

2016-2017

Villa Maria College Student Handbook



Villa Maria College is a Felician Franciscan Sponsored Ministry

The provisions of this Handbook are not to be regarded as a contract between the College and the student. The College reserves the right to make necessary changes in the information contained in this handbook, which supersedes all previous handbooks.

2016-2017 Villa Maria College Student Handbook

Welcome

On behalf of Villa Maria College, I am pleased to introduce the 2016-2017 Student Handbook. This handbook is a valuable resource, which contains information about the College, and its policy and procedures for students. These policies and procedures guide our actions as a college community toward fulfilling our mission and living out the College's core values.

At Villa Maria College we believe education is about more than just earning a degree. Beyond our desire for students to develop intellectually, we are concerned with the overall physical, emotional and spiritual growth of the individual. The College offers a full complement of support services to help students succeed personally and professionally, from our Career Services Center and Campus Ministry to the Academic Support Center and our Counseling office.

In order to be a successful student at Villa Maria College it is essential that you seize the opportunities that are presented to you for intellectual and personal growth. This is applicable to all areas of academic and college life, including the classroom, your co-op or internship, student organizations, activities, opportunities for spiritual growth, service to others, and more. As faculty and staff of Villa Maria, we will support you in these endeavors and challenge you to be transformed by your educational experience.

Please note that all students are responsible for reading and knowing the policies and regulations in this handbook. This handbook will be a helpful guide throughout your time at Villa Maria College. We encourage you to consult it regularly and use it wisely.

Brian J. Emerson,
Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services



2016-2017 Villa Maria College Student Handbook

1. Introduction

- a. This Student Handbook contains helpful information. It also contains policy statements and regulations, which every Villa Maria College student is expected to follow. Each student is responsible for knowing and observing the contents of both this handbook and the Villa Maria College Catalog.
- b. In recognition of the necessity to provide an environment conducive to free inquiry and free expression in an academic institution, for fair and just relationships with students, and in the spirit of the “Joint Statement on Rights and Freedom of Students,” Villa Maria College has developed the Student Rights, Student Responsibilities and the Student Code of Conduct contained in this handbook.
- c. Villa Maria College expects the members of the College community to demonstrate respect for themselves and others at all times. This respect includes a responsibility to show sensitivity to difference and act justly in interactions with one another. All members of the community are entitled to and responsible for maintaining an environment of civility that is free from disparagement, intimidation, harassment, and violence of any kind. Villa Maria College expects the members of the College community to respect college property, the private property of other members of the College community, and the property of the larger neighborhood and city in which we live.
- d. Provisions of this Handbook are not to be regarded as a contract between the College and the student. The College reserves the right to make necessary changes in the information contained in this handbook, which supersedes all previous handbooks.

2. Mission Statement

- a. Villa Maria College, founded by the Felician Sisters, provides students a rigorous and enriching educational experience. Offering academic programs with a broad core curriculum, the College transforms and empowers students to realize their intellectual, creative, professional, and spiritual potential. Inspired by a welcoming Catholic tradition and a dynamic Franciscan spirit, Villa Maria College offers individual attention and fosters compassion, justice, peace, respect for human dignity and a commitment to service.

3. Core Values

- a. Respect for Human Dignity—our reverence for and commitment to promoting and protecting the dignity of persons.
- b. Compassion—an empathetic consciousness of others expressed in caring service.
- c. Transformation—the process that encourages an open mind and heart leading to continuous improvement of the person and ministry.
- d. Solidarity with the Poor—ensuring the needs of the poor and vulnerable are met through advocacy and action.

- e. Justice and Peace—forging right relationship: re-creating a sustainable environment, promoting the common good, in pursuit of justice.

4. **Student Rights** - All students, as members of the Villa Maria College community, shall have the following rights:

- a. Freedom of expression and assembly subject to the limitations of the Student Code of Conduct and other College regulations and policies.
- b. Freedom to pursue educational goals.
- c. The right to notification by the instructor, during the first week of class and in the form of a written syllabus, of all course requirements. Such notification should include, but not be limited to, course subject matter for each class meeting, assignments and due dates, types of examinations and examination dates, instructor's office hours, required texts and procedures for determination of final grades. All students have the right to adequate notice of substantive changes in course content.
- d. Freedom from unreasonable search and seizure by College officials subject to the Student Code of Conduct and other College regulations and policies. The College determines the reasonableness of searches and seizures. Generally, unreasonable searches and seizures are those that are not allowed by the Student Code of Conduct, other College regulations and policies.
- e. The right to conduct procedures as defined in the College Conduct System.
- f. The right to privacy and confidentiality of student records according to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). See FERPA policy for more information.
- g. The right to be evaluated fairly in all academic endeavors and to challenge an academic evaluation in accordance with the Grade Appeal Process.

5. **Student Responsibilities** - Students, as members of the College community, shall have the following responsibilities. This should not be construed to exclude other responsibilities which students inherit as members of the student body or as citizens of the community at large:

- a. The responsibility for maintaining academic integrity and other standards of academic performance as established by College policies and regulations.
- b. The responsibility for acting in such a manner as to insure that other students may enjoy the rights declared under the Student Rights.
- c. The responsibility for respecting and complying with the Mission Statement of the College, as well as the Student Code of Conduct.
- d. The responsibility for respecting and complying with all provisions of local, state and federal laws.
- e. The responsibility for acting in a manner which promotes an atmosphere of learning, free expression and respect for the rights, dignity and worth of every individual in the College community.
- f. The responsibility for meeting financial and other obligations to the College.
- g. The responsibility to register for a Villa Maria College e-mail account and to utilize it as the primary means of communication as a student.

6. **Student Code of Conduct Preamble**

- a. Villa Maria College is a private, Catholic college, which holds basic traditions and Christian principles including certain expectations of ethical and moral behavior. The College therefore, reserves the right to establish and enforce regulations governing student behavior.
- b. All students who enroll in Villa Maria College are assumed to be mature people of high moral character, who understand the need to conduct themselves in a manner that is compatible with the College's mission as an educational institution. Each student is expected to become familiar with all College policies, rules and regulations and is responsible for adhering to them.
- c. Students must understand that the Code of Conduct may operate simultaneously with federal, state, or local law. The College will not protect any student from the enforcement of the law. College officials will assist law enforcement agencies wherever possible.

7. Student Code of Conduct

- a. Violations of this Code may be construed to include any active violation, attempted violation, solicitation of another to commit a violation, or aiding another in a violation. Disciplinary action may be instituted when an individual or group of individuals violates any of the following:
- b. Academic Dishonesty
 - i. Academic Dishonesty includes but is not limited to the following: 1) the completion or attempted completion of any academic work by means other than those permitted; and 2) the alteration of a document relating to the grading process, including – changing an instructor's grade book, or changing answers on a test after the time to complete the test is over.
 - ii. Examples of Academic Dishonesty include but are not limited to; unauthorized collaboration, copying another student's answers, unauthorized aids on a test, fabricating assignments, using purchased or pre-made term papers, plagiarism, and destroying another student's work.
 - iii. Plagiarism occurs when an individual presents the ideas, thoughts, or words of another as his or her own. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, using phrases, sentences, or ideas from a published source, including the internet, without citing that source, representing another's unpublished work as your own, rewriting or paraphrasing the work of another without giving credit to that person by citation, submitting a paper as one's own work that has been copied, in whole or in part, from another's work.
- c. Generally, the faculty decides upon sanctions for acts of Academic Dishonesty. Thus, Academic Dishonesty may carry specific penalties carried out by the faculty outside of the Conduct Procedure. Those penalties include but are not limited to: failure on the specific assignment, failure of the course, and/or a letter detailing the offense that is kept in the Office of Academic Affairs. Note that although deference is given to the faculty to handle matters of Academic

Dishonesty, such action does not preclude disciplinary action under the College Conduct Procedures.

d. Alcohol and Drugs

i. Alcohol and drugs are prohibited on the College's property. On occasion, at the College's discretion, alcohol may be served on campus in accordance with College policy and state law. Students are expected to comply with all federal, state, and local laws pertaining to alcohol and drugs as well as the comprehensive Additional information on Alcohol and Drug policy found in this handbook. Potential violations of law and College policy include but are not limited to:

1. Possession, consumption, or transportation by automobile of alcohol by a person under 21 years of age.
2. Use, Possession or Distribution of a controlled substance (illegal drugs), or drug paraphernalia.
3. Possession or display of alcohol paraphernalia. Examples include but are not limited to: empty alcohol containers, shot glasses, alcoholic signage, and alcoholic games/toys.
4. Sale or distribution of Alcohol on campus, except by vendors who possess the appropriate licenses and have received permissions from the Student Affairs Office.
5. Presentation of any written or oral evidence of age that is false, fraudulent, or not a person's own for the purpose of ordering, purchasing, or attempting to procure alcohol by a person under 21 years of age.
6. Any person bringing guests to campus is responsible for making College policies known, and any violations by the guests will be attributed to the host student.
7. Granting access to or serving alcohol to those under 21 years of age or who are intoxicated.
8. Possession of alcohol outside approved or registered areas.
9. Being in the presence of alcohol outside approved or registered areas.
10. Destruction of College property at approved off-campus functions, resulting from the use of alcohol.
11. Inappropriate behavior, noise, or conduct that infringes on the rights of others and is the result of the use of alcohol.
12. Public intoxication, including but not limited to, the Villa Maria College campus.
13. Any other violation of the Alcohol and Drug Policy in this handbook.

e. Assault

i. Any intentional touching or attempt or threat of such touching, that either places another person in fear of imminent bodily harm, or causes or could have caused physical injury to another person.

1. Examples may include: pushing, fighting, threatening to fight, or intimidation via social media.
 - ii. Any conduct, or attempted conduct, that results in harm to another's property including College property.
- f. Credit Card Marketing Policy
- i. The advertising, marketing, or merchandising of credit cards to students on the campus of Villa Maria College is strictly prohibited.
- g. Discrimination
- i. Any conduct that discriminates on the basis of age, race, religion, creed, color, national or ethnic origin, gender, sex, sexual orientation, domestic violence victim status, marital status, veteran status, military status, or any other protected status.
 - ii. For additional information please refer to the Villa Maria College Civil Rights Grievance Procedure.
 - iii. Non-Discrimination Statement:
 1. Villa Maria College is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, religion, creed, color, national or ethnic origin, gender, disability, sex, sexual orientation, domestic violence victim status, marital status, veteran status, military status, predisposed genetic carrier status and any other characteristics or protected status recognized by applicable federal, state or local law. This policy applies to admissions, all terms and conditions of employment, and any other aspect regarding the conduct of College programs and activities
- h. Disorderly, Lewd, Harassing, or Indecent Conduct
- i. Conduct or attempted conduct that either:
 1. Obstructs, disrupts, or interferes with the personal or group rights of others or with any activities of the College, including but not limited to, access to facilities and performance of normal College operation.
 2. Any severe, persistent, or pervasive activity or communication that is deemed intimidating, hostile, coercive, offensive or that limits a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the regular activity and environment of the College.
 - a. This includes, but is not limited to bullying and cyber-bullying.
 3. Disrespect for a College official by using egregious or antagonistic language or behavior.
 4. Any behavior that jeopardizes the integrity of the College or any of its members.
 5. Endangering the Safety of the College Community.
 - a. Any conduct that endangers the safety of the College community, including but not limited to, tampering with

safety or fire warning devices, setting a fire on College property, improper use of cooking equipment, and reckless operation of a motor vehicle.

