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All content appearing in this International Student Handbook is subject to change at any time. The version on the website will be the most current version should any changes be made. For questions, please contact the Office of Student Life at 941.359.7505.

Designed and Edited by Betsy Pope

## WELCOME TO OUR CREATIVE COMMUNITY!

Greetings to all of our international students, parents and family members from the staff of Ringling College of Art and Design, the Office of Student Life and International Student Affairs.

We are committed to promoting learning and growth beyond the classroom, providing you support networks, creative programs, social activities, leadership and volunteer opportunities and cultural diversity. In anticipation of your 1st year at Ringling College, and because daily life on our campus will present new perspectives and experiences, we have prepared this International Student Handbook for you, which covers everything from basic “everyday living” tips to more detailed legal rights information.

In addition, our Ringling College website provides a variety of important “insider” information about your 1st year as a student. You can access it at <http://www.ringling.edu>.

We are here to help you achieve your academic goals, while we focus on your individual basic needs, so feel free to ask us any questions!

Our College and the community of Sarasota is a rich cultural environment that inspires creativity. We are delighted to welcome you to our creative community!

### **OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE**

The Office of Student Life is located on the 2nd floor of the Ulla Searing Student Center.

Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Telephone: 941.359.7505

### **OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AFFAIRS**

The Office of International Student Affairs is located in Room 219 of the Goldstein Library.

Office Hours:

*Regular Office Hours*

Monday – Friday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

941.893.2051

### **OFFICE OF RESIDENCE LIFE**

The Office of Residence Life is located on the 1st floor of Ann and Alfred Goldstein Hall.

Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m..

Telephone: 941.309.1963

Extended hours on evenings and weekends will be staffed by Resident Assistants.

## LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES

### Your 1st Year

The 1st year in college is your first step toward a college degree and a lifelong dream of becoming a professional artist or designer. For most students it means saying goodbye to friends, family and familiar surroundings, and is a major life transition. It will be your time to gain independence, meet new friends and consider future goals; it will be a tremendous phase for your intellectual, artistic and personal growth!

The adjustments you will face to college life in the United States will vary depending on your background and experiences. Personally, you will face many decisions and new responsibilities. Emotionally, you may be challenged with the new surroundings and some uncertainty as you explore new horizons. Socially, you will be making new friends and meeting people from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds with beliefs and customs different from your own. As you grow in your awareness and experiences, the Office of Student Life will be here to support you every step of the way.

Your college years will be a time of great transformation!

### Helpful Hints

Here is a short list of “helpful hints” for your 1st days or weeks in the United States.

- Get plenty of rest.
- Take time to share your feelings with others.
- Allow yourself to express any emotion that comes up.
- Make your home environment as comfortable as possible.
- Make friends as quickly as possible. If there are others of your nationality on campus, get acquainted. It will give you a support system.
- Don't hesitate to introduce yourself to someone even if you feel as though your English might not be perfect. You are here to learn!
- Visit the Office of Student Life as soon as possible to see what kinds of activities are offered to international students.
- Keep a diary or journal. This is a marvelous way to vent some of the concerns or frustrations you'd be embarrassed to speak about. It will also be a valuable record.
- Try to search out “things that are not like home.”
- Embrace the differences!

*(Portions adapted from: Wells, Paddy S., Coping with Culture Shock, “The Bridge,” Vol. 6, No. 4, Winter 1981, pp. 44-47 and Storti, Craig,*

*The Art of Crossing Cultures, 1990, pp. 710.)*

### Health Information & Medical Facilities

Ringling College international students are required to have health insurance. You are automatically enrolled in and billed for the Ringling Student Health Insurance Plan.

If you already have adequate coverage with a U.S. insurance company or if you are a sponsored student whose health insurance is provided for you by your sponsor, please contact University Health Plans at 1-800-437-6448 or [info@univhealthplans.com](mailto:info@univhealthplans.com). For more information, please visit our website at [health.ringling.edu](http://health.ringling.edu).

Ringling College has partnered with Sarasota Memorial Hospital to be the campus healthcare provider. A registered nurse or physician's assistant is available 8:30am-4:30pm, Monday through Friday with medical oversight provided by the physician group that staffs Sarasota Memorial's Urgent and Emergency Centers. The Health Center is located on the northeast corner of Old Bradenton Road and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

The off-campus Sarasota Memorial Hospital Urgent Care Centers ([smh.com/urgent-care](http://smh.com/urgent-care)) are also available to students when the on-campus Health Center is closed.

