



Bobcat Code Review Report
Student Judicial Board
Student Government Association
Georgia College & State University

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Report Introduction

The purpose of this report shall be to recommend change in the GCSU Student Code of Conduct, known also as the Bobcat Code, in order to better serve students. This report does not have the power to change the Bobcat Code; it only serves as a recommendation to the university administration, providing a student perspective on the current Code of Conduct.

General Information

Rules 1-10: Academic Honor Code

Rule 1. Abuse of Academic Materials

No recommended changes. 4/0

Rule 2. Cheating

Revision 2.1 4/0

Specify unauthorized materials to include the use of AI outside of the instructor's policy. ~ Ryall

Rule 3. Classroom Disruption

No recommended changes. 4/0

Rule 4. Complicity in Academic Dishonesty

No recommended changes. 4/0

Rule 5. Fabrication or Falsification

No recommended changes. 4/0

Rule 6. Falsifying Grade Reports

No recommended changes. 4/0

Rule 7. Impermissible Collaboration

No recommended changes. 4/0



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RULE 8. Misrepresentation to Avoid Academic Work

Revision 8.1 4/0

Grammar change from “Misrepresentation by fabrication an otherwise justifiable excuse...” to “Misrepresentation by fabricating an otherwise justifiable excuse...”

~ Ryall

No further changes recommended. 4/0

RULE 9. Plagiarism

Revision 9.1 4/0

Specify prohibited materials to include the use of AI outside of the instructor’s policy. ~ Ryall

No further changes recommended. 4/0

RULE 10. Multiple Submissions

No recommended changes. 4/0

RULE 11. Unauthorized Posting and Distribution

No recommended changes. 4/0

RULE 12. Violation of Additional Course Standards

No recommended changes. 4/0

Rules 100-139: Student Honor Code

RULE 100. Adverse Impact

No recommended changes. 4/0

RULE 101. Alcohol Possession and Use

Revision 101.1

Original:



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“E. Providing alcoholic beverages to a person who is intoxicated;”

Recommended Revision:

“E. Providing alcoholic beverages to a person who is at risk of medical harm as a result of overconsumption of alcoholic beverages;”

Rationale:

The language is broad and ambiguous. If the purpose of this prong is to prohibit providing alcoholic beverages to a person who is intoxicated to a degree that is harmful to themselves, then our recommended change captures the purpose without the ambiguity. ~ Kim

The language of the rule is too broad. For students who are of age to consume alcoholic beverages, it is not specific enough for when to cut off. Our

Revision 101.2

Original:

“G. Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages in public locations on campus, including Residence Hall common spaces; common spaces in Residence Halls refer to any public space that exists outside the bedroom of a specific residential unit. Examples include, but are not limited to public kitchens, public living rooms, public bathrooms, group study/lounge spaces, laundry rooms, lobbies, computer rooms, etc. Common spaces also include the public spaces located on the outside grounds of a Residence Hall. If alcohol is found in the common area, all Students may be accused of violating the policy and/or found responsible;”

Recommended Revision:

“G. Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages in public locations on campus;”

Rationale:



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To reduce redundancy with Residence Life Rule 200F and 200G. ~ Ryall

Rule 102. Animals

Revision 102.1

Original:

“F. Emotional Support Animals are considered for Residence Halls, as noted by the Federal Housing Act if specified by documentation from a licensed professional. All applications for bringing an Emotional Support Animal will be submitted to the University for review and approval by the Student Disability Resources Center and University Housing.”

Recommended Revision:

[DELETE]

Rationale:

To reduce redundancy with Residence Life Rule 201B and 201C. ~ Ryall

Rule 103. Assault

Revision 103.1

Original:

“A. Any physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature.”

Recommended Revision:

“A. Any act of an insulting or provoking nature which places another in reasonable apprehension of immediately receiving a violent injury.”

Rationale:

To make the definition more clearly align with OCGA 16-5-20 Simple Assault. ~ Ryall

[Note A](#)



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Rule 104. Bias Incident

No recommended changes.

Rule 105. Impeding the Conduct Process

Revision 105.1

Original:

“B. Failure to provide, destroying or concealing information during fact-finding of an alleged violation of the Bobcat Code.”

Recommended Revision:

[DELETE]

Rationale:

The current language could be construed to mean it is a violation of the Bobcat Code to not incriminate oneself during the fact-finding process. This revision places Rule 105 more closely in line with OCGA 16-10-94 Tampering With Evidence. ~ Ryall

Rule 106. Damage or Destruction of Property

No recommended changes.

Rule 107. Deception

No recommended changes.

Rule 108. Discrimination

No recommended changes.

Rule 109. Disorderly Conduct

No recommended changes.

Rule 110. Disorderly / Improper Assembly

No recommended changes.