6. Vandalism: willful or malicious destruction or defacement of public or private property.
 - a. Examples include: Intentional or unintentional misuse of college property that causes damage or additional work for the maintenance department.
- i. Failure to Comply
 - i. Failure to comply with the directions or requests of a College official or law enforcement officer in the performance of his or her official duties. This offense shall be construed to include any student's willful refusal to appear at a hearing of the College Conduct System.
- j. Failure to Honor Financial Obligations to the College
 - i. Failure to meet or honor the student's financial obligations to the College will result in the College withholding grades, transcripts, degrees, certificates, or diplomas until all debts are paid; however, further disciplinary action can be taken.
- k. Failure to Provide ID
 - i. All students are required to carry their Villa Maria College ID at all times and to produce the ID upon request of a College official or law enforcement officer.
- l. Fraud or Forgery
 - i. Fraud or Forgery includes all of the following actions or attempted actions:
 1. Any unauthorized tampering, falsification, alteration, misuse, or forgery of College documents.
 2. Representing oneself as another in writing or in person.
 3. Knowingly supplying false or misleading information to the College.
 4. Unauthorized possession of an ID.
- m. Gambling
 - i. Gambling is prohibited unless it is approved by College administration.
- n. Hazing
 - i. All acts of hazing, both on and off campus, by an organization or any of its members or alumni, are strictly forbidden. Villa Maria defines hazing as any action taken or situation created, intentionally, or recklessly, to produce mental, physical, or emotional discomfort, pain, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule. Hazing is forbidden both on and off College property. Any student engaged in hazing may be subject to disciplinary action by the College, regardless of any claimed consent or assumption of the risk by the victim. Additionally, hazing is illegal under New York State law and any person engaged in hazing may face civil and criminal

consequences, including possible jail time. See New York State law § 120.16 and 17. A helpful resource is www.StopHazing.org.

o. Hate Crime/Bias Crime

- i. Villa Maria College prohibits student conduct violations, including criminal activity, which is motivated by bias or hate. This policy is in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Hate Crimes Act of 2000, Art. 485 and Art.129-A of the New York State Laws of 2003, the following policy is in effect for Villa Maria College.
- ii. Available Services for Victims of Hate Crime/Bias Crime
 1. Villa Maria College recognizes the need to make available confidential counseling and other support services to the victims of bias-related crime and incidents. Victims may speak to the Director of Counseling, the Director of Campus Ministry, or to anyone on the staff the victim trusts. Referrals will be made when necessary.
 2. Measures to reduce the likelihood of bias-related crimes or incidents include the sponsoring of a program once each semester. The orientation programs also address this topic. Students are reminded about security measures at Orientation and also through a program offered each semester.

p. Motor Vehicles

- i. Operators of motor vehicles are expected to follow the laws that govern the use of motor vehicles while on campus and should exercise caution and good judgment when doing so. Violations of law relating to the use of motor vehicles may be monitored and enforced by any campus administrator, most commonly by members of the Security staff. Violations to this policy may be forwarded to Cheektowaga Police for enforcement or may be referred through the Student Conduct procedure.

q. Sexual Misconduct

- i. Includes: Discrimination on the basis of sex [Title IX], Harassment, Sexual Assault, Sexual Violence, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and Stalking. Please refer to the Villa Maria College Civil Rights Grievance Procedure and Title IX Policy: Discrimination on the Basis of Sex & Sexual Misconduct.
- ii. The Sexual Misconduct (Title IX policy) can be found on the Civil Rights Compliance Page of www.Villa.edu.
 1. Full address:
 - a. <https://www.villa.edu/campus-life/civil-rights-compliance>

r. Smoking

- i. Smoking is strictly prohibited on College property. Cigarettes cannot be sold, advertised or given as samples on campus. Further information can be found in the Tobacco Free Policy in this handbook.

s. Solicitation

- i. Solicitation on campus is prohibited unless the Vice President for Finance and Administration gives their consent in writing.
- t. Stalking
 - i. Any ongoing pattern of behavior or past series of acts that place another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm or threaten his or her mental well-being or safety, or are intended to cause emotional distress. Such behavior may include but is not limited to: unwelcome communications of any type, threats, following, or surveillance.
- u. Theft or Possession of Stolen Goods
 - i. Theft and possession of stolen goods are strictly prohibited. Theft includes, but is not limited to, the taking of furniture or objects from college lounges and common areas; the borrowing of personal or college items without permission; the use of another's items for re-sale or distribution.
- v. Unauthorized Entry
 - i. Unauthorized entry includes:
 1. Breaking and entering into any building or room on campus
 2. Unauthorized use of a College key or access device.
- w. Unauthorized Use of Campus Property, Name, Logo
 - i. The Villa Maria College name, college seal, and logo are not to be used for any purpose without the consent of the Administration. Unauthorized use of all College property is strictly prohibited.
- x. Use or Possession of Dangerous Objects
 - i. Use, possession, or storage of dangerous weapons, chemicals, explosive devices or materials, including, but not limited to, firearms, air guns, knives, ammunition, slingshots, metal knuckles, bows and arrows, firecrackers, and bombs of any kind are prohibited.
- y. Violation of College Policy
 - i. Any conduct that violates College Policy established by a specific area or department, including but not limited to Academic policies, classroom policies, computers/computer labs, financial aid, the library, Collegiate Village, parking lots, or recreation facilities.
- z. Violation of Law
 - i. Any conduct that could be construed as a violation of any state, federal or local law can be cause for disciplinary action. Students are required to notify the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services of any arrest or conviction of crime other than minor motor vehicle infractions where no one was hurt. Notice should be given within five (5) days of the occurrence.

8. Villa Maria College Conduct System

- a. Jurisdiction - Jurisdiction is the right and authority to hear and adjudicate controversies, and dispense disciplinary action. The College Conduct System's jurisdiction includes all violations of the Student Code of Conduct by a Villa

Maria College student, organization, or group, committed on campus or off campus if:

- i. The victim is a student of Villa Maria College or a Villa Maria College affiliated individual or group, including the College itself.
- ii. The alleged violator has used his or her status as a student, organization, or group of Villa Maria College to facilitate the commission of the offense.
- iii. The violation is committed at a Villa Maria College sponsored or sanctioned event.
- iv. The event raises serious questions as to the fitness of the student, organization, or group, to continue its relationship with Villa Maria College, due to concerns for the safety of the College community.

b. Conduct Authority

- i. The VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services shall have original jurisdiction in all controversies.
- ii. The VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services shall have the authority to investigate possible violations of the Student Code of Conduct before and after charges are made.
- iii. The VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services shall have the responsibility of determining the composition and authority of Conduct and Appellate Bodies.
- iv. The VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services is charged with development of policies for the administration of the conduct program and procedural rules for the conduct of hearings that are not inconsistent with provisions of the Student Code of Conduct. Questions of interpretation of this College Conduct System's procedures are to be resolved by the sound judgment of the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services.
- v. A Conduct Body may be designated as arbiter of certain disputes within the student community. All parties must agree to arbitration and agree to be bound by the decision with no right of appeal.

c. Charges and Hearings

- i. Any member of the College community may bring charges against any student for alleged violations of Student Code of Conduct. A charge shall be prepared in writing and directed to the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services or designee who is responsible for the administration of the College Conduct System. Charges should be submitted within six months of the incident.
- ii. The VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services or Designee may investigate the charges to determine if the charges have merit.
- iii. The VP or Designee may attempt to dispose of the charges by mutual consent of the parties involved on a basis acceptable to the VP or Designee. Such disposition shall be final and there shall be no subsequent proceedings. If the charges cannot be disposed by mutual consent, the VP

or Designee may later serve in the same matter as a member of the Conduct Board.

- iv. All charges shall be presented to the accused student(s) in written form. A date and time shall be set for an initial hearing within a reasonable time after the student has been notified, generally not less than two and not more than fifteen calendar days. Notice will be given to the student via College e-mail and in a written letter mailed to their address on file, or delivered to them in class. Failure of the student to collect his or her mail from an e-mail inbox does not render the notice ineffective. Maximum time limits for scheduling of hearings may be extended at the discretion of the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services or Designee for the convenience of those involved.
 - v. An accused student may request an initial meeting with the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services to clarify the charges against him or her and learn about the College Conduct System. The meeting will be at the convenience of the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services.
 - vi. If College officials determine that the actions of a student(s) are a threat to the health and safety to any member or members of the campus community, the College may immediately suspend the student from classes and campus activities, and remove the student from campus pending a Conduct Hearing.
 - vii. Students under criminal investigation or who have pending legal charges may be suspended until the resolution of the criminal investigation or legal action.
 - viii. During an interim suspension, a student may continue course work through independent study unless otherwise determined by the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services or the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
 - ix. Violations of the Student Code of Conduct will be handled through the College's Conduct System. If a controversy cannot be disposed of by mutual consent, a hearing will be conducted.
- d. Conduct Hearing Procedures - Conduct Hearings shall be conducted according to the following guidelines:
- 1. The VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services will appoint a Hearing Officer or a Conduct Board to conduct hearings and determine sanctions.
 - 2. Conduct Hearings shall be conducted in private and be recorded.
 - 3. The complainant, accused student(s), and their advisors, if any, shall be allowed to attend the entire portion of the hearing at which information is received (excluding deliberations). Admission of any other person to the hearing shall be at the discretion of the Conduct Board and/or the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services.

4. At no time is a parent, guardian, relative, or legal representative permitted to be present for a Conduct Hearing.
5. In hearings involving more than one accused student, the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Service and/or Hearing Officer, at his or her discretion, may permit the hearings concerning each student to be conducted either separately or jointly.
6. The complainant and the accused student have the right to be assisted by an advisor. The advisor must be a member of the College community and may not function as an attorney at the hearing. The complainant and/or the accused student is responsible for presenting his or her own information and, therefore, advisors are not permitted to speak or to participate directly in any hearing. A student should select as an advisor a person whose schedule allows attendance at the scheduled date and time for the hearing because delays will not normally be allowed due to scheduling conflicts of the advisor.
7. The complainant, the accused student, and/or Hearing Officer/Conduct Board shall have the privilege of presenting witnesses. The Hearing Officer/Conduct Board shall have the right to question all witnesses.
8. Pertinent records and written statements may be accepted for consideration at the discretion of the Hearing Officer/Conduct Board.
9. All procedural questions are subject to final decision by the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services, the Hearing Officer and/or members of the Conduct Board. The Hearing Officer/Conduct Board may choose to suspend the hearing to consider such questions. The VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services or Designee shall have the final say as to procedural matters.
10. The Board's determination shall be made on the basis of whether it is more likely than not that the accused student violated the Student Code.
11. Formal legal rules of process, procedure, and/or technical rules of evidence, such as those applied in criminal or civil court, are not used in the College Conduct System.
12. Nothing in these paragraphs shall be interpreted to include the right to legal counsel. There shall be no cross examination of witnesses except by the Hearing Officer/Conduct Board if necessary.
13. There shall be a single record, such as written notes or a digital recording, of all hearings before a Conduct Board. Deliberations

shall not be recorded. The record shall be the property of Villa Maria College.

14. If after receiving notice as described above, an accused student does not appear for a Conduct Hearing, the hearing will be held in that student's absence. The information in support of the charges shall be presented and considered even if the accused student is not present.
15. The Hearing Officer/Conduct Board may accommodate concerns for the personal safety, well-being, and/or fears of confrontation of the complainant, accused student, and/or witness during the hearing by providing alternative means of testimony, where the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services deems appropriate.
16. Proceedings under the Student Code are not criminal or civil proceedings and shall not be construed as such.
17. Villa Maria College may record conduct hearings and interviews for record keeping purposes. A conduct hearing may be recorded; the recording will become part of the student's record.
18. Villa Maria College students, organizations, and groups have the right to notice and an opportunity to be heard only as described above.

e. Appeal Process

- i. An accused student may appeal a decision reached or sanctions imposed by a Hearing Officer/Conduct Board. All appeals must be in writing and submitted to the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services within seven (7) calendar days of the conduct Hearing. This written appeal is the sole basis for the review. The written statement should be as complete as possible and set forth the basis for changing the determination of the Conduct Hearing as described below.
- ii. Except as provided below, an appeal shall be limited to a review of the record of the Conduct Hearing and supporting documents.
- iii. Basis for Changing the Determination of the Conduct Hearing. The determination of the Conduct Hearing can be changed only if the student can show clear and convincing reasons that:
 1. The Conduct Hearing was conducted unfairly in light of the charges and evidence presented, or not according to the prescribed procedures giving the accused student a reasonable opportunity to prepare and to present his/her defense,
 2. The decision reached regarding the accused student was not based on the evidence, i.e., the facts in the case were insufficient to establish a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, or
 3. The sanction(s) imposed were inappropriate compared to the violation.

4. New facts should be considered. In order to consider new facts, those facts must be sufficient to alter a decision, not known to the student appealing at the time of the original hearing. An Appellate Body shall determine the propriety and admissibility of any new facts. If the new facts are admissible, the Appellate Body shall consider those facts and change the determination of the Conduct Hearing, as it deems appropriate.
 - iv. Review by an Appellate Body is final and may result in more severe sanction(s) for the accused student(s).
 - v. The Appellate Body may consist of the Director of Student Life, the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services or designee, the Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee, the Vice President for Finance, or the Vice President for Development. The Appellate Body may not be the Hearing Officer or member of the Conduct Board in the original hearing.
 - vi. The Appellate Body shall not consist of the President of the College.
 - vii. Following an Appellate Body decision, no other College official shall review the case.
- f. Parental Notification
- i. The parents of a student may be notified of student conduct violations. Parents may also be notified in the case of a health or safety emergency.
- g. Disciplinary Actions
- i. Record of Disciplinary Actions Taken
 1. Other than Dismissal and Revocation of a degree, disciplinary actions shall not be made part of the student's permanent academic record but shall become a part of the student's confidential record.
 - ii. Types of Disciplinary Actions
 1. The following Disciplinary Actions may be imposed upon any student, organization, or group found in violation of the Student Code of Conduct:
 - a. Warning – a notice in writing that states that the student, organization, or group has violated the Code.
 - b. Disciplinary Probation – a written reprimand for a violation of the Code. Probation is for a designated period of time and includes the probability of more severe disciplinary actions if the student group or organization is found in violation of the Code during the probationary period. Students, organizations or groups on probation may not be allowed to participate in College activities.
 - c. Loss of Privileges – denial of specified privileges for a designated period of time.
 - d. Fines – an assessment of a proportionate monetary penalty.

- e. Restitution – compensation for loss, damage or injury. This may take the form of appropriate service and/or monetary or material replacement.
 - f. Notification of Others – In the event that individuals or college offices need to know of a student’s sanctions, the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services or designee may do so.
 - g. Discretionary sanctions – work assignments, essays, service to the College or other related discretionary sanctions.
 - h. Academic Hold – a hold being placed on student’s records, grades, transcripts, or registration until certain conditions are met.
 - i. Suspension – separation from the College for a definite period of time. Conditions for readmission may be specified as part of the Disciplinary Actions. Suspension may be probated to begin at a determined point in the future.
 - j. Dismissal – permanent and complete separation of the student from the College.
 - k. Revocation of admission and/or degree – admission to the College or a degree awarded from the College may be revoked for fraud, misrepresentation, or other violations of the Code in obtaining a degree, or for other serious violations committed by a student prior to graduation.
 - l. Withholding degree – the College may withhold awarding a degree otherwise earned until completion of the process set forth in the Student Code of Conduct, including the completion of Disciplinary Actions imposed.
- iii. More than one of the above types of sanctions may be imposed for any single violation.