The Health Center is equipped to diagnose and treat most common illnesses and conditions including: colds and flu, earaches, sore throats, eye injuries, bronchitis, minor lacerations and burns, sinus infection, skin rashes, urinary problems, physicals, gynecological problems, and sprains, strains, and fractures.

There are no out-of-pocket costs to see a provider for a general medical office visit.

The following services are provided at no additional cost for Ringling College students:

- Visits with a mid-level provider
- Annual flu shot for every student
- Annual routine female gynecological exam and smear
- Allergy injection therapy
- STD Testing
- On-site laboratory testing including urine dip, rapid strep, rapid flu and pregnancy.
- After-hours visit with a physician provided at the Sarasota

Memorial Hospital Urgent

Care Center on University Parkway at no cost to students. (Costs may be incurred to the student if any additional services are provided.)

The following services can be provided at the clinic for an additional fee. Some of these

fees can be billed to insurance depending on individual coverage or can be paid for at the time of service utilizing the College's discounted self-pay prices:

- Vaccinations
- Medications administered in the clinic
- Laboratory fees for send out tests that cannot be completed in the clinic
- Medical supplies such as splints and slings
- Laceration repair and incision and drainage procedures.

The following services cannot be provided directly onsite at the clinic, but can be arranged and coordinated within Sarasota Memorial's comprehensive network of services:

- Radiology services
- Physical therapy services
- 12-lead EKG
- Follow up care for specialist visits within

Sarasota Memorials' comprehensive First Physicians Group

- Urgent or emergency room care

The student health fee helps make these services possible.

Students will be required to complete a medical questionnaire and show their Ringling

ID and insurance card when visiting the Health Center.

## Emergencies

For late night or emergency medical treatment, Sarasota Memorial Hospital at U.S. 41 and Waldemere Street is well equipped and only minutes away.

## Calling Home

If you do not have a cell phone yet, you can still call your home country. You can use any public / private telephone to make a collect call. This means the receiver will be charged for the phone call. There are some countries that do not accept collect calls. To find out, dial 00. Ask to make a collect call. Tell the operator the country you are calling, (or the country code which you can find in the phone book), the city code and the phone number. Give the operator your name so he or she will know to say who is calling.

If you are calling from your own phone, remember to dial 011 before the country code to place an international call. Remember that you need to consider the time zone differences.

## Transportation & Travel

### Automobiles

If you own an automobile, you must fill out Ringling College of Art and Design forms during registration to receive a Ringling College parking sticker. To rent a car in Florida, you typically need to be 25-years old.

### The State Of Florida

All drivers are required to possess a valid driver's license. If you have an international driver's license in addition to your driver's license from your home country it may not be necessary for you to get one in the United States. Driving without a valid driver's license can result in revocation of all privileges to drive.

A Florida driver's license can be obtained at the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles located in Sarasota or Bradenton. You will need to take your I - 20, passport, visa and I-94 arrival record to the office ([www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94)). Your vision and knowledge of driving laws will be tested. PIP (Personal Injury Protection) insurance covers you regardless of whether you cause an accident, up to the limits of your policy.

Auto insurance is mandatory in Florida. You must carry at least \$10,000 of personal injury protection insurance [PIP] and a minimum of \$10,000 of PIP covers you if you are in your car, in someone else's car or if you are a pedestrian or bicyclist, as long as the injury is caused in an accident involving an automobile. Property Damage Liability coverage pays for damage you or members of your family cause to other people's property while driving. Note that in the United States you may need to insure each person who will be driving the car. (This will depend on each particular insurance company's policy.) When purchasing insurance, check several companies before making a selection. Don't hurry into making a decision just because the insurance sales person wants you to buy insurance immediately. If possible, ask someone who is more familiar with U.S. insurance policies. You may also obtain more detailed information from the Florida Department of Financial Services by calling their toll-free telephone number at 1.800.342.2762.

All new residents with cars are expected to obtain a Florida title and license plates. No yearly inspection is required in Florida, but you are required to renew your registration sticker each year. This sticker is to show that you have paid the required taxes. The new sticker needs to be purchased prior to your birthday each year. You can call the Department of Motor Vehicles at 941.861.8300 regarding the title, plate and sticker.

