies.

Off-Campus Conduct

While the College does not monitor all off-campus behavior, it reserves the right to take disciplinary action when a student's conduct off campus negatively impacts the College community. This includes, but is not limited to, behavior shared on public social media, arrests or convictions, or any activity that poses a threat to the safety, reputation, or operations of the College. Disciplinary action will follow the procedures outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

Part 4: Violations and Sanctions

Subpart A. Violations

The following behaviors are considered violations of the College's Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary action:

Academic Dishonesty: Includes, but is not limited to:

- Cheating, plagiarism, or submitting false academic records.
- Forging, altering, or misusing College documents or academic records.
- Falsely claiming to represent the College or a student organization.
- Unauthorized access to or use of test materials.
- Collaborating to falsify records or obtain unearned grades, honors, or awards.
- Assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty.
- Inappropriate use of generative artificial intelligence (AI).

Theft or Property Damage: Attempted or actual theft of public or private property. Unauthorized borrowing or use of property. Destroying, damaging, or littering College property.

Disruptive Behavior: Actions that interfere with the normal operations of the College or the rights of others. Examples include verbal outbursts, disruptive behavior toward instructors or peers, disruptive use of devices, or interference with instruction or events.

Disorderly Conduct: Threatening, harassing, or physically harming others. Engaging in lewd, indecent, or disruptive behavior. Repeated use of profanity or deviance of college authority.

Weapons on Campus: Possession or use of weapons on college property, except as permitted under College Procedure 5.PTCC.21.1 is prohibited. Weapons include firearms (including BB guns), knives, explosives, chemicals, and comparable items. Exceptions apply for Gunsmithing students and events such as:

- Transporting firearms for repair or instruction via the designated entrance.
- Possession under instructor supervision.

Controlled Substances: Use, possession or distribution of a controlled substance, drugs, and/or drug paraphernalia on college property.

Alcohol Use: The use, possession, manufacturing, selling or distribution of alcohol products is prohibited on campus, except as expressly permitted by law and college regulations. Individuals under 21 years of age are not permitted to possess alcohol in the state of Minnesota.

Smoking Policy Violations: Smoking, including the use of electronic cigarettes outside of designated areas, is prohibited. Please see Policy 6.PTCC.3 Smoking, Food, and Beverage on Campus for additional information.

Criminal sexual Behavior: Engaging in or threatening sexual activity without consent, including with individuals who are unconscious or impaired.

Misuse of College Facilities or Services: Unauthorized use of the College property, including phones, mail, or computer systems. Using College resources for prohibited activities.

Violation of College Policies: Failure to comply with published College rules, including those related to smoking, harassment, or other conduct expectations.

Retaliation: Harassing, threatening, or intimidating individuals involved in a complaint or investigation.

Violation of Sanctions: Knowingly violating the terms of the sanctions previously imposed.

Hazing: Acts that endanger the mental or physical health of a person, cause humiliation, or involve theft or destruction of property as part of initiation or membership in a group.

Encouraging Misconduct: Attempting or encouraging others to commit any act prohibited by this Code. Such attempts are subject to the same disciplinary actions as the completed offense.

Subpart B. Possible Sanctions

When a student is found responsible for violating the Code of Conduct, one or more of the following sanctions may be imposed, depending on the nature and severity of the violation:

1. **Warning:** An oral or written notice that a student's behavior is inappropriate and must not continue. This may include a formal reprimand.
2. **Confiscation:** Seizure of items or property used or possessed in violation of college policies.



3. **Compliance:** A directive requiring the student to complete a specific action or meet a condition as a requirement for continued enrollment or readmission.
4. **Restitution:** Financial compensation for damage or loss caused by the student. This may include direct or indirect costs incurred by the College.
5. **Suspension:** Temporary removal from the College for a defined time. During this time, the student may not attend classes, participate in college activities, or be present on college property. Conditions for readmission may be specified, including faculty approval of re-enrollment in courses. The College may also restrict the transfer of credits earned elsewhere during the suspension period.
6. **Expulsion:** Permanent removal from the College, with no opportunity for re-enrollment.
7. **Loss of Privileges:** Temporary or permanent denial of specific privileges, such as participation in student organizations, extracurricular activities, or holding student office.
8. **Community Service:** Assignment of a specified number of hours of unpaid service to the College, a nonprofit organization, or a community agency.
9. **Discretionary Sanctions:** Other educational or corrective measures, such as:
 - Work Assignments
 - Counseling or referrals
 - Participation in rehabilitative or educational programs
10. **Immediate removal:** Faculty have the authority to remove a disruptive student from the classroom. The faculty member will determine if and when the student may return. If the student refuses to leave or poses a safety threat, faculty may contact law enforcement and/or cancel class immediately.

Failure to comply with these sanctions may result in additional disciplinary action.

Related Documents:

[Minnesota State Board Policy 3.6 Student Conduct](#)

[Minnesota State Board Procedure 3.6.1 Student Conduct](#)

3.PTCC.6.1 Student Conduct Procedure

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