

The GSWeathervane 2011 – 2012

A Student Handbook

This handbook is published annually and includes information on activities, policies and regulations, student rights and responsibilities, problem-solving resources, and the academic calendar. It is prepared and edited by the Division of Student Affairs in cooperation of the offices of Academic Affairs and the President.

This handbook is prepared for the convenience of students and does not constitute an official publication of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. In case of any divergence from or conflict with the Bylaws or Policies of the Board of Regents, the official Bylaws and Policies of the Board of Regents shall prevail.

The statements set forth in this handbook are for informational purposes only and should not be construed as the basis of a contract between a student and this institution. While every effort has been made to insure accuracy of the material stated herein, the University reserves the right to change any provision listed in this handbook without actual notice to individual students. Every effort will be made to keep students advised of such changes.

Information regarding academic requirements for graduation will be available in the offices of the Registrar, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Deans of the Schools. It is the responsibility of each student to keep himself or herself apprised of current graduation requirements for a degree program in which he or she is enrolled.

Georgia Southwestern State University is in compliance with all applicable federal and State regulations. The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, handicap, or status as a veteran.



Welcome from the President

Welcome to Georgia Southwestern State University—a campus that cares.

You have chosen to be part of the GSW experience, and we congratulate you on that choice. You could not have selected a better place or better time. Georgia Southwestern is entering its second century and moving quickly to create an even greater presence among the fine regional universities in the state and across the southeast. GSW is known for many things including its alumni, which include notable figures like former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and first lady Rosalynn Carter, former U.S. Attorney General Griffin Bell, and many others; its outstanding academic programs and the faculty who make those programs possible; and its staff who work hard to create a consistent, student-centered campus environment. When these strengths are coupled with the exceptional enthusiasm and energy of all the GSW stakeholders, it is inevitable that great things are going to happen here at the University.

I like to think of student life here at GSW as a “total collegiate experience.” By that I mean we are careful in not drawing too clear a line between curricular and extra-curricular activities. Every activity on this campus is in some ways curricular and plays a part in one’s education. Belonging to a service club, pledging a sorority or fraternity, playing on an athletic team, working part-time on campus, or participating in the intramural program, all have important educational or curricular outcomes. For that reason I like to think of everyone who works on the campus, be they faculty or staff, as teachers. The number one priority for every GSW employee is your success as a student.

The GSWeathervane is a valuable handbook and guide that provides important information about the many opportunities that we offer as part of the “total collegiate experience.” I encourage you to explore these opportunities and find those that are right for you. These organizations and activities provide not only valuable entertainment and educational venues, but also chances to make lifelong friendships. Again, welcome to Georgia Southwestern. May your days here be filled with many good times, learning opportunities, rewarding experiences, and intellectual challenges.

Best wishes,
Kendall Blanchard



Welcome from the Vice President for Student Affairs

Welcome to Georgia Southwestern State University. We want all of our students to have an exciting, fun, rewarding and successful experience at GSW. This is YOUR campus!!!! Our campus is also a community, and this community forms our GSW family. As a member of our GSW family, each of us has a role to play in making GSW successful. Believe me; GSW is not successful if our students are not successful. GSW's ultimate goals for each student include enhancing your learning skills, helping you to successfully complete your program of study, assisting you in obtaining employment, and helping you to become a responsible citizen. We have many faculty, staff members, administrators, and other students who will help you along the way. Please remember that your top priority should be your academic studies. We also have many student organizations, and we hope you will find one, or more, that you can become involved in. Although we already have many outstanding student leaders at GSW, there is always room for more. We want you to succeed and will pledge our commitment to make this happen; but you will also need to do your part. Together we can be a winning combination and your success can be guaranteed. Again, welcome to GSW. We look forward to working with You!!

Best wishes for success,

Sam Miller, Ph. D.
Vice President for Student Affairs



Welcome from the Vice President of Academic Affairs

Welcome to Georgia Southwestern State University! You are about to begin an exciting, new phase in your life. At GSW you will make new friends and have new experiences, but most importantly, you will gain valuable knowledge and skills that will have a positive impact on you and on others, and that you will use for the rest of your life. Your learning at GSW MATTERS!

The good news is that you are completely in control of your learning. Perhaps the biggest transition you face in coming to a university is that faculty will expect you to take charge of your learning. Learning is an active process that requires a great deal of effort on your part. But rest assured that GSW has many support mechanisms to help you be successful. We are a learning community, with high expectations, and confidence in you. The faculty here want and expect you to come see them outside of class. Please see them whenever you are having difficulty in class or if you just want to chat about your future career.

In addition to the faculty, tutors are available in the Academic Skills Center. The First Year Advocate is located there as well. She will help you with everything from setting up tutoring to exploring housing issues and financial aid. Your peers are another source of assistance. Our residence halls are designed to foster living and learning communities, where you can form study groups so that you can help each other.

With freedom comes responsibility, however; you are in charge of your learning, and it is up to you to attend class and put in the necessary hours of studying. The general rule is for every hour spent in class, you should budget two hours out of class in studying and doing homework. Being admitted to a great university means that you have what it takes to succeed. But you will need to work at it. Perseverance will pay off. Interest, curiosity, and excitement should guide your learning. If there is anything I can do to help you succeed, do not hesitate to come visit me. I wish you great success.

Sincerely,
Dr. Brian U. Adler
Academic Vice President and Dean of the Faculty

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UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

Georgia Southwestern State University cultivates excellence in learning and teaching that encourages intellectual, personal, and social growth for students, faculty, staff, and the community. Georgia Southwestern State University is a comprehensive state university within the University System of Georgia that offers a full range of bachelor degree programs, along with selected master's and specialist degree programs.

UNIVERSITY DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Georgia Southwestern State University embraces diversity as an integral part of being a caring community of learners. We are committed to building and maintaining a diverse, accessible, civil and supportive campus. GSW provides an environment and curriculum which affirms pluralism of beliefs and opinions, including diversity of religion, gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, disability, age, and socioeconomic class.

The University will implement and adhere to policies and procedures which discourage harassment and other behaviors that infringe upon the freedom and respect that every individual deserves.