### Child Restraint Law

The Florida law concerning child restraint states any child younger than age 5 must be restrained in a motor vehicle. Children aged 3 and younger must be in an approved child seat. Children between the ages of 3 – 5 must use seat belts if in the

back, or must ride in an approved seat if seated in the front. Seat belts must be used.

### Traffic Laws & Parking

Traffic laws are strictly enforced in Florida and on Ringling College property. To be sure you are familiar with the different laws, obtain a copy of a Driver's Handbook from the Department of Motor Vehicles at <http://www.flhsmv.gov>.

### Important Traffic Laws

- Highway speed limits are 55 - 75 miles per hour (90 - 115 kmph).
- Generally speed limits in cities vary between 30 - 50 miles per hour (50 - 80 kmph).
- The use of seat belts is required by law.
- Driving and parking on campus should be exercised with caution. Always park with your license plate clearly visible as well as the Ringling sticker. (Not doing so may get you a ticket.) It is illegal to park in any disabled parking space at any time without the proper sticker on your license plate.
- Parking on campus without a permit sticker can result in a ticket or towing of your vehicle. Free parking stickers can be obtained from the Office of Public Safety.
- Pedestrians and bicyclists always have priority on the road.

### Bicycles

MUST Register your bicycle with Public Safety to obtain a sticker. ONLY use bike racks to lock bikes onto... not railing fences.

If you wish to ride a bicycle, it is wise to register it with the Sarasota Police Department on Ringling Boulevard, in downtown Sarasota. This way you will have a better chance of getting your bike back if it is stolen. Be sure to have a good lock and chain to secure your bicycle when leaving it unattended. A bike without a lock is an open invitation to theft.

Sarasota is a busy place to ride a bike. Bicycle regulations are somewhat unclear, but a good rule to follow is to ride single file and stay on the bike paths and/or to the right side of the road. When making a turn, you must use hand signals to inform motorists of your directions.



Right Turn



Slow of Stop



Left Turn

BE CAUTIOUS – motorists do not always know bikers have the right of way. If you must ride at night, wear light colored clothing and be sure to have a light as well as reflective tape on both to be visible to motorists. It is a good idea to wear a helmet while biking.

### Bus Service

The Sarasota County Area Transit [SCAT] and Manatee County Area Transit [MCAT] bus schedules are available from the Office of Student Life. You can also call SCAT at 941.861.1234 or MCAT at 941.749.7116 for information. Now free with your Ringling College Student I.D.! Visit the SCAT website at <http://www.scgov.net/SCAT> and MCAT website at <http://www.ridemcat.org>

### Taxis

Taxi service is also available. Diplomat 941.355.5155 and Yellow Cab 941.955.3341. Call well in advance to make sure you get to your destination on time.

### Shopping Information & Locations

Shopping in the United States may be different from what you are used to at home. Merchandise is generally sold in a "self-service" manner, and clerks might not be close at hand. It is very important when shopping in U.S. stores, especially large stores, to use a cart or a basket (if it is provided by the store for your use). Never put a piece of merchandise in your pocket, purse, etc. If you do, it may appear to a store employee you intend to take the merchandise without paying for it. Misunderstandings can result in a charge of "shoplifting," a serious federal offense.

We advise you to compare prices at different stores. The same items are frequently sold at different prices depending upon where you shop. Check with friends regarding where to buy goods at bargain prices. In U.S. retail stores, prices are set and cannot be negotiated. Do not try to bargain with the sales clerk. (An exception to this is when dealing directly with a private individual or when buying large, expensive items such as a car or a house.) In the United States, the price on the tag does not

include sales tax. This tax varies from county to county. The sales tax in Sarasota County is 7%.

## Introduction To The Classroom

American teaching methods and practices may be quite different from those you are used to. Regular class attendance, preparation for frequent examinations throughout the term and participation in class discussion are not only expected in our educational system, but also will be the 3 most important habits you can practice for academic success.

International students often find the classroom atmosphere and student / instructor relationship informal. In general, instructors welcome questions from students and encourage student participation in class discussion. Never hesitate to ask a question about something you don't understand. It might be useful to ask your professor how he/she would like to be addressed. In many cases the instructor expects discussion, questions and input by class members and part of your grade may be based on your contributions in class. If the limitations of class size and / or time do not permit questions to be asked during class periods, you may bring them to the instructor during his or her office hours.