9. Academic Policies

a. Introduction

- i. The following academic policies are intended to guide students in their academic endeavors at Villa Maria College. Additional academic policies and procedures can be found in the College Catalogue.

b. Academic Dishonesty

- i. Integrity and credibility are the foundation for all academic work. Academic dishonesty is thus a grievous offense to the educational process and the mission of Villa Maria College. All members of the Villa Maria College community are expected to behave with integrity and credibility.

- ii. The Academic Dishonesty Policy may be found in the Student Code of Conduct. Violations of that policy may be cause for sanctions by Academic Affairs and/or the College Conduct System.
- c. Building Security
 - i. Building security is everyone's responsibility. Students should carry their keys, close doors, report suspicious persons, and not give access to unescorted guests. Propping outside doors is a security risk to all students, and is not permitted.
 - ii. Bicycles/ Vehicles
 - 1. Bicycles are not permitted inside campus property. There are no storage facilities available for bikes in campus buildings. Therefore, bikes must be stored outside.
- d. Classroom Expression
 - i. Discussion and expression of all views relevant to the subject matter are permitted in the classroom and subject to the responsibility of the faculty member to maintain order and to adhere to class time limitations.
 - ii. Students are responsible for learning the content of any course in which they are enrolled.
 - iii. Students are responsible for all stated course requirements, as found in the syllabus of that course.
 - iv. Academic evaluation of student performance shall be neither prejudicial nor capricious.
 - v. Information about student views, beliefs and political associations acquired in confidence by faculty members in the course of their teaching, advising and counseling should remain confidential.
- e. Campus Expression
 - i. Discussion and expression of all views are permitted within the College subject to requirements for the maintenance of order.
 - ii. Support of any cause by orderly means that does not disrupt the operation of the College is permitted.
 - iii. Public statements and demonstrations by individual members of the College community or organizations shall be clearly identified as representative only of those individuals or organizations and not of the College.
 - iv. Students, groups and organizations may invite persons on campus subject to the requirements for use of College facilities and permission from the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services. An honest effort shall be made to provide College facilities for speakers and/or programs invited to the campus by a recognized campus organization.
 - v. Sponsorship of guest speakers and/or programs does not necessarily imply approval or endorsement of the views expressed either by the sponsoring organization(s) or the College.
- f. Campus Publications

- i. The College recognizes that student publications can be a valuable aid in establishing and maintaining an atmosphere of free and responsible discussion and of intellectual exploration of the campus. They can be a means of bringing student concerns to the attention of the College community and of formulating student opinion. All student publications shall be published in accordance with guidelines established by the policies and procedures set forth by the governing documents of each particular publication. These guidelines shall adapt generally accepted journalistic standards to the College setting.
- ii. Student publications shall be generally free of censorship, and their editors and managers shall be free to develop their own editorial policies and news coverage.
- iii. This sense of free expression shall recognize the religious character of the College and shall be sensitive to that character.
- iv. This editorial freedom entails a corollary obligation to honor those generally accepted journalistic standards as interpreted by the College, including but not limited to, the avoidance of libel, indecency, undocumented allegations, attacks on personal integrity, techniques of harassment and innuendo, and to follow all applicable regulations of the Federal Communications Commission. Editorial policy is to be consistent with the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct.
- v. Editors and managers of student publications shall not be arbitrarily suspended or removed from office because of student, faculty, administrative, alumni or public disapproval of editorial policy or content. Editors and managers shall be subject to sanctions only for proper and stated causes in violation of conduct in their role as editors or managers, and when the conduct in question pertains to publications as defined in this Code. Such sanctions shall normally be imposed only as a part of established College Conduct System for students; provided, however, that nothing herein shall be construed to limit the authority of the College in dealing with wrong-doing or breaches of accepted journalistic ethics or standards by any student editor, reporter or publications manager or staff person.
- vi. All student communications shall explicitly state on the editorial page that the opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the College community.
- vii. A College student, recognized group, or organization may only distribute printed material on campus with prior approval of that individual's group or organization's governing body providing such distribution does not disrupt the operation of the College and conforms to Mission of the College and regulations.
- viii. Posting or distribution of printed materials in or on College buildings shall be in accordance with the Mission of the College and the College's Posting Policy.

g. Cell Phone /Electronic Device Use During Class

- i. Students are allowed to have cell phones on campus. However, students may not use cell phones, digital music players, and other electronic devices during class unless designated by the faculty member. Faculty members may confiscate electronic devices or cell phones in the event of a violation of this policy, or require the student to leave for the remainder of class.

h. Computer Policies

- i. All currently registered part-time and full-time students are eligible to obtain a network and e-mail account. User accounts will be activated only after the student signs the "Student Account Agreement" form. These forms are provided to students at registration, orientation, and are available in the Library, in the Open Computer Labs, and from Computer Services. Signing this form indicates that the student agrees to adhere to the Student Acceptable User Policy and the College's Using Software Guide which are posted and are available in the Open Computer Labs and the Library. The following policies will be strictly enforced:

1. All users of computers must have a valid Villa ID and be able to present this on request.
2. No foods or liquids are allowed in the computer classrooms or laboratories.
3. No children are allowed in any of the computer facilities. Room access is restricted to persons actively registered for the semester, current employees, or alumni meeting fee requirements.
4. Misuses of equipment or the computer facilities; intentional damage to equipment, facilities, or software; the alteration of other user accounts; intentional alteration of the hard drive; accessing inappropriate web sites, soliciting, or using the web for non-academic purposes will result in denial of lab privileges and possible disciplinary dismissal from Villa Maria College.
5. Loud talking and boisterous behavior are not allowed in the computer classrooms or laboratories out of respect to other users.
6. No cell phones are allowed in the computer classrooms or laboratories.

- ii. Prohibited Use of IT Resources:

1. It is a violation of this policy to: Intentionally and without authorization, access, modify, damage, destroy, copy, disclose, or take possession of all or part of any computer, computer system, network, software, data file, program, or database. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Gaining access by willfully exceeding the limits of authorization.

- b. Attempting to gain unauthorized access through fraudulent means.
 - c. Gaining access by using another person's name, password, access codes, or personal identification.
 - d. Attempting to gain unauthorized access by circumventing system security, uncovering security loopholes, or guessing passwords/ access codes.
 - e. Give or publish a password, identifying code, personal identification number or other confidential information about a computer, computer system, network or email account, or database.
 - f. Install any software on computer systems in the computer labs, unless authorized by a member of the lab staff or a faculty member.
 - g. Transfer copyrighted materials to or from any system, or via the College network, without the express consent of the owner of the copyrighted material. (See section entitled "File Sharing and Copyright Infringement.")
 - h. Provide outside access to College-developed or commercially obtained network resources.
 - i. Use any College IT resource for commercial, political, or illegal purposes, or for harassment of any kind.
 - j. Display obscene, lewd, or otherwise offensive images or text.
 - k. Intentionally or negligently use computing resources in such a manner as to cause congestion and performance degradation of the network.
 - l. Use College printers for work or pleasure outside the scope of employment or enrollment at the College.
- iii. Provisions for Private Computers Connected to the College network:
1. The following apply to anyone connecting a private computer to the College network via the College Housing network, wireless LAN connection, dial-up network connection, or a regular network connection in an office.
 2. The owner of the computer is responsible for the behavior of all users on the computer and all network traffic to and from the computer, whether or not the owner knowingly generates the traffic.
 3. A private computer connected to the network may not be used to provide network access for anyone who is not authorized to use the College IT resources. The private computer may not be used as a router or bridge between the College network and external networks, such as those of an Internet Service Provider.

4. Should the ITS staff have any reason to believe that a private computer connected to the College network is using resources inappropriately, network traffic to and from that computer will be monitored. If justified, the system will be disconnected from the network, and action taken with the appropriate authorities.
 5. Any residential student, with an authorized network account, may use the in-room connection for scholarly purposes, for official College business, and for personal use, so long as the usage does not violate any law or this policy, or result in commercial gain or profit.
 6. Users are responsible for the security and integrity of their systems. In cases where a computer is hacked into, it is recommended that the system be either shut down or removed from the campus network as soon as possible to localize any potential damage and to stop the attack from spreading. If you suspect electronic intrusion or hacking of your system and would like assistance, contact IT immediately.
 7. The following types of servers should never be connected to the College network: DNS, DHCP, and WINS, or any other server that manages network addresses.
- iv. Copyright Laws
1. File Sharing and Copyright Infringement
 - a. Villa Maria College is committed to following copyright law. Villa Maria College's network allows for quick and easy downloading of Internet files for your scholarly work. Each Villa Maria student must exercise responsible behavior when using the computer network on campus. Unauthorized downloading of music and video files is a violation of copyright law. Protect yourself as a student and the College as a community from the possibility of lawsuits. Students who are found to be downloading files illegally through the Villa Maria Network will be brought up on conduct charges.
 - b. Federal copyright law applies to all forms of information, including electronic communications. Members of the College community should be aware that copyright infringement includes the unauthorized copying, displaying, or distributing of copyrighted material.
- v. Villa Maria College complies with all provisions of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. Any use of the Villa Maria College IT resources to transfer copyrighted material including but not limited to, software, text, images, audio, and video is strictly prohibited. Therefore, the use of file sharing programs such as KaZaa, Morpheus, iMesh, Limewire, etc. is in most

cases, a violation of College policy and federal law. Electronic Communication Policy

- vi. Villa Maria College will use electronic communication methods to conduct official college business. Communicating to faculty, staff and students electronically will ensure that all information is delivered in a timely manner.
 - 1. All faculty, staff and students are given the appropriate access to their email account and the website to obtain these communications. Faculty, staff and students are expected to check and manage their email account on a regular basis in order to stay current with college-related communications. The College also retains the right to send correspondence via traditional methods.
- vii. Peer-to-Peer sharing degrades network performance, opens up the network to viruses, and could result in a legal liability as a result of the unauthorized use of copyrighted material. P2P applications should not be used on campus computers or computers connected to the College network. Misuse could result in disciplinary action, loss of computing privileges, and criminal and/or civil penalties.
- viii. Users are responsible for all activities to and from their network accounts. Users must take every precaution to protect logins and passwords. Under no circumstances should a user allow someone else to share a network or email account. Users are required to change any generic passwords given for initial access.
- ix. Users should not assume or expect any right of privacy with respect to the College's IT resources. Although the College does not seek to monitor the communication of its employees or students, system administrators and/or College officials may access or examine files, user history, site content, or accounts that are suspected of unauthorized use or misuse, that have been corrupted or damaged, that may threaten the integrity of the College's IT resources, or that are in violation of College policy. In addition, files, email, access logs, and any other electronic records may be subject to search under court order.
- x. Internet Use and Social Networking
 - 1. Villa Maria College does not seek to monitor the IT uses of its students and employees, including the content of social networking sites (i.e. Facebook). As a matter of policy, Villa Maria College does not actively monitor the content of social networking sites. However, content found on the internet (Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, etc.) that violates college policy, including the Code of Student Conduct, will be subject to disciplinary action.
- xi. Email

1. All students are provided a “@villa.edu” email account. This account is accessible through the Villa.edu site or by clicking on “e-mail” on the villa.edu website. Your logon username and password are used to access your email. This is the official mail address of all Villa students and is used for emergency notifications, class information, and general correspondence.
 - a. The use of electronic mail is a privilege not a right. Email is for College communication, research, or campus business. Transmitting certain types of communications is expressly forbidden.
 - I. Forbidden communications include: messages containing chain letters, spam, pyramid schemes, urban legends, alarming hoaxes, vulgar, obscene or sexually explicit language or images, threatening, offensive, derogatory, defamatory, harassing, or discriminatory communications of any kind. As with the other College IT resources, the use of email for commercial or political purposes is prohibited.
 2. Under the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, tampering with email, interfering with the delivery of email, and using email for criminal purposes may be felony offenses, requiring the disclosure of messages to law enforcement or other third parties without notification to the student.
 3. Email messages should be transmitted only to those individuals who have a need to receive them. Distribution lists should be constructed and used carefully. Inappropriate mass mailing is forbidden.
 4. All users of the College email system are subject to the access and disclosure of email messages by authorized College personnel.
 5. Students who withdraw from Villa Maria College or who are dismissed will have their User ID and e-mail account deactivated at the time of withdrawal.
- xii. File Storage
1. All data storage is the student’s responsibility. The College provides a mechanism for data storage through a student’s Microsoft Office 365 account – One Drive. Students should always save their data in more than one location using flash drives, external storage devices, or other cloud storage. The College is not responsible for loss of any student data nor is the College responsible for loss of data due to any equipment failures. Saving files on the computer desktop or to the computer’s storage drive is discouraged since others can access these files and

computers are purged upon logging out. Computer Services is not responsible for loss of files saved on computer desktops or on the storage drive.