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Rule 111. Drugs and Drug Paraphernalia

Revision 111.1

Original:

“E. Individuals suspected of drug use may be found responsible for suspicion of drug use if University Officials have reason to believe Students have engaged in drug use.”

Recommended Revision:

[DELETE]

Rationale:

Goes against the preponderance of the evidence standard of evidence. If university officials have enough reason to believe students have been engaged in drug use, the current standard of evidence allows them to be charged with Rule 111A regardless.

~ Ryall

Rule 112. Endangerment

No recommended changes.

[*Note A*](#)

Rule 113. Failure to Respond

No recommended changes.

Rule 114. Felony Conviction

No recommended changes.

Rule 115. Fire Safety and Maintenance

No recommended changes.

Rule 116. Gambling

No recommended changes.



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Rule 117. Guests

No recommended changes.

Rule 118. Harassment

No recommended changes.

[Note A](#)

Rule 119. Hazing

No recommended changes.

Rule 120. Interfering With Active Bystander

No recommended changes.

Rule 121. Shared Responsibility

No recommended changes.

Rule 122. Lying

No recommended changes.

Rule 123. Recreational Wheeled Devices

No recommended changes.

Rule 124. Sexual Misconduct and Interpersonal Violence

No recommended changes.

Rule 125. Retaliation

Revision 125.1

Original:

“Any act of retaliation is prohibited when, in good faith, someone reports what they believe to be a violation of any university policy, including the Bobcat Code,



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participates or cooperates in, or is otherwise associated with any fact-finding process...”

Recommended Revision:

“Any act of retaliation is prohibited when, in good faith, someone reports what they believe to be a violation of any university policy, including the Bobcat Code, participates or cooperates in, or is otherwise associated with any fact-finding process... **Retaliation is any action or behavior that is designed to punish an individual for reporting concerns or wrongdoing, cooperating with an investigation, participating in a grievance or appeal procedure or otherwise objecting to conduct that is unlawful, unethical or violates GC policy.**”

Rationale:

The current rule does not provide a clear definition of the term, “retaliation.” Adding it to this section would make it easier for students to read. This definition is directly copied from the Bobcat Code, Policy 11F1B2. ~ Ryall

Rule 126. Tobacco Use and Smoking

No recommended changes.

Rule 127. Solicitation

No recommended changes.

Very similar to Rule 209 Solicitation and Posting, could possibly clarify changing the language of this section to not include Residence Life.

Rule 128. Student Identification Card Violations

No recommended changes.

Rule 129. Theft

No recommended changes.

Rule 130. Threats



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Note A

Rule 131. Unauthorized Entry

No recommended changes.

Section C states, “remaining overnight in public areas of the Residence Hall or surrounding areas without approval from Residence Life staff.” Maybe this should be a separate rule under the Residence Life rule section.

Rule 132. Unauthorized Use

No recommended changes.

Rule 133. Unpiloted Aerial Systems

No recommended changes.

Rule 134. Unauthorized Use of Computing Resources

No recommended changes.

Rule 135. Vandalism

No recommended changes.

Rule 136. Violation of Confidentiality

No recommended changes.

Rule 137. Violation of Law

No recommended changes.

Rule 138. Violation of Other Applicable University Policies

No recommended changes.

Rule 139. Weapons and Firearms

Revision 139.1

Original:



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“D. Anything that can be used to injure, attempt to injure, or harass another person is considered a weapon.

E. In unclear cases of definition, the context in which a particular subject was used or attempted to be used will determine whether it is a weapon.”

Recommended Revision:

“D. Anything that can be used to injure, attempt to injure, or harass another person is considered a weapon. In unclear cases of definition, the context in which a particular subject was used or attempted to be used will determine whether it is a weapon.”

Rationale:

This revision pushes the two paragraphs together in order to provide further clarity to readers on what counts as a weapon. ~ Ryall

Rules 200-214: Residence Life Rules

Rule 200. Alcohol

Revision 200.1

Original:

“G. Residents who remain in the environment where an alcohol violation is occurring, regardless of whether the resident/guest is using or possessing alcohol, is prohibited.”

Recommended Revision:

[DELETE]

Rationale:

I believe the intent of this rule is to discourage students from engaging in events where alcohol is being consumed. It is important to teach responsibility when dealing with substances such as alcohol, but it is the reality of the college environment that alcohol is a significant aspect of its culture. By keeping this



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prong as it is written, any individual who participates in a party inside a residence hall may be subject to violating the Bobcat Code regardless of their participation in drinking. There is no mention of intent nor knowledge of whether or not they are in the presence of alcohol. To remove this prong is not to promote a potentially harmful environment involving alcohol, it is to disallow bystanders and non-drinking attendees from being penalized for the actions of their drinking peers. It removes the opportunity for responsible students to act in good faith.