Grading is based on letters rather than numbers. Refer to the Catalogue for further details. Instructors often use "class comparison" while grading. Class grades are distributed with the majority of students receiving grades in the mid-range. Because your grade may depend on the relative performance of your classmates, you may find students to be rather competitive and unwilling to share their work with you. Students do work together on various group projects, but the majority of students do their own work and expect others to abide by the same procedure.

Individualism is highly valued in our society and a person generally receives credit and / or recognition only for what he or she has been responsible. Plagiarism, copying or taking credit for someone else's work as if it were your own, brings serious consequences.

## Social Life In The United States

Americans place great emphasis on individuality and personal identity. This often results in a large degree of informality in appearance, interpersonal relationships and methods of communication. Such informality can give the impression Americans are too familiar. This is not the case, although in some situations individuals may be looked upon as exhibiting poor taste in their behavior or dress. As long as one does not infringe on the rights of others, he or she is permitted a great deal of flexibility in his / her personal expression.

### Use Of Names

Here are a few tips to help you properly address someone:

1) First names are more readily used in the United States than in many other countries. You may use the first name to address someone of approximately your same age and status or with someone younger. If you are unsure, it is appropriate to ask if

the person prefers to be called by his or her first name.

2) A man or woman older than you is often addressed as Ms., Miss, Mrs., Mr. or Dr. until the individual requests you use his or her first name or until you get to know the individual better. "Sir" or "Ma'am" are polite forms of address used by some Americans when addressing someone older.

3) Men and women will be confused if you use Ms., Miss, Mrs., or Mr. with a first name, as is the custom in some countries. Ms., Miss, Mrs., or Mr. is used only with the family or last name.

4) Some American women prefer the new form of address: Ms. [pronounced "Miz."] This is used for both single and married women and replaces Miss and Mrs.. Ms. is also an acceptable form of address if you do not know if the woman is single or married.

5) Make a special point to learn whether your instructors prefer to be called by their first names or by Mr. or Ms..

### Introductions

Men usually shake hands when introduced. Women also often shake hands. When an individual is introduced to another individual, it is more common to nod in acknowledgment with a phrase such as, "How do you do?" or by repeating the person's name. Some will shake hands, however. A safe rule is if someone extends his or her hand to you, shake it.

### Making Friends & Sharing Cultures

Americans are curious people. They will ask you many questions. Some of their questions may appear ridiculous, uninformed and elementary, but try to be patient in answering them. You may be the first foreign national of a particular country whom they have met and they may have little understanding about your culture. Most Americans will be sincerely interested in learning about your country and your culture.

How Americans form and maintain friendships is perhaps one of the most difficult things for international students to understand. The casualness of friendship patterns in the United States allows people to move freely into new social groups that form around work, school, shared interests or places of residence. Most Americans readily welcome new people into their social groups. Many Americans will probably greet you with considerable warmth, but find this does not always continue. Americans have many interests and engage in a variety of activities so warmth expressed in one meeting between individuals, while genuine and sincere, may be confined to that occasion. Close interactions develop between individuals as they identify similar points of view and share a variety of experiences.

### Concept Of Time

You may feel life in the United States seems rushed. Americans are usually time conscious, and being on time is important. When you accept an invitation or make an appointment, you are expected to arrive within minutes of the scheduled time.

### Social Etiquette

You may receive invitations in person, by phone, mail, or email. Most invitations are informal but all should specify time and place. A casual verbal invitation such as “come and see me sometime” or “drop in” is usually given with the understanding you will call and make more specific plans before visiting.

When you accept an invitation, be sure you understand where and when the event is to be held and how to get there. If you don’t have a car, tell the person who invites you so that transportation can be arranged.

If you receive an invitation in the mail with the letters “RSVP” it means your hostess expects you to reply and indicate whether or not you will attend. Some invitations ask for “RSVP regrets only,” which means you should respond only if you cannot attend. If you must refuse, give a short explanation. If you accept an invitation to a person’s home, it is important to keep the appointment. The host will usually expect you to call or write well ahead of time if you are unable to attend.

Most Americans don’t have domestic help, and it is important for them to know in advance the number for whom to prepare. Do not accept an invitation you do not plan to honor. Americans are more offended by the guest who accepts an invitation and then fails to appear than by a person who refuses an invitation.