2. Stored files of unregistered students will be removed when a semester begins and students are authorized. Logon accounts for unregistered students are removed on a semester basis. Portal access does not expire and students can view portal information for the semesters registered at Villa.

xiii. Lab Hours

1. Computer facilities are when the building is open A lab assistant or monitor may be available daily and Saturdays when possible. For assistance with computer questions or problems, contact helpdesk@villa.edu. For aid with assignments, check with your instructor or the Student Success Center. Report all equipment malfunctions to Computer Services.

xiv. Laptop Use

1. Any student who attaches a laptop computer to the VMC network must take measures to insure that the computer is protected against compromise by an internal or external attack. Reasonable measures include the installation and maintenance of virus detection and eradication software, care in opening e-mail message attachments, vigilance when visiting web sites and adhering to published system configuration and management standards.

xv. Printing

1. All computer users are encouraged to use PRINT PREVIEW before sending any document to the printer for final copy. At the beginning of each semester students are provided a \$10.00 printing allowance. Charges per sheet are made as follows: black and white \$.02 and each color copy \$.50. Additional printing capacity for the semester can be purchased in \$1.00 increments in the Business Office. Accounts will be reset in Computer Services upon presentation of a Business Office receipt. Remaining allowances cannot be carried over to the next semester. Printers located within specific program rooms have printing costs covered by course fees, and do not provide a print allowance or incur a print charge.

xvi. Wireless Internet Access (WiFi)

1. Wireless access points are available throughout the entire campus. Open, unsecured network access to the Internet is provided via VILLA_NET. Information sent over this wireless network connection is not encrypted and might be visible and accessible to others.

xvii. Class Attendance

1. Regular attendance in classes is expected of all students; however, some College sponsored co-curricular and extra-curricular events may occasionally be scheduled during class hours. It is College policy that students who are participants in a College sponsored event are excused from a class for the specific event. Exceptions to this policy: students fulfilling clinical and student teaching requirements.
2. Participants in College sponsored co-curricular and extra-curricular events:
 - a. Are not excused for practice.
 - b. Are expected to make-up all work they miss.
 - c. Are not penalized by the instructor for their excused absence.
 - d. Are expected to communicate with each faculty member before the date of the excused absence.
 - e. Must meet individual faculty requirements to complete work due for each missed class.
3. College personnel who are responsible for the College sponsored co-curricular and extra-curricular events will inform faculty of the schedules at the beginning of each semester.
4. When weather is a factor in College sponsored events, the event may result in cancellation and require rescheduling.
5. It is the student's responsibility to inform the faculty of any change in the original schedule.

i. Disabilities

- i. According to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, if students with disabilities are qualified to attend colleges or universities that receive federal funds, they must be accepted regardless of disability. Each institution of higher education is required to develop specific guidelines to provide reasonable accommodations for persons with physical, psychological or learning disabilities in accordance with Section 504. It is the responsibility of the student to seek any necessary accommodations for their disability. It is highly recommended that the students seek services within the first week of classes.
- ii. Students with documented learning disabilities who enroll at Villa Maria College have many services available to make attaining a college education possible. They may choose to utilize reasonable accommodations for free.
- iii. All College personnel who play a role in accommodating the student must receive formal notification of the nature of both the disability and their role in providing reasonable accommodation.
- iv. Eligibility for Services: A qualified college student with a disability may request academic support services from the Director of Health and

Disability Services. Once the student is admitted to the College, the following should be followed to receive academic accommodations:

1. The student is responsible for identifying himself/herself as a person with a documented disability. Therefore, the student is required to make an “intake” appointment with the Director of Health and Disability Services. This should be done within the first two weeks of the semester.
 2. The student will meet with the Director of Health and Disability Services, provide the required documentation and discuss possible reasonable academic accommodations.
 3. Once the student has provided appropriate documentation to the Director of Health and Director of Disability Services for each class every semester. A faculty member is not required to provide academic accommodations until he or she has received the accommodation letter from the student.
- v. Students who may need assistance with physical disabilities may contact The Director of Health and Disability Services for assistance.
- vi. The College has a robust Disability Service Grievance Procedure. This information can be found on-line on the “Disabilities Services” webpage. Further assistance can also be obtained from the Civil Rights Grievance Officer, the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services. They can be reached at 716.961.1838.
- j. Dress Code
- i. Villa Maria College places emphasis on cleanliness, neatness, appropriate attire, respectable appearance and appropriate personal hygiene. Presentable attire is expected in the classroom, academic functions, and College functions. Faculty members, as well as College staff members, can make the determination of what is appropriate in these settings and discuss with students. Faculty members teaching courses requiring a specialized form of dress may designate other dress for their classes and/or for special class projects. Appropriate and presentable attire is part of the College’s on-going efforts to educate for personal responsibility and promotion of civility. Sunbathing on campus property is generally not permitted.
- k. Food and Beverages in Class
- i. Policies regarding eating and drinking any beverages in the classrooms and any consequence(s) for not adhering to them will be established and enforced by the faculty member responsible for each class. At all times, conscious efforts should be made by all to maintain a clean environment, which displays a respect for the rights of others and the conditions of College facilities.
- l. Insurance
- i. The College does not cover personal property that may be lost or damaged from any cause, including but not limited to fire and flooding.

m. Accusations of Plagiarism or Other Forms of Academic Dishonesty

- i. Plagiarism is offering work of another as one's own. Plagiarism is a serious offense and may include, but is not limited to, the following:
 1. Complete or partial copying directly from a written publication or unpublished source in any form of media without proper acknowledgment to the author. Making minor changes in wording or syntax—without acknowledgment to the author—is not sufficient to avoid plagiarism charges.
 2. Paraphrasing the work of another without proper author acknowledgment.
 3. Submitting as one's own original work (however freely given or purchased), the original exam, research paper, manuscript, report, computer file, Internet information, or other assignment that has been prepared by another individual.
- ii. The usual penalty for academic dishonesty is failure on the assignment for the first offense. All incidents of plagiarism are reported to the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, and a letter citing the incident is included in the student's official file. Should a second incident of plagiarism occur during the student's pursuit of a degree, s/he will earn an "F" in that course, and a letter regarding the incident will be entered into the student's official file. Upon graduation, all relevant letters in the student's file will be destroyed. Should a third incident of plagiarism occur, the student will be dismissed from the College; her/his readmission is unlikely.
- iii. In all cases of alleged academic dishonesty (such as plagiarism, cheating, claiming work not done by the student, or lying) where a faculty member observes or discovers the dishonesty, the faculty member may choose to confront the student and handle the matter between the faculty member and the student, or the faculty member may choose to refer the incident to the appropriate department/division chairperson. If the appropriate department/division chairperson is the instructor in question, the concern should be directed to the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. If the faculty member chooses to confront the situation alone with the student and the matter is satisfactorily resolved, the faculty member and the student should submit a joint statement of the details to the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, which will be included in the student's file. If the situation is not satisfactorily resolved between the faculty member and the student, the matter may then be referred or appealed to the appropriate department/division chairperson.
 1. In either case, the appropriate department/division chairperson may choose to 1) resolve the matter through a meeting with both the student and the faculty member, or 2) refer the matter to the

Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. The findings, in either case, are final.

- iv. If alleged academic dishonesty is reported to a faculty member by a third party, then the faculty member will meet with the appropriate department/division chairperson to determine whether the evidence warrants an investigation, and how the investigation will be handled. It may also be decided that the faculty member will either confront the student or, assuming enough evidence is present to warrant action, turn the matter over to the appropriate department/division chairperson to either resolve or organize a hearing.

n. Leave of Absence Policy

i. Introduction

1. Students who desire to leave Villa Maria College for a period of time, with the intention of returning, should go through the Leave of Absence process. Students who wish to leave and do not intend to finish their studies at Villa Maria College must officially notify the college by going through the Withdrawal Process found in the College Catalogue.
2. Students planning to withdraw from Villa Maria College are requested to contact the Registrar at 961-1806. Following an interview with the Registrar, the student completes a withdrawal form.
3. The college reserves the right to place a student on a leave of absence for non disciplinary reasons when it concludes that a leave is in the best interest of the student due to personal or health related conditions that apparently have not or cannot be resolved in an immediate fashion, or if it deems such a leave necessary due to a threat to the student's or others students' health or safety. The student may register again upon satisfaction of such terms as the college determines are appropriate to the situation in accordance with this policy. The College will not assume the cost of any evaluations or treatment requested of students.

ii. Medical Leave of Absence

1. A Medical Leave of Absence is given for an entire semester.
2. Any student (full or part-time) in good standing who must temporarily leave the College for medical or psychological reasons may request a Medical Leave of Absence.
3. A student who desires a Medical Leave of Absence must submit a letter of request to the VP for Enrollment and Student Services. The VP will then in turn set the parameters necessary to grant the request for the Leave of Absence. If the student meets the parameters set forth, the VP will approve the Leave of Absence in writing to the student.

4. A health care provider's statement, on official letterhead, is required prior to the consideration of the leave and again at the conclusion of the leave.
 5. For students who have federal financial aid: a leave of absence should not exceed 180 days in any 12-month period of time. Instructions concerning financial aid (institutional and Federal) will be given to the student at the beginning of the leave.
 6. Returning to Villa Maria College
 - a. A student who desires to return to Villa Maria College after an official Leave of Absence may do so by indicating such a desire to the VP for Enrollment and Student Services in writing.
 - b. If the student has met the criteria of a Leave of Absence the VP can reinstate the student and allow registering for the next semester.
 - c. If the student has not met the criteria for the return from the Leave of Absence the VP can deny reenrollment.
 7. Appeals
 - a. If denied the Medical Leave of Absence, a student may appeal in writing the VP for Enrollment and Student Services. Appeals will be heard by the VP for Enrollment and Student Services and the VP for Academic Affairs
- iii. Disciplinary Leave of Absence/ Involuntary Withdrawal
1. Standards for Withdrawal
 - a. A student will be subject to Involuntary Administrative Withdrawal or Disciplinary Leave of Absence from college housing, or from the College, if the College has determined that the student:
 - I. Engages, or threatens to engage, in behavior which poses a danger of causing physical harm to self or others, and/or
 - II. Engages, or threatens to engage, in behavior which would cause significant property damage, which directly and substantially impedes the lawful activities of other members of the College, and/or
 - III. Commits a violation of the College's Code of Student Conduct and lacks the capacity to comprehend and participate in the conduct process, and/or
 - IV. Commits a violation of the College's Code of Student Conduct and did not understand the nature or wrongfulness of the conduct at the time of the offense.

b. Referral for Evaluation

I. The VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services, or designee, may refer a student to the Director of the Counseling Center for evaluation, if there is reasonable belief that the student meets the previously noted criteria for involuntary withdrawal. At either the VP's or Director of the Counseling Center's discretion, the student may be referred to an independent mental health professional chosen by the college for evaluation, under the condition that the student will sign a release of information allowing the college to disclose to the mental health professional the student's current behavior and reasons for referral.

II. The VP or Director of the Counseling Center shall set the conditions for evaluation (such as time frame and reporting requirements) according to the procedures of the Counseling Center. A student who fails to meet the conditions for evaluation may be withdrawn on an interim basis or be subject to a hearing without the requested evaluation.

c. A student who is involuntarily withdrawn shall remain in such a state until a Hearing can be held. The Hearing shall be held within a reasonable amount of time.

iv. Voluntary Withdrawal

1. Students may withdraw from Villa Maria College at any time for any reason. However, a student may drop a course and add another only during the "drop/add" period (typically the first week of classes). A student may drop a course after the first week of classes and up until the 10th week of classes with the designation of "W" with permission of the office of the Registrar. Different guidelines may exist for students in the on-line program, please consult those applicable policies for more information. Students who wish to withdraw from Villa Maria College must meet with the Registrar to initiate the withdrawal process.

a. Any student who drops below full-time status may face eligibility issues for financial aid and participation in some college activities.

- b. Students who withdraw from the College are subject to the refund policy established in the “refund” section of this catalogue and all other applicable financial policy.
 - c. Students who voluntarily withdraw must follow the admission and re-admission standards in place at the time of re-enrollment.
2. In certain instances, the College may offer a student who faces disciplinary action, or who is subject to a disciplinary leave of absence or involuntary withdrawal, or other circumstances, which the college deems appropriate an option to voluntarily withdraw from the College. In such situations, students will follow the normal Withdrawal procedure.
3. Procedure
 - a. This policy may be enacted by the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services, or designee when:
 - i. Any member of the College community who reasonably believes that a student may meet one of the involuntary withdrawal standards above contacts the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services with his/her concerns about the student.
4. Appeal Process
 - a. A student may appeal the Disciplinary Leave of Absence/ Involuntary Withdrawal in writing to the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services.
5. Returning to Villa Maria College
 - a. A student who desires to return to Villa Maria College after a Disciplinary Leave of Absence/ Involuntary Withdrawal may do so by indicating such a desire to the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services in writing.
 - b. The VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services will determine the criteria for returning to Villa Maria College. If the student has met the criteria for returning the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services can reinstate the student and allow him or her to register for the next semester.
 - c. If the student has not met the criteria for the return from the Leave of Absence, the VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services can deny reenrollment.
6. Refunds
 - a. Refunds, if applicable, may be considered in accordance with applicable College policies and procedures found in the College catalogue.