I believe the intent of this rule is to discourage students from engaging in events where alcohol is being consumed. In actuality, however, this rule incriminates the vast majority of the student body without consideration to their participation in drinking. Under this rule, students must often make the choice between having a social life and violating the Bobcat Code. I would argue that the vast majority of students have been at an event with alcohol at least one point during their college careers, many of which may have been in a residence hall. By including this clause, students may think, "if it's already against the rule for me to be here, it wouldn't hurt to drink anyways." It removes the opportunity for responsible students to act in good faith.

Without this rule, students would be encouraged to choose not to drink, knowing that they are not out of compliance with the Bobcat Code until they actually possessed or drank the alcohol.

In addition, this rule criminalizes roommates of people engaging in alcohol violations. For these roommates, their options are either: report their roommate to the Conduct Office (which certainly can cause high tensions for the rest of the time living together, whether anonymous or not), or leave their own room when the violation is being committed. Even if the drinking is taking place in the main apartment and the roommate is in his/her private room at the time, the rules do not clearly state the physical boundary of "the environment", meaning a roommate watching TV in their own room could be charged with this (as has happened before).



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Students often use their rooms as a space to safely consume alcohol before going downtown. Continuing to enforce and keep this policy may encourage students to drink in unsafe and uncontrolled environments, which does not promote the wellbeing of students. ~ Ryall

Rule 201. Animals / Pets

No recommended changes.

Rule 202. Collective Liability

No recommended changes.

Rule 203. Cooperation and Compliance

No recommended changes.

Rule 204. Damage or Misuse of University Property

No recommended changes.

Rule 205. Drugs

Revision 205.1

Original:

“A. Being present where a drug-related violation is occurring, regardless of whether the resident/guest is using or possessing drugs;”

Recommended Revision:

[DELETE]

Rationale:

See rationale for Rule 200 Alcohol, particularly the paragraph about roommate involvement. ~ Ryall

Rule 206. Fire Safety



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No recommended changes.

Rule 207. General Safety and Well-Being

No recommended changes.

Rule 208. Noise

Revision 208.1

Original:

“A. All residents are expected to respect 24-hour courtesy hours. If a student makes a reasonable request of another student to be less noisy, that student should comply. No noise should be heard **outside of a student room;**”

Recommended Revision:

“A. All residents are expected to respect 24-hour courtesy hours. If a student makes a reasonable request of another student to be less noisy, that student should comply. No noise should be heard from **[down the hall/a reasonable distance];**”

Rationale:

The standard of “no noise should be heard outside of a student room” is completely reasonable in Villages 1-3, but because of the doors in Villages 4-6 any regular level of speaking happening in an apartment’s living room or kitchen can usually be clearly heard from outside the door. The unofficial standard among Community Advisors is to make contact with residents if noise can be heard over two doors down (roughly 100 feet). The noise prohibition should change to reflect the near-impossibility of meeting the current requirement. ~ Ryall

Rule 209. Solicitation and Posting

No recommended changes.

Rule 210. Unauthorized Use or Access

No recommended changes.



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Rule 211. Visitation and Guests

No recommended changes.

Rule 212. Weapons and Firearms

No recommended changes.

Rule 213. Disposal of Trash

No recommended changes.

Rule 214. Misuse of Residential Space

No recommended changes.

Rule 298. Additional Rules

No recommended changes.

Rule 299. Modifications and Revisions

No recommended changes.

Notes

Note A

Rule 118 Harassment, Rule 103 Assault, and Rule 112 Endangerment all feature elements of OCGA 16-5-20 Simple Assault and OCGA 16-5-23 Simple Battery. These could possibly be condensed into one rule (Assault & Battery, or under existing Rule 103 Assault). No fault of system just makes it make more sense, just because it's not being abused now doesn't mean it won't be abused later

Note B

Rule 105 Impeding The Conduct Process clause C and Rule 125 Retaliation are very similar.

Rule 105C reads: "Attempting to discourage an individual's proper participation in, or use of, the Conduct Process."



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Rule 125 reads: “Any act of retaliation is prohibited when, in good faith, someone reports what they believe to be a violation of any university policy, including the Bobcat Code, participates or cooperates in, or is otherwise associated with any fact-finding process...”

General Findings and Conclusion

After a thorough review of the Bobcat Code, it has been determined that there are some areas that would benefit from revision, specifically regarding alcohol and drug policy. We have also found that there is significant overlap of rules between the Student Honor Code and Residence Life Rules, and recommend changes should be made to keep Residence Life policy in the appropriate section. Through our experience with the conduct process, we have confidence that the current conduct authorities have the best interests of students at heart. However, in an effort to prevent any future conduct officers from abusing the code, we recommend that these changes be made. All revisions in this document were agreed on by a majority vote of the Student Judicial Board.

We take our mission as advocates for the students of Georgia College very seriously, and we hope you will take our suggestions with the seriousness with which we considered them.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ezra Ryall".

Ezra Ryall
Attorney General, Student Judicial Board



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