#### **Dress**

Your national dress is appropriate for any occasion and will be of interest to other guests attending a function. If you do not wear national dress, there are a few rules. Generally dressy clothes are worn to a cocktail party, casual clothes to a picnic, and “in-between” types of clothes are worn to other functions. If you are not sure about what to wear, ask your hostess or someone else who you know is attending the same event.

#### **Showing Appreciation**

It is unnecessary to bring a gift when invited to dinner; however, should you decide to do so, flowers, dessert, bread, wine or another beverage are all good choices and any will be graciously accepted. Overnight guests often will bring a small inexpensive gift to the host. A souvenir from the home country, for example, would be quite suitable and greatly appreciated.

Before leaving, tell the host and hostess something nice about the function and thank them for inviting you. Compliments on the meal are always appreciated. It is thoughtful to send a note of thanks for an invitation, especially for an overnight or weekend visit in someone’s home.

#### **American Holidays**

The following are some of the special days celebrated in the U.S. An asterisk (\*) next to the day indicates United States Post Offices, banks and some schools are closed on that day. (CHECK THE SCHOOL CALENDAR FOR DETAILS ON COLLEGE CLOSURE)

**\* January 1 – New Year’s Day.** Celebration of the first day of the year.

**\* 3rd Monday in January – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.** A day of recognition to one of the great civil rights leaders.

**February 14 – Valentine’s Day.** Originally for sweethearts, it is now a day to send cards to loved ones. Red hearts are symbolic of this day and flowers are traditional gifts. Young school children make and exchange Valentine’s Day cards.

**\* February 19 – George Washington’s Birthday.** Celebration of the birthday of the first president of the United States.

**2nd Sunday in May – Mother’s Day.** A day to honor mothers and grandmothers. Mother’s Day cards are sent through the mail.

**\* Last Monday in May – Memorial Day.** A day to honor the memory of the deceased. People often decorate the graves with flowers. Military services honor the war dead. Marks the beginning of summer.

**3rd Sunday in June – Father’s Day.** A day to honor fathers and grandfathers. Father’s Day cards are sent through the mail.

**\* July 4 – Independence Day.** The “birthday” of the United States of America. The Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776.

**\* First Monday in September – Labor Day.** A day to honor working people. Labor Organizations sponsor celebrations. It is also symbolic of the end of summer.

**October 31 – Halloween.** This is generally a children’s holiday. Children dress up as ghosts, witches, and skeletons and go out in the evening (in costume) “trick or treating” – a custom of going from house to house with a bag or container to collect “goodies.” They ring doorbells and are offered a piece of candy to protect the householder from a “trick.”

**\* November 11 – Veteran’s Day.** A special day to honor the courage and patriotism of citizens who have served in the U.S. Armed Services.

**\* 4th Thursday in November – Thanksgiving Day.** A day for families to give thanks with feasting and prayer for the blessings they have received during the year. Turkey is traditionally the main course of the meal. This day also marks the beginning of the holiday season, which lasts until New Year’s Day.

**\* December 25 – Christmas Day.** A holiday celebrated by Christians to observe the birth of Jesus Christ. A spirit of good pervades, gifts and cards are exchanged among family and friends.

## LEGAL RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

### **U.S. Immigration Laws**

Like all countries in the world, the United States has laws and regulations governing internationals living temporarily within its borders. These immigration laws and regulations are complex



and difficult to understand.

Since immigration laws frequently change, it is wise to keep in touch with the Director of International Student Affairs, Amy Pettengill. Always consult prior to adjusting your course of study or enrollment status, and when contemplating travel outside of the United States.

## U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (CIS)

Enforcement of United States immigration laws is the responsibility of the Citizenship and Immigration Services, (formerly INS) now called the CIS. The CIS is part of the Bureau of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and like most government agencies, is headquartered in Washington, D.C.

The closest CIS field office is:

United States Citizenship and Immigration Services  
5524 West Cypress St.  
Tampa, FL 33607  
Telephone: 800.375.5283  
Website: www.uscis.gov

## General Information

### Passports

Remember to keep your passport valid at least 6 months into the future. It is your responsibility to note the expiration date of your passport and have it extended at least 6 months before it expires.

### Visas

Your visa is the stamp in your passport, which allows you to enter the United States. The visa is usually valid for a specific period of time. The visa is important only for entry to the United States. The expiration date on the visa does not affect how long you may stay in the United States. Please remember that your I-94 record is not your visa. If you need to renew your visa, it must be renewed in your home country.