- 7. Deviations from Established Procedures by Villa Maria College
 - a. Reasonable deviations from these procedures will not invalidate a decision or proceeding unless significant prejudice to the student may result.
- v. Military Leave of Absence
 - 1. Villa Maria College supports students who are members of the United States armed forces and reserve units. An undergraduate or graduate student who is a member of the U.S. military, National Guard or other armed forces reserve unit who is called or ordered to active duty elsewhere may be granted a Leave of Absence from the College for the period of active duty and up to one year after returning from active duty.
- o. Withdrawal from College Procedure
 - i. Any student wishing to withdraw from the College needs to see the Registrar to begin the proper procedure. Financial aid and/or academic transcripts will be held if proper withdrawal paperwork has not been completed and balances have not been paid.
 - ii. Students needing to withdraw from a class or from the College must note that failure to attend the first class or subsequent class meetings does not constitute official withdrawal. To be official, notification of withdrawal must be made in writing. Any tuition refund is based on the date the office receives the official written notice of withdrawal. A student may withdraw without penalty prior to the first meeting of the course. Please refer to the College's refund policies provided on-line and in the Catalogue.

10. Additional Policies

- a. Alcohol and Drug Statement - Villa Maria College is dedicated to the creation of a Christian environment, which fosters the intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical development of its students and employees. This development is the essence of personal wellness.
 - i. The College community takes its responsibility seriously, and through education, counseling and modeling, assists students and employees in making responsible, ethical and informed behavioral choices.
 - ii. In accordance with the 1989 Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, the College reaffirms standards of conduct that clearly prohibit the unlawful possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees on the College property or as part of any of its activities. Villa Maria College will comply with state law and local ordinances regarding the purchase and consumption of alcoholic beverages.
 - iii. The Drug Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989 (Public Law 101-226; Final Regulations published on August 16, 1990) requires the College to certify to the United States Department of Education that

it has adopted and implemented a program to prevent the illicit use of drugs and the abuse of alcohol by its students and employees.

- iv. The Higher Education Act Amendments of 1986 require those institutions receiving federal financial student aid to certify that they have drug prevention programs accessible to institutional officers, employees and students. This program must include the annual distribution of the following to each student and employee:
 - 1. Standards of conduct that clearly prohibit, at a minimum, the unlawful possession, use or distribution of drugs and alcohol by students and employees on the institution's property or as part of the institution's activities;
 - 2. A description of the applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for unlawful possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol;
 - 3. A description of the health risks associated with the use of illicit drugs and the abuse of alcohol;
 - 4. A description of any drug and alcohol counseling, treatment or rehabilitation programs that are available to students and employees; and
 - 5. A clear statement that the institution will impose sanctions on students and employees (consistent with local, state and federal law) and a description of these sanctions, up to and including expulsion or termination of employment and referral for prosecution for violations of the standards of conduct.
 - v. The law further requires that the College conduct a biennial review of its program to (a) determine its effectiveness and implement changes as they are needed; and (b) ensure that the sanctions developed are consistently enforced. The following document is Villa Maria College's response to Section 22 of the law, entitled "Drug-Free Schools and Campuses" and the Higher Education Act Amendments of 1986 which require those institutions receiving federal financial student aid to certify that they have drug prevention programs accessible to institutional officers, employees and students.
- b. Emergency Situations
- i. The College reserves the right to immediately remove a person(s) from campus if College officials determine that the actions of any person(s) are a threat to a member or members of the campus community.
 - 1. In the event that such person(s) involved are students, the College may temporarily suspend its normal procedure to ensure the safety of the campus community.
 - a. In such circumstances, once the emergency situation has been mitigated, normal policy for removal of students from campus will resume.

2. In the event the person(s) involved are non-students, the College may remove the person(s) and issue a criminal no trespass warrant according to New York State law.
3. In responding to Emergency Situations, “The College” is defined as any College employee acting in his or her official capacity. This includes, but is not limited to, the President, Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, etc.

c. Financial Aid

- i. The Financial Aid Office at Villa Maria College believes that all qualified students should have an opportunity to attend Villa Maria College. The financial aid program is designed to help bridge the gap between the College’s cost and the student’s ability to pay. Villa Maria College participates in all federal and state financial aid programs in addition to offering its own institutional awards. Information about financial aid can be found on the Financial Aid website of www.Villa.edu and the College Catalogue.
 1. The specific website is:
<https://www.villa.edu/admission/financial-aid/>

d. Financial Obligations

- i. Financial arrangements for tuition and fees must be made with the Business Office by the date stipulated at the time of billing. There is a financial penalty for failure to meet this deadline.
- ii. If a student has any outstanding debts at the end of a semester, a transcript and grades will not be released until these debts are paid. A student is not permitted to register for a new semester if he/she owes any debts from the previous semester. In addition, degrees, certificates or diplomas will not be conferred until all obligations are fulfilled, and disciplinary action may be taken.

e. Fire Safety/Fire Alarms/ Fire Safety Equipment

- i. Fire safety is everyone’s responsibility. All fire alarms should be considered true indications of danger and the building must be evacuated as safely and quickly as possible.
- ii. For specific fire procedures see the Emergency Procedures of the College
- iii. While staff will attempt to alert students to leave buildings, it is incumbent upon each person to take personal responsibility to exit buildings when there is a fire alarm sounding. Staff will indicate when people may safely return inside.
- iv. Additionally, fire drills are conducted in each building each semester. Failing to evacuate the building during an alarm may result in disciplinary action.
- v. Causing a building to go into alarm falsely can carry grave consequences. Students may panic or may ignore the alarm believing it to be false. This may in turn cause students to become injured, overcome by smoke, or to lose their lives. Therefore, the College takes the actions of tampering

with fire alarms, smoke detectors, sprinklers, and fire extinguishers very seriously.

- vi. The following will be considered as sufficient cause for immediate disciplinary action and may result in dismissal from the College or criminal prosecution:
 - 1. Intentionally or carelessly setting a fire of any nature.
 - 2. Pulling a fire alarm.
 - 3. Tampering with smoke detectors or sprinkler systems resulting in triggering the alarm system.
 - 4. Misuse of fire extinguishers.
 - 5. Setting off firecrackers or similar incendiary devices.
 - 6. Tampering with the protective hood on fire alarm pull stations.
 - 7. Using candles.
 - 8. Removing batteries or tampering with a room smoke detector.
 - 9. Vandalizing exit signs.
 - vii. All students and College personnel must evacuate the building where and when the fire alarm has sounded. Faculty members in classrooms and administrators in all buildings are to enforce the following regulations when the fire alarm sounds:
 - 1. Close all doors and windows.
 - 2. Evacuate all areas.
 - 3. Identify any disabled person needing assistance; arrange for necessary aid in evacuation.
 - 4. Follow directional signs to fire exits; use stairs, do not use elevators.
 - 5. Move away from the building and down the sidewalk or to a designated safety area.
 - viii. Fire drills are mandatory and held during each semester.
 - ix. All people occupying the building(s) must evacuate immediately at the sound of the fire alarm.
 - x. Unauthorized use of fire extinguishers, intentionally pulling a fire alarm or tampering with any other designated fire safety equipment is subject to disciplinary action and/or possible criminal action.
- f. Health
- i. The Director of Health Services maintains student medical records and information. Villa Maria College follows FERPA regulations regarding confidentiality of health records and release of information.
 - ii. All students are required to complete a Confidential Student Health Form, including immunization status mandated by New York State Public Health Law 2165. (See immunization policy below.)
 - iii. Immunization Policy
 - 1. Effective August 1, 1990, New York State Public Health Law 2165 requires all students born on or after January 1, 1957, attending degree granting institutions, must demonstrate proof of immunity

to measles (two doses), mumps, and rubella, or two MMRs, or proof of immunity with a blood test in order to attend classes. As of July 2003, students are required to sign a meningitis response form. For transfer of immunization records, each student is entitled to one copy without charge. A fee of two dollars must be paid for each additional transaction.

iv. Medical Emergency Policy

1. A medical emergency is an injury or illness that is acute and poses an immediate risk to a person's life or long-term health.
 - a. Press "Speed 1" on corridor phones or dial 911 from other phones. Notify Security by pressing "Speed 2" on corridor phones or dial 870-7176. Security can assist emergency personnel to appropriate location.

v. AIDS Policy

1. Villa Maria College will not discriminate against students who have AIDS, ARC, or a positive HTLV-III Antibody test. The College also recommends that students inform appropriate health resources, but realizes this is the responsibility of the individual. This information will be held in the strictest confidence and inquiries received for information will be denied. In appropriate settings, Villa Maria College promotes preventative measures such as the use of personal protective equipment. Additionally, education will be ongoing to assist in the prevention of this disease.

g. Housing

- i. Villa Maria College does not have College owned housing for students. Students are, however, offered apartment-style housing at Collegiate Village (CV) located about 1.5 miles from the campus. Villa Maria College (VMC) students who live at CV are expected to abide by the policies and procedures of the Collegiate Village Resident Handbook. Conduct issues that occur at CV may be subject to additional action by the College's Code of Student Conduct.
- ii. For more details on housing, including information on apartment options and rates, visit the website at www.collegiatevillagewny.com.

h. Identification Cards

- i. All students must have an identification card issued by the College. Faculty and other employees are also welcome to come to the front desk of Felician Hall for an ID. The card is necessary to use in the Dining Hall to purchase tax free meals and the meal plan. Students are issued ID cards at Orientation and during the first week of classes in the Student Center during extended hours. Later in the semester, please call 961-1877 to ensure that someone is available to take photos for the ID cards.
- ii. The card permits students to participate in all College and student-sponsored activities, to use computers in open labs, and to withdraw

materials from the Villa Maria College Library. It is necessary to present an ID card to the Business Office personnel when transacting financial affairs, in the Villa Maria College Bookstore when making purchases on a book loan, and in the Student Center when using facilities. The card also serves as proof of campus status and must be presented when requested by College personnel and/or security guard.

iii. ID cards are issued in the Student Center during scheduled office hours. Lost ID cards will be replaced for a \$10 charge, which covers the cost of materials and handling.

i. Parking/ Moving Violations

i. Villa Maria College is not responsible for injury to any person or damage to any vehicle. Drivers assume the responsibility of reporting incidents to the police and to the Business Office. The following regulations are in effect during the fall, spring, and summer sessions:

1. All cars are registered in the Student Center.
2. The parking sticker is displayed on the driver's side rear window.
3. The campus speed limit is 15 mph.
4. Cars are parked between yellow lines.

ii. No Parking Areas

1. Breezeway on either side of the Main Building. The breezeway is not to be used for waiting purposes or parking, this is a walkway between buildings;
2. Fire lanes—space nearest the buildings (unlined);
3. Any unlined areas or areas marked with diagonal lines; and
4. Parking spaced labeled for visitors.

iii. Parking stickers are to be obtained in Felician Hall front desk. A parking sticker is valid for the duration of time a student is enrolled at Villa Maria College. A parking sticker must be obtained for each car used on campus.

iv. All offenders of parking regulations are subject to a student conduct violation and/or parking ticket issued by Campus Security. Fines are to be paid in the Business Office within five school days after receiving a parking violation ticket. Grades will be withheld until all fines are paid. Cars illegally parked in the handicapped area are subject to being towed away at the owner's expense.

j. Photography and Video

i. By enrolling at Villa Maria College students acknowledge that their image may appear in official college photographs and videos that can be used for a variety of purposes including, but not limited to: advertising, signs, and other materials. Students who do not want their image used in College photographs or video should contact the Communication Office to opt out of this blanket agreement.

k. Snow Days & Emergency Closings

- i. The college has an emergency notification system to alert people to closings, snow days, and other important information. To sign up visit: <https://www.villa.edu/emergency-message-registration/>
- ii. ANNOUNCEMENTS OF EMERGENCY AND/OR SNOW CLOSINGS ARE MADE ON THE FOLLOWING RADIO STATION: WBEN-930 AM; AND ON THE FOLLOWING TELEVISION CHANNELS: WGRZ-CHANNEL 2, WIVB-CHANNEL 4, WKBW-CHANNEL 7. IF YOU DO NOT HEAR A CLOSING ON THE RADIO AND TELEVISION CHANNELS, IT MEANS SCHOOL IS IN SESSION.
- iii. Villa Maria College will not cancel classes except when there are severe weather conditions in Cheektowaga and/or Buffalo. The College recognizes, however, that many students commute from a wide geographical area and the road conditions may vary greatly. Common sense and good judgment should guide students as to whether they can safely get to their classes. Students are strongly advised to inform faculty members of absence due to weather during the day or during the evening/weekend hours, respectively.