### I-94

Your I-94 is your arrival record available electronically at [www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94). This record indicates how long you may stay in the country and your current immigration status.

### I - 20

When you are accepted for admission you are issued a form I - 20 by Ringling College, which serves as evidence of your admission. Before issuing an I - 20, the College must make sure you have sufficient financial resources to study full-time without working illegally.

## Important Tips To Remember

You need to maintain full-time student status, which is at least 12 credit hours per semester.

If you move from one residence to another, you must report your new address to the Director of International Student Affairs within 10 days after you change it.

Any or all changes in academic objectives, particularly those

involving a transfer to another school, should be discussed with your Academic Advisor and the Director of International Student Affairs.

## Visa Revalidation Information

- F - 1 visas cannot be revalidated in the United States. If your visa has expired, you must renew your visa in your home country or a third country.
- If your visa has expired, you may travel to Canada or Mexico with an expired Visa. It may be revalidated once and this depends on your country of origin.

## Travel Outside The U.S.

If you will be leaving the United States temporarily, you must have certain documentation with you in order to re-enter the United States:

- 1) Valid passport
- 2) Valid F - 1 visa stamped in your passport
- 3) Valid signature on your Form I - 20 (Past 12 months)

If you are traveling outside the United States to a country other than your own, you need to call that country's embassy or consulate to find out if an entry visa is required.

**NOTE: Any time you leave the United States you need to confirm that your I-20 has a valid travel signature past 12 months.**

## Duration Of Status

All F - 1 students are admitted to the United States for "Duration of Status" [D/S], which means:

- the period during which you are pursuing a full-time course of study in the educational program.
- the period during which you are pursuing any authorized training.
- the 60-days you are given after graduation or practical training to depart from the United States or apply for a change of status.

You are entitled to one quarter of vacation each year:

- if you are eligible and intending to register for the next term.
- if you have completed the equivalent of a full year of study.

## Transferring Schools

You must follow the transfer procedure if you are transferring schools. See your International Student Advisor for transfer information.

## Program Extension

If you are unable to complete your course of study by the "completion date" on your I - 20, you may apply for a program extension if the following conditions are met:

- you apply 30 days before reaching the I - 20 completion date.

- you have continuously maintained lawful F - 1 status.

- the delay in completing program requirements has been caused by compelling academic reasons (such as change of major), or compelling and documented medical reasons. Delays in completing program requirements that are caused by academic probation or suspension are not acceptable reasons for a program extension.

## Employment

### On-Campus

You may work a maximum of 20 hours per week on-campus while College is in session or during vacation periods, if you will be registering for the next term. Authorization from your Director of International Student Affairs is required for on-campus employment, but you will need a "valid for work" social security card to work on campus. To receive a Social Security card, see your International Student Advisor who will give you an overview of the process of applying for a Social Security Number.

For information about finding on-campus jobs, stop by the Center for Career Services, call 941.359.7501, or go to <http://www.ringling.edu/talent>.

### Off-Campus

#### 1) Off-Campus Employment Based on Severe Economic Hardship

If you are suffering from severe economic hardship based on unforeseen circumstances beyond your control, you may be eligible for off-campus employment. Permission is difficult. When you enrolled in Ringling College, you signed an affidavit stating you had sufficient funds to pay all expenses for the school year. See the International Student Advisor for more information.

#### 2) Curricular Practical Training [CPT - internship]

CPT is employment performed for academic credit or which is a requirement as part of the specific program. For more information, see the International Student Advisor.

#### 3.) Optional Practical Training

When work experience is not part of the degree program but is related to your field of studies you may engage in OPT for a total of 12 months. You may work before you complete your degree or work after you graduate, but you are limited to no more than 12 months of Optional Practical Training and it must be in your field of training.

4. All off-campus employment, including internships, must have the approval of the Director of International Student Affairs and the Immigration Office. All students applying for off-campus employment must complete specific forms relevant to that type of training. You will be issued a new I - 20.

Any international student who works off-campus without approval is out-of-status. International students may not do freelance work or sell their work through a gallery. Students who are out-of-status are at risk of deportation from the United States.

## F - 2 Status

If you are a student with F - 1 status and wish to bring your spouse, and / or unmarried minor children (younger than age 21) to the United States, you will need a new I - 20. See the Director of International Student Affairs to receive the most complete and current information.