I. Student Records – FERPA

- i. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. Students obtain these rights upon attendance at Villa Maria College. Attendance at Villa Maria College begins with either the first day of class or the date the student moves into student housing, whichever is earlier.
- ii. The student's rights include the right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the College receives a request for access.
- iii. A student should submit to the registrar, dean, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official, a written request that identifies the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. The College official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the College official to whom the request was submitted does not maintain the records, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
- iv. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Please note that this is not a grade appeal mechanism. The policy regarding grade appeals is located in the Student Handbook under Academic Policies.
- v. A student who wishes to ask the College to amend a record should write the College official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record that the student wants changed, and specify why it should be changed.
- vi. If the College decides not to amend the record as requested, the College will notify the student in writing of the decision and the student's right to

a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- vii. The right to provide written consent before the College discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records, except to the full extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- viii. Under one such exception, the College discloses education records without a student's prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the College has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using College employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.
- ix. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for the College.
- x. Upon request, the College also discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
- xi. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the College to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5901
 - 1. The right to withhold directory information. The College has designated the following as directory information: student name, address (including e-mail address and parents' address), telephone number, date and place of birth, photograph, major field of study, class year and enrollment status, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, the most recent previous educational institution attended, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and weights and heights of members of athletic teams. Students may refuse to allow the College to designate the above information about them as directory information by notifying the registrar in writing within two weeks after the first day of class for the fall semester. Students must submit an annual written notification of refusal to allow the designation of directory information.

- m. Student Right-to-know and Campus Security Act
 - i. Any individual who is considering enrolling at Villa Maria College may secure a copy of the College's graduation rate compiled in accordance with the Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act by contacting the College's Admissions Office. Any enrolled student may obtain this information by contacting the Registrar's Office. The Institutional Research Office is the depository for this information.

11. Alcohol and Drug Policy

- a. In keeping with its institutional mission, Villa Maria College seeks to provide a student-centered environment that recognizes the dignity and potential of all and addresses a student's intellectual, vocational, and spiritual needs. In so doing, Villa Maria College strives to maintain a campus community that fosters truth, charity, and unity.
- b. To insure a safe, healthy, and vibrant learning and working environment, Villa Maria College holds each person responsible for his/her conduct at all times including behaviors which occur while under the influence of alcohol and/or other drugs.
- c. Villa Maria College reaffirms its commitment to achieving a drug-free campus and to the maintenance of an environment free from abusive use of alcohol. Villa Maria College seeks to fulfill this commitment by providing the following: education, enforcement of the alcohol and drug policy, and information to those who voluntarily seek assistance.
- d. To insure compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and the Drug-Free School and Communities Act of 1989, the following policy is currently in effect for Villa Maria College.
- e. Standards of Conduct
 - i. No illicit drugs may be bought, possessed, used, distributed, or consumed on campus, at Collegiate Village Buffalo, or elsewhere as part of College activities at any time. Use, sale, possession, or purchase of narcotics or other drugs without a physician's prescription is in violation of the law and of the standards of Villa Maria College.
 - ii. No alcoholic beverages may be bought, possessed, used, distributed, or consumed on campus, at Collegiate Village Buffalo, or elsewhere as part of College activities unless approved and authorized in advance by the President of the College.
- f. Legal Sanctions
 - i. As of December 1, 1985, the legal minimum age to purchase alcoholic beverages in New York State is 21. Under the law, no person can sell, deliver, or give away any alcoholic beverage to any person under the age of 21. The law as it currently stands can be found in Appendix A.
 - ii. Villa Maria College will not shield any student from local, state, and federal legal sanction for unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol. The state penal code is very specific (Section 220.0 through Section 220.65 can be obtained in the College Library or the

Health Services Office) in the controlled substances area and most violations are felonies. Federal and state laws are listed in Appendix B and Appendix C.

g. Health Risks

- i. The Villa Maria College Community has a serious concern relating to the use of any drugs including alcohol. Alcohol and illicit drug substances can have the following single or multiple effects (long or short term):
 1. Death through cardiac and/or respiratory arrest;
 2. Genetic damage;
 3. Hallucinations;
 4. Visual problems;
 5. Coordination problems/increase in accidents;
 6. Breathing and circulatory problems;
 7. Decreased inhibitions and emotional control leading to possible spouse, child, or parent abuse;
 8. Drowsiness;
 9. Mood altering and emotional changing experiences (swings);
 10. Depression of and/or increasing the effects of prescription drugs already being taken;
 11. Hyperactivity/depression;
 12. Multiple mental health and nervous system disorders;
 13. Neglect of good nutrition and personal hygiene;
 14. Decrease in reaction time;
 15. Cancer;
 16. Increased incidence of suicide.

h. Available Services and Programs

- i. Villa Maria College recognizes the need to make available confidential counseling (i.e., subject to the standards of privacy established in the medical and religious professions) to students who are struggling with alcohol/drug related problems. Information about treatment facilities is provided in Appendix E and further information can be obtained from the Director of Health Services. Once a semester, the College will offer an education program regarding alcohol and drug abuse.
- i. In compliance with Section 952 of the Higher Education amendments (H.R. 6) parents and guardians of students will be notified of violations of college policies or rules in addition to local, state, and federal laws governing the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance, if the student is under 21 years of age and if the college determines that the student has committed a violation with respect to such use or possession. Notice shall be made by the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services in such cases.
- j. Any student employee of the College convicted of any criminal drug statute violation which has occurred in or on the workplace premises is required to notify the supervisor, preferably in writing, within five (5) calendar days following such a conviction. Any person receiving such notification shall

immediately provide, in writing, notice to his/her vice president. The vice president will notify the Vice President for Business Affairs, the Director of Financial Aid, and the Director of Grants so that notification can be sent to the appropriate federal contracting agency.

k. Advertising

- i. Advertisements for events may not mention the availability of alcohol in a prominent way or create the impression that drinking is the sole purpose of an event. If mention of alcohol is made, equal attention must be given to the availability of non-alcoholic beverages.

12. Civil Rights Grievance Procedure

- a. The full Civil Rights Grievance Procedure, which contains policies on Title IX – Sexual Harassment and disability services can be found on-line at www.Villa.edu.
 - i. Full address:
 1. <https://www.villa.edu/campus-life/title-ix/>

13. Crime Prevention Policy

- a. To fulfill federal requirements of Title II of the Clery Act and also Article 129-A of the NY Education Law, the following policy is currently in effect for Villa Maria College. Since Villa Maria College believes in values and justice, no crime will be tolerated on the campus. Security plans, emergency plans, and crime reporting are organized to contribute to a safer environment, and to provide the mechanism for obtaining outside help from local police agencies and emergency facilities. The policy of Villa Maria College requires the reporting and investigation of crimes, including but not limited to Violent Felony Offenses as defined in NY Penal Law 70.02. The policy also requires that an investigation will be made in the event that a student who resides at a facility owned or operated by the College is reported to be missing. Investigations will be coordinated between the College and local police authorities.
 - i. Emergency phones are located on corridors. Instructions are posted adjacent to the phone.
- b. Reporting Crimes
 - i. Villa Maria College requires that all crimes, missing person situations, and emergencies be reported immediately.
 - ii. All students, faculty, staff, and visitors are asked to report any unusual or suspicious incidents to the Business Office, the police, or to security.
 1. Police, Fire Department, Rescue—press “Speed 1” on corridor phones or dial 911
 2. Security Guard—press “Speed 2” on corridor phones or dial 870-7176
 3. Business Office—dial 1811
 - a. To insure proper documentation, please complete a crime report in the Business Office.

- iii. If you prefer to contact someone confidentially, you may call
 1. Counseling—1821 or 961-1821
 2. Campus Ministry—1813 or 961-1813
 3. Information received confidentially will be used for statistical purposes. If it is determined that the circumstances of the crime pose a danger to other members of the College community, then general information about the incident may be released. However, the victim’s identity will be protected.

14. Emergency Procedures

- a. Emergencies and disasters are unpredictable and often strike without warning. It is essential that all Villa faculty, staff, students, and visitors respond quickly and appropriately to emergency situations in order to reduce the risk of injury and property damage. Emergency Procedures can be found in the Business Office
- b. Emergency Phone Numbers
 - i. Villa Maria Security 716.870.7176, 716.848.9640
 - ii. Police/Fire/Ambulance Emergency 9-911
 - iii. The 9-1-1 emergency system can be accessed from office and hallway phone by dialing 9 prior to 9-1-1. If you do call 9-1-1 for an emergency, please also call Villa Security immediately afterward. This will allow officers to meet, coordinate with, and direct emergency officials for the incident. If you cannot reach Villa Security for some reason, call 9-1-1.
- c. General Emergency Procedures
 - i. When you become aware of an emergency situation where life or property is threatened, contact Villa Security immediately at 716.870.7176, 716.848.9640. It is imperative that everyone follows the directives of emergency response personnel. This includes Villa Security, local Police and Fire/EMS personnel. Know the location of safety equipment in your work area and how to use it. Familiarize yourself with emergency evacuation routes for your building.

15. Identifying Characteristics of Villa Maria College

- a. Ideals: *Veritas, Caritas, Unitas*
 - i. Latin inscription of the ideals of the College— truth, charity, and unity.
- b. School Colors: *Blue and White, accent: Brown*
 - i. The founders chose these colors with brown symbolizing the Franciscan Order and blue symbolizing the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- c. Patroness: The Virgin Mary under the title of Our Lady of Villa is the patroness and protector of Villa Maria College. The statue is located on the front grounds of the College.
- d. Mascot: The Viking
- e. Seal: The Seal of Villa Maria College is a graphic representation of the foundation upon which the College rests, the life-giving sources that feed it and the ideals that flow from its spirit. The Holy Spirit, the Source of Eternal

Wisdom, hovers above the triangle upon which are inscribed in Latin the ideals of the College—truth, charity, and unity. Within the triangle, which symbolizes the Most Holy Trinity, is the Immaculate Heart of Mary as it is depicted in the Seal of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Felix of Cantalice. The crossed arms of Christ and St. Francis of Assisi symbolize the Franciscan Rule of the Third Order Regular, with the Eucharistic Host placed upon the Cross depicting the Eucharistic and penitential character of the Felician Congregation. The Latin inscription encircling these symbols reads: “Seal of Villa Maria College of Buffalo, New York” and the date of the chartering of the College—1961.



16. Missing Student Policy

- a. It is the policy of Villa Maria College that any faculty or staff member of the College who receives information that a student of the College is missing from his or her normal and ordinary place of residence, whose whereabouts cannot be determined, and whose absence does not appear to be voluntary shall promptly report this information to the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services. The source of the report to include name, phone, and address of the reporting party along with a summary of the circumstances shall be made a part of any such report, to the extent possible. For purposes of speed, the initial report may be verbal to be followed by a written statement of circumstances forwarded in due course.
- b. The Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services shall make inquiry to confirm as much information as possible and shall make a report to the Police Department in either Cheektowaga, New York, or in Buffalo, New York, as appropriate. Reporting:
 - i. Anyone with knowledge that a student is missing for 24 hours or more must report this information to Campus Security, the Business Office, or the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services.

- ii. Individuals who wish to report that a student has been missing for 24 hours may contact any of the following office
 - 1. Office of Student Affairs - VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services
 - a. Telephone: 716.961.1831
 - b. Location: Felician Hall, room 119.
- c. Confidential Contact
 - i. Each student has the option to register a confidential contact person to be notified in the case that the student is determined to be missing. Only authorized campus officials and law enforcement officers in furtherance of a missing person investigation have access to this information.
 - ii. To complete a Confidential Contact Information form, please visit the Business Office. The Business Office will maintain confidential Contact Information forms.
 - iii. The College will contact the parent or guardian of any students who are less than 18 years of age and not emancipated, who are reported missing.
- d. Law Enforcement
 - i. In all instances where a student has been reported missing for more than 24 hours, law enforcement will be notified.
 - ii. Villa Maria College may initiate any part of an investigation or procedures in less than 24 hours if circumstances warrant a faster implementation.

17. Student Activities and Organization Policy

- e. Introduction
 - i. Part of the Student Services, the Student Life Office strives to meet the various needs of the campus community. In addition to social programs, they offer cultural events, holiday programs, and service projects in order to enhance the holistic development of the students. The office works closely with the Student Government in planning various campus events. The office is responsible for the authorization and coordination of student-sponsored extracurricular programming held on campus.
- f. Clubs and Organizations
 - i. The purpose of clubs and organizations at Villa Maria College is to promote student involvement and leadership, build community, have fun, and further interests in Villa Maria and the outside community. Students have the ability to create and develop new clubs and organizations if there is not one on campus that suits their interests.
- g. Student Participation in College Governance
 - i. Villa Maria College recognizes that students are entitled to participate in the formulation of rules, regulations and policies directly affecting Student Life. Participation shall be provided through the Student Government and through student participation on College committees and councils.

- ii. The Student Government shall have primary responsibility for recognizing student organizations, enforcing Student Government rules, regulations and legislative actions, and budgeting and administering College funds allocated to it.
- h. Fundraising
 - i. The Student Life Office and the Development Office must approve all fundraising done by student clubs or organizations. Fundraising forms can be picked up from the Campus Activities Office.
- i. Legal Compliance
 - i. All organizations and groups shall be in compliance with all applicable federal, state and local laws.
- j. Organizational Funds
 - i. All organizations and groups which receive College funding or which use the College name in the solicitation of funds or the generation of revenue must keep such funds on deposit with the College and make use of the normal College disbursement process in the expenditure of these funds.
 - ii. All clubs and organizations may not use any funds to purchase alcohol without prior written approval from the Director of Student Life and VP for Enrollment Management and Student Services.
 - iii. All clubs and organizations funding and expense must follow the policies set forth by the College and are subject to change at any time without notice.
- k. Posting Materials
 - i. The Student Life Office will be responsible for approving all posters and fliers on campus from all student clubs and organizations and off-campus individuals or organizations.
 - ii. Student organizations and campus departments may utilize the bulletin boards on campus. Off-campus individuals or organizations, Villa students, and student organizations may only post fliers if they are approved first by the Student Life Office. There is no guarantee that a flier will be approved.
 - iii. Fliers must contain contact information for the organization/department and suitable content for the campus community. Any fliers depicting inappropriate material will not be approved; i.e. explicit content, alcohol advertisement, etc.
 - iv. Fliers may not be posted on any of the glass doors on campus, unless they contain emergency information. Fliers must only be posted on the designated bulletin boards. Only one flier will be posted for each bulletin board.
 - v. Other campus offices may post relevant materials to their departments without approval or stamping. Academic offices are responsible for their own postings. However, posters will only stay in place for two weeks and still must adhere to the policy regarding suitable content, location, etc.

- vi. All campus offices are responsible for ensuring that up-to-date fliers only are posted on campus. Fliers will be removed after 14 days, and must be removed 24 hours after the event.
 - vii. Chalking of the sidewalks is only permitted after receiving approval from the Student Life Office. Students must define what will be written, and they must seek approval at least three days prior to the chalking.
 - viii. Violators to the posting policy will be held accountable with guidelines outlined in the Student and Staff Handbooks. Off-campus individuals who violate this policy will be banned from posting fliers in the future.
- I. Risk Management
- i. Certain activities in which students choose to participate may involve certain personal physical risks. Students should use caution and common sense when participating in any activities, and recognize that the College is not always able to provide for, and can never ensure, student safety.
 - ii. In activities or events sponsored by clubs or organizations where the physical risk of students is of concern, the Director of Student Life will develop a risk management plan with the club or organization officers.
- m. Social Activity Regulations
- i. For any event outside of normal classroom activity involving the use of College facilities, applications for space may be obtained from the Student Life Office and the Facilities Rental Office.
 - ii. College facilities may be scheduled and used by registered organizations for regular business meetings, for social programs and for programs open to the public according to the policies outlined in this section.
 - iii. Reasonable conditions may be imposed to regulate the timeliness of requests, to determine the appropriateness of the space assigned, to regulate time and use, and to ensure proper maintenance and order.
 - iv. Allocation of space shall be based on priority of requests and the demonstrated needs of the organization.
 - v. Reasonable charges may be imposed to cover any costs for the use of facilities. Physical abuse of assigned facilities or disregard for specific regulations pertaining to a given facility may result in reasonable limitations on future allocations of space to offending parties as well as restitution for damages.
 - vi. The organization requesting space must inform the College of the names of outside speakers and the general purpose of any meeting open to persons other than members.
 - vii. No speaker sponsored by a registered organization shall be denied appearance on campus for arbitrary or capricious reasons. Reasons for denial include, but are not limited to, probability of disruption of campus activities, endangerment of the College's tax-exempt status, and/or reasonable expectation of danger to life or property.
 - viii. The sponsoring organization and its officers are responsible for:

1. Informing the advisor(s) in advance of all functions sponsored by the organization. All organizational activities must receive the prior approval of the advisor.
 2. The behavior of persons attending the function including but not limited to Student Code violations, and any illegal acts either engaged in or knowingly permitted by the organization.
 3. Any damage to utilized facilities.
 4. Activities of the organization and for its compliance with the Mission of the College and regulations.
- ix. The sponsoring organization(s) and/or group(s) may require presentation of valid ID cards for admission to an event held on the campus. Functions may be closed to persons other than members of the sponsoring organization(s) and/or group(s) and to their invited or accompanied guests.
 - x. Functions held in College facilities may end no later than the established closing hours of the facility concerned unless permission is given by the Director of Student Life or designee.
- n. Commercial enterprises of any kind (solicitation, sales, distribution, etc.) by students or organizations are permitted on campus or in College buildings only with permission of the Director of Student Life. Commercial enterprises other than solicitation, sales or distribution by students must have the approval of the Vice President for Finance and the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services. No credit card application solicitation is permitted on campus. No outside solicitation of any kind is permitted in the Residence Halls.
 - o. Sound trucks or outdoor amplifying systems are not allowed on campus for any purpose without the approval of the Director of Student Life.
 - p. Use of the College Name/Logo
 - i. No organization shall use the College's name without written authorization of the College. College approval or disapproval of any political or social issue shall not be stated or implied by an organization.
 - ii. The official letterhead stationery, logo or seal of the College shall not be used in any publication, correspondence, or other printed material prepared or distributed by the organization or its officers without prior submission of the material to, and written permission from the Director of Campus Activities.
 - iii. All merchandise with the Villa Maria College logo or name, including t-shirt or other imprinted merchandise, must be approved through the Communication Office.

18. Student Services: Information about College Services and Personnel

- q. Security
 - i. The main building is open Monday through Thursday 7:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. and Friday 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Doors are locked at 6 p.m. Access to the building is available through the cafeteria entrances only. The music and

library buildings are open 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. On Saturday, the main building is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sun-day hours and changes in building hours are posted as needed. Felician Hall is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Student Center is open 8 a.m. Monday through Friday. Closing times depend on events and/or availability of personnel.

- ii. The grounds are well lighted and maintained to contribute to safety and security. Police cruise through the grounds several times each day. During evening hours, people are advised to leave the building in groups or to request service from security. Security checks are made regularly. In case of an emergency, security calls the police.
 - iii. Once a semester, the College will offer a program designed to inform students about campus security procedures and practices, about the need to be responsible for one's own safety and that of others, and about the prevention of crimes.
- r. Student Success Center (SSC)
- i. The Student Success Center (ASC) supports students at every stage of their college careers. Trained, experienced tutors provide academic assistance in a wide range of subjects, tailoring each session to the individual student's needs. Students visit the SSC to receive tutoring in any subject, to improve writing, and/or to receive guidance in areas like study strategies, test taking, and time management. Students can make an appointment with a tutor by calling the SSC Secretary at (716) 961-1861. Or, simply drop in—the SSC is located on the ground floor level of the Library building. There is no fee for services.
 - ii. The Student Success Center is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- s. Library
- i. The Villa Maria College Library holds a carefully selected collection of books, periodicals, and other educational resources supportive of the instructional program of the College. It also provides a Media Resources Room where non-print materials add another supportive dimension for faculty and student needs. Wireless Internet access is available throughout the Library.
 - ii. Main Floor Foyer—coin-operated copy machine, checkout desk, reference desk, reserve materials, scanner, computers with Internet access
 - iii. North Room—circulating books, reference books, children's literature collection, study carrels, pamphlet file, online catalog
 - iv. South Room—periodicals, Polish collection (upper tier)
 - v. Media Resources Room—multimedia materials and hardware
 - vi. The main floor of the library is handicap accessible.
 - vii. Library Hours
 - 1. Mondays – Thursdays: 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m.

2. Fridays: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
 3. Borrowers - All users must have a current Villa Maria College student ID card with a library barcode in order to check out materials from the Library.
- viii. Fines - Overdue books, \$.10 per day except for Reserve Materials, which are \$.50 per day. Losses and damages are paid in full matching current prices. All outstanding dues, losses, and damages are reported to the Registrar's Office. Grades and transcripts are withheld until obligations are met.
- t. Services for Students with Disabilities
- i. Assistance is available for students who have documented disabilities. The College recognizes the academic potential of all students and strives to provide reasonable accommodations to assist those with disabilities to be successful in their studies.
 - ii. Before accommodations are granted, students with documented disabilities are required to self-identify. To self-identify, a student should notify the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities. Upon notification, the procedure for obtaining accommodations will be explained to the student. As a final step in the process, the student should discuss with each instructor how the accommodations can be granted.
 - iii. College-wide support services are provided to assist students in raising their levels of competencies, selecting appropriate and manageable course loads, and exploring career opportunities that will capitalize on their strengths and talents.
 - iv. Optimum benefit from the College's support services can be gained by early identification, advisement, and enrollment.
- u. Honors
- i. Phi Theta Kappa
 1. Phi Theta Kappa, the International Honor Society for two-year colleges, provides leadership, fellowship, scholarship, and service opportunities for full-time and part-time students. Eligibility for membership in the local chapter, Tau Lambda, is determined by a number of factors: completion of at least 12 credit hours of coursework at Villa Maria College leading to an Associate degree, an overall GPA of at least 3.5, and a recommendation reflecting engagement in service and leadership. An induction ceremony takes place each semester.
 - ii. Who's Who
 1. Members of the College Community nominate qualifying prospective graduates in baccalaureate and associate programs who distinguish themselves in genuine qualities of character, academic pursuits, and co-curricular endeavors for inclusion in Who's Who Among Students in American Colleges and

Universities. Certificates are presented at the Spring Honors Convocation.

iii. Faculty Association Achievement Award (1979)

1. The Faculty Senate Achievement Award is a Certificate of Honor and a cash award given to a graduating student in an associate degree program with the highest cumulative grade point average for the past three semesters of full-time study at Villa Maria College and a graduating student in a baccalaureate degree program with the highest cumulative grade point average for the past seven semesters of full-time study at Villa Maria College.

iv. Blessed Mary Angela Student Award (2014)

1. Named after the foundress of the Felician Sisters, the Blessed Mary Angela Student Award is awarded annually at Commencement to the most outstanding graduate of Villa Maria College. Recipients should embody the mission and values of Villa Maria College, demonstrated through outstanding achievement in academics, leadership and service to both the College and the local community.

v. Spirit Award (1976)

1. The Student Life Office gives the Martin Wanamaker Spirit Award to a graduate who distinguished him or herself in promoting spirit on campus.

v. Campus Ministry

- i. The Campus Ministry office ministers to all students, faculty, and staff members of the Villa Maria College Community. Inspired by its Catholic, Franciscan Felician roots and traditions, various opportunities are offered to help people deepen their awareness of the presence of God in themselves, in each other, and in the world around them. This awareness can be strengthened through Eucharist, interfaith prayer, private prayer and meditation, retreat experiences, spiritual direction, and pastoral and vocational counseling. It is hoped that this deepened awareness of God's presence will result in various works of mercy and charity.
- ii. As part of the Villa Maria Complex Peace Site, Campus Ministry promotes an appreciation and respect for the dignity and integrity of all persons by suggesting venues for expanding knowledge and changing behaviors and attitudes regarding violence and injustice.
- iii. Knowledge of local and global peace and justice issues is promoted through Pax Christi, the Diocesan Peace and Justice Commission, and the Western New York Peace Center. These issues are shared with the College Community through emails and signs posted outside the Campus Ministry Office.
- iv. Campus Ministry oversees the operation of the Sister Mary Josette Food Pantry. The Pantry, affiliated with the Food Bank of Western New York, is

located in the College and serves the needs of the less fortunate both on and off campus.

w. Career Services

- i. The Career Services Center provides services to students and alumni.

Services include:

1. Providing career advisement;
 2. Providing print and non-print career information resources in the Career Resource Center (see the online Library catalog for a listing of resources);
 3. Maintaining and updating the employment opportunities board and web page for local and out-of-state employment;
 4. Assisting with job search strategies including resume and cover letter preparation as well as interview techniques;
 5. Furnishing information regarding career fairs, volunteer work, and full and part-time employment opportunities;
 6. Supporting students and faculty in professional practices career-related course activities; and
 7. Maintaining and sending to potential employers, as requested, student/alumni credential files consisting of an updated resume, references, and a release form.
- ii. For further information regarding services and career-related activities, students and alumni are requested to make an appointment with the Director of Career Development.

x. Counseling Center

- i. Situations often arise in life that requires some type of change, either in one's behavior or one's personal environment. Counseling helps students work through those changes in a productive manner. It provides the opportunity for students to assess personal problems, clarify thoughts and feelings, learn how to cope with and overcome stressors, and improve decision-making. While some students may engage in the counseling process to address concerns and overcome obstacles, others may want to gather information that will prevent potential problems from occurring. Overall, the counseling process helps students meet personal, educational, and professional goals. Counseling is confidential and free of charge.
- ii. Personal Counseling
 1. Students are invited to utilize counseling services for a variety of reasons. Some may include issues that arise in personal relationships, in adjustment to life changes, or dealing with loss. Some students may need help with how to stay motivated, overcome procrastination, manage stress or deal with feelings of depression/anxiety. Numerous factors can impede one's ability to reach academic goals and meeting with a counselor can help reduce stress, gain insight, and resolve personal issues.

- iii. Personal Growth and Development
 - 1. It is essential that students develop self-management and interpersonal skills. While some students may desire counseling to deal with a particular problem, others may want to improve communication skills, learn how to balance the role of student with their personal life and avoid potential problems before they occur. Workshops, presentations, and individual sessions are made available to address topics such as:
 - a. Coping with College and Life Demands;
 - b. Handling Unexpected Events;
 - c. Stress Management;
 - d. Handling Relationship Breakups;
 - e. How to Resolve Conflict;
 - f. Improving Communication Skills;
 - g. Managing Multiple Roles;
 - h. Wellness; and
 - i. Understanding Personality Types.
- iv. Parents/Single Parents
 - 1. Some students are also parents. While pursuing a degree and raising children require significant adjustments, various strategies can be employed to insure success. Individual sessions are available to help students learn how to handle both family and student responsibilities.
- v. Adult Learners
 - 1. Adult Learners are students primarily over the age of 23 and returning to school after several years. In addition to the role of student, adult learners often have many other responsibilities. To meet their diverse needs, services are provided through the Counseling Center. Individual sessions are also provided to address concerns and/or questions as they arise.
- vi. Hours
 - 1. The Counseling Center is located on the ground floor of the library building. General office hours are between 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Evening hours are also available. Students may stop in or call 961-1821 to schedule an appointment. For those students experiencing a Mental Health emergency, Erie County Crisis Services is available 24 hours at 716.834.3131.
- y. Lockers
 - i. Lockers are available August 15 to May 31 on a first come, first served rental basis. The fee is \$5 (\$2 rental, \$3 deposit). When withdrawing from the College at any time during the semester, at the end of a semester, or when the academic year is completed, a student must return the lock to the Student Life office to obtain a form for a refund of the \$3 deposit. The actual refund is obtained in the Business Office. Locks must be

turned in by May 31 or the refund is forfeited for that academic year. Lockers are cleaned during the months of June and July. The College is not responsible for items left in lockers.

z. Student Life Office

- i. Students are welcome to check with the Student Life Office regarding any problems, difficulties, or questions that arise while on campus. Referrals to appropriate offices or departments are made when necessary. The Student Life Office is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday through Friday.
- ii. Student life at Villa is an integral part of the total educational experience. A diversified portfolio of student interest groups, along with major campus-wide events is available to students. Each group and activity has a unique purpose and focus. The groups are divided into the areas of government, academic/social, cultural, and wellness.

aa. Student Government

- i. Student Union Association (SUA)—the Constitution of the Student Union Association of Villa Maria College of Buffalo may be found in the Appendix to this handbook.
- ii. Student Union Board (SUB) is the voice of the students as it pertains to student life at Villa, promoting student responsibility, loyalty to the College, and cooperation among students in their relations with faculty and administration.

bb. Academic and Social Clubs & Organizations

- i. Ambassadors are a network of Villa students who assist the College in various recruitment and service-related activities.
- ii. Animation Club is open to all animation majors. The club affords students the opportunity to build their social, professional, and networking skills while learning and sharing animation knowledge above and beyond what is learned in the classroom. Club members will also travel to film festivals and animation studios.
- iii. Art Club is open to art students and gives them an opportunity to discuss both historical and contemporary art issues and to travel to New York City for intensive art and cultural exploration.
- iv. Business Club is a social and professional club open to all students who desire to participate in community-based projects while having fun and expanding hands-on knowledge of management.
- v. Fashion Club is open to all Fashion Design and Merchandising majors. Meetings are dedicated to expanding interest in the fashion industry and discussing current happenings in the fashion world. The club also sponsors trips to fashion related businesses and/or locations.
- vi. Graphic Design Club is open to all Graphic Design students. The club's purpose is to enhance the quality of education and life on Campus through visual communication, to provide professional development, to promote community outreach, and to have fun doing it!

- vii. IN Club is the Interior Design club for current students and alumni. The club's purpose is to make members aware of current aspects in the design field and to assist members in preparing for employment. All members are required to be registered with the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID).
 - viii. Music Club is open to all music students. Meetings involve musical discussions and performance and critique sessions. Members have the opportunity to perform their studio pieces or original compositions and receive constructive criticism from their peers.
 - ix. Phi Theta Kappa is the International Honor Society for two-year colleges. It provides full and part-time students the chance to develop leadership and service skills.
 - x. Photovisions is the photography club for current students and alumni. Speakers, field trips, and group activities promote knowledge and networking with area galleries and photographers.
 - xi. Physical Therapist Assistant/Health Related Professionals Club is a social and educational club comprised of Physical Therapist Assistant students and students interested in health science career fields. The organization sponsors program-related seminars, social activities, and speakers who share professional and career information.
 - xii. The Writers' Circle is an informal gathering of student creative writers who share their prose and poetry; offer readings of their own work, and host poets and authors at the College for readings and workshops. It is open to all students, whether or not they have taken any Creative Writing classes as well as Creative Writing and Literature majors.
 - xiii. Villa Maria College Student Alumni Association Club is committed to nurturing a relationship between students and the College based on loyalty and the pursuit of knowledge. Membership in the Club will sustain a bond between students and graduates and coordinate student and alumni support of the College.
 - xiv. Villa Volunteers is a group of Villa Maria College students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends who are dedicated to making a difference through service to others.
- cc. Cultural Clubs & Organizations
- i. Drama Club is an organization open to all students. Its purpose is to familiarize students with all aspects of drama including lighting, music, and costumes, as well as planning and producing a play each semester.
 - ii. E.A.S.E. is an acronym for Environmental Awareness, Sustainability, and Education. In 1979, Pope John Paul II declared St. Francis of Assisi the Patron of Ecology. As a Franciscan institution espousing the values of St. Francis, the group's theme is "Care for Creation." The group will learn and share information on issues impacting the environment while addressing how individuals can respond to help "ease" up on the earth and all creation.

- iii. Gospel Choir is open to all students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Its purposes are to give honor and glory to God through music, while providing an opportunity for students to showcase their musical abilities, and to support the College's Mission by building community.
 - iv. In Living Colour serves as a way for students of different cultures, ethnicities, and sexual orientation to come together to promote tolerance in our ever changing society.
 - v. SKALD is the annual award-winning student literary arts magazine spotlighting student literature, art, and photographic work.
- dd. Wellness
- i. The gym and fitness room are open Monday through Sunday for various hours. Visit www.VillaVikings.com to learn more. Student ID card required using facilities.
 - ii. Campus Ministry Team consists of students, faculty, and staff. This Team offers members of the College Community opportunities to deepen their awareness of the presence of God and promotes an appreciation and respect for the dignity and integrity of all persons.
- ee. Bookstore
- i. The Bookstore is the official source for the purchase and rental of new and used textbooks. The Bookstore also buys, sells, and rents used textbooks. School supplies, photo materials, art materials, and imprinted items are available. Students may purchase textbooks, discounted software, and computer products online and in the store itself. Students may also purchase graduation attire. Bags, briefcases, coats, jackets, and books may not be taken into the Bookstore. These items are to be left in a locker. The Bookstore accepts payment by cash, check, Visa, MasterCard, and American Express. Book loans are available through the first two months of each semester. However, the Bookstore may close individual accounts early once the student's financial aid has been processed.
 - ii. Hours – are posted on the entry to the store.
 - 1. For more information, go to www.villa.bkstr.com.
- ff. Business Office Hours
- i. The Business Office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. During the first week of classes during the fall and spring semesters, extended hours are posted outside the Business Office.
- gg. Dining Hall & Villa Bistro
- i. The Villa Maria College Dining Hall is utilized as an integral part of College social life. Villa Bistro service is available Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Fridays when classes are in session and offers a variety of food. In addition, the Dining Hall is available for study and socializing whenever the college is open. Notice will be posted if this schedule is changed.

19. Tobacco-Free Policy

hh. Purpose

- i. Villa Maria College recognizes the overwhelming scientific evidence assembled by the U.S. Surgeon General, Centers for Disease Control, Environmental Protection Agency, and World Health Organization, which demonstrates that tobacco is a profound agent of deadly diseases, responsible for millions of deaths worldwide each year, both to tobacco users and non-users. Studies have indicated that exposure to second hand smoke is a significant risk for everyone. All forms of tobacco are now known to be harmful and highly addictive. Villa Maria College cares deeply about the health of the College Community and our neighbors. As an employer and an institution of higher education, the College is committed to providing a safe working and educational environment. Tobacco use is inconsistent with our traditional Felician Franciscan values and culture of wellness.

ii. Policy

- i. Villa Maria College became a 100% tobacco-free campus on August 1, 2013.
 1. All tobacco product use is prohibited everywhere within the perimeter of all Villa Maria property, indoors and outdoors, as well as in College-owned vehicles and in any vehicle on Villa property.
 2. Tobacco product use is discouraged at all College sponsored events including off-campus events.
 3. Tobacco product sales are prohibited everywhere on the College campus.
 4. The College will not accept advertising, marketing, distribution, or promotion of tobacco products.
 5. All grants and gifts to the College and all solicitations and proposals for such funds must have the approval of the College and must conform to the College's mission statement, culture of wellness, College policies, and applicable laws and regulations. In addition, Villa Maria College will not invest in any direct tobacco company holdings.

jj. Compliance

- i. In keeping with the mission of Villa Maria College, this policy is driven by respect for others and the environment and relies on the thoughtfulness, consideration, and cooperation of tobacco users and non-users for its success. Enforcement of this policy will depend on the cooperation of all members of the Villa Maria College Community, both to comply and encourage others to do so. It is the responsibility of all members in the College Community to observe this tobacco policy.
 1. Villa Maria will inform members of the College Community about the tobacco policy by widely disseminating information about the

policy on a regular basis. The tobacco policy will be clearly posted in employee and student handbooks, on the campus website and as part of other publications.

2. The policy will be shared with parents, alumni, and visitors through media, campus announcements, the website, and other means. Key components of the policy will be posted on signage around campus (e.g. Tobacco use is not allowed on campus grounds.) Public announcements will address the policy at events on campus
3. Policy non-compliance will prompt an initial educational response, which will include information regarding the existence of the policy, the rationale for the policy, and the availability of cessation support services. Repeated non-compliance will be referred to the appropriate campus student conduct or employee supervisory system for resolution. Employees and students will be treated respectfully in the consistent observance of the policy.
4. At times, the establishment of boundaries has resulted in displacing tobacco users onto the surrounding community grounds. In the event that this does happen, Villa Maria College will reach out to ameliorate the situation in support of its neighbors.

kk. Definitions

- i. For the purposes of this document, the following definitions apply:
 1. "Tobacco" is defined as all tobacco and tobacco-derived products intended for human consumption, including but not limited to cigarettes, pipes, cigars, hookah-smoked products, clove cigarettes, bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snus, and other related tobacco products. This definition does not include any product that has been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration for sale as a tobacco use cessation product.
 2. "College" is defined as Villa Maria College.
 3. "Campus property" is defined as any property owned, leased, or operated by Villa Maria College.
 4. "Tobacco company" is defined as a company that produces and/or markets branded tobacco products, including subsidiaries, but not including parent companies which engage in business activities that are not in any way related to tobacco.
 5. "Direct tobacco company holdings" are defined as corporate stock holdings directly owned by the College, not including stock holdings that may be owned through mutual funds or indirect investments.

ll. College Commitment

- i. Villa Maria's commitment to becoming tobacco-free will foster:
 1. Preserving respect for others and the environment;

2. Supporting the culture of wellness;
 3. Reducing the health hazards posed by exposure to second hand smoke on campus;
 4. Preparing students for an increased number of tobacco-free work places;
 5. Helping prevent desecration of the campus by tobacco litter;
 6. Eliminating designated smoking areas that can limit smoke free access particularly for people with disabilities;
 7. Discouraging students from adopting or continuing to use any form of tobacco;
 8. Curtailing the known difficulties posed by policies with designated smoking areas;
 9. Decreasing tobacco use through the use of social-norming; and
 10. Recognizing that, as stated by the CDC, smokeless tobacco can lead to nicotine ad-diction and that users are more likely to become smokers.
- mm. Cessation
- i. Understanding the addictive nature of tobacco use and that breaking that addiction is extremely difficult for many people, the College will make every effort to assist those employees and students who wish to stop using tobacco. The campus will promote and provide evidence-based cessation resources. Students and employees may obtain referrals and support for cessation resources through the College Health Office (716-961-2852) or New York State Smokers Quit line 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487).
- nn. Policy Review
- i. Villa Maria College will maintain its Tobacco-Free Committee to identify and address needs and concerns related to this policy, implementation, compliance, enforcement, and cessation. The Tobacco-Free Committee will review this policy on a regular basis to ensure that it is sustained, effective, and up to date. The provisions of this policy shall be subject to future review and revision to ensure that its objectives are attained and that Villa Maria College is in compliance with federal and state law.

20. Villa Maria College Communication Media Policy

- a. Villa Maria College may use images of students in its communications and marketing media. Students who do not consent to being in these materials must opt-out by e-mailing: communication@Villa.edu.



21. Villa Maria College Heritage: Blessed Mary Angela Truszkowska

- oo. The Felician Sisters, sponsors of Villa Maria College were founded by Blessed Mary Angela Truszkowska, a woman born in 19th century Poland. A highly intelligent, generous, vivacious but frail child, she was drawn to prayer and genuine concern for others.
- pp. A member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, she worked zealously for the poor, neglected children, and the aged. She started the institute of Sophia Truszkowska that began as a conscience of the cultural milieu of the time. After entering the Third Order of St. Francis, Sophia took the name of Angela. When she and her cousin Clothilde offered themselves to the service of Mary, Mother of Jesus, on November 21, 1855, this was recorded as the founding of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Felix of Cantalice popularly known as the Felician Sisters.
- qq. Blessed Mary Angela was innovative in pioneering nontraditional leadership roles for women and service-oriented roles to meet the needs of the times. She heartily endorsed sending sisters to America in 1874. Today, Blessed Angela remains an example of true femininity, a woman of conviction, a religious who inspired and challenged many to action and contemplation. Villa Maria College seeks to continue the spirit of Blessed Mary Angela.