**Dependents in F - 2 status are never allowed to accept employment.**

## F - 1 To B - 2 Status

If you have finished your studies and wish to stay in the United States as a "visitor for pleasure," you may apply to change your immigration status from F - 1 to B - 2. As an F - 1 student your duration of status ends 60 days after your program ends. This means you may remain in the United States for 60 days before returning home. If you wish to remain in the U.S. for a longer period of time, you must apply for a change of status no later than 60 days after the completion of your studies. Contact the Tampa Office of Citizenship and Immigration Services for details at 800.375.5283, or speak to the International Student Advisor.

**Be advised this option may be changed due to new regulations.**

## Legal Assistance

If you need legal advice you may consult with International Student Affairs for referrals. Immigration concerns may require an immigration lawyer.

## Travel To Mexico Or Canada

## United States Tax Information

### Social Security

If you are employed in the United States, you are required to have a Social Security number. If your salary is processed by payroll, you must have a Social Security number to open savings and checking accounts. If you are applying for a Social Security card, you must apply in person and present your passport with an I-94, three letters: supervisor, Human Resources and the International Student Affairs office and one other form of identification to the Social Security Office. This office is located at 2001 Siesta Drive, Suite 301, Sarasota. Be sure to allow extra time for this visit as you will have to wait to be called. The Sarasota Social Security Office requires an authorization letter from your Director of International Student Affairs and a letter showing an offer of employment has been made to you for on-campus employment.

### Filing Tax Returns

Effective in 1992, all persons in F status must file a tax return, even if they have no U.S. source of income. International Students with on campus jobs must file Federal Tax returns between 01 January and 15 April of every year; those without wage income must file by 15 June. You will receive information about filing your taxes through Glacier Tax Prep, a system the college has licensed for this purpose.

## Safety

Ringling College of Art and Design is a small campus with a close-knit faculty, staff and student population. Criminal activity on campus is rare and when crimes do occur they are usually minor. However, whether or not you become a victim of a crime depends largely on your personal habits. It is up to you as an individual to make good decisions and to live safely. The following personal safety tips may be useful:

- 1) Keep emergency numbers in your cell phone, whether you live on campus or off. If on campus, call 941.359.7500.
- 2) At night, walk in well-lighted areas. Travel in groups of 2 or more. Do not ignore intuition or feelings. If you think you are being watched or followed, head for a populated area.
- 3) Do not wear headphones – they block audible warnings of a person or vehicle approaching.
- 4) Avoid working in classrooms, labs or isolated locations alone at night. Again, try to do these activities in groups.
- 5) Never leave your purse, book bag, wallet or valuables unattended.
- 6) Never leave your residence hall room or apartment unlocked for any amount of time, no matter how short. In a residence hall facility, lock your door and wear the key around your neck on a chain when you go to the shower.
- 7) If a vehicle stops for directions, keep your distance. Don't stand so close you can be grabbed and pulled inside. Avoid being too friendly with strangers.
- 8) Placing a single key between your forefinger and middle finger when walking to or from your vehicle provides you with a very discreet, but effective weapon for self-defense if you are assaulted. Also consider keeping a noisemaker with you (a whistle or key chain alarm).

### In Your Car

- 1) Park in well-lighted areas. Look around the parking lot before exiting your vehicle. If you see anything or anyone that makes you uncomfortable, contact the Office of Public Safety (941.359.7500) immediately and they will escort you to your residence.
- 2) Always lock your car. When returning, check the back seat to be sure no one has entered and is hiding. Have keys ready when walking to your car.
- 3) Keep plenty of gasoline in your vehicle so you do not find yourself stranded in an unfamiliar area.
- 4) If you think you are being followed by another car, drive to a police station or well-lit, populated area like a shopping center and seek assistance. Do not go home if you think you are being followed.

## Sexual Assault

- 1) Make friends slowly. Do not immediately trust strangers. Get

to know your new friends and classmates well before trusting them unconditionally.

- 2) Make dating situations double dates or group outings. Do not go out alone with a new date until you know that person well enough.
- 3) Let a friend or roommate know who you are with, where you are going and what time you will return. Do not change your plans
- 4) Avoid drugs and alcohol. Most date rape situations are drug or alcohol related. Current date rape drugs including "liquid gas" or "roofies" are odorless, colorless liquids that are added to alcoholic drinks to incapacitate the victim. Always keep your drink in sight and in your hand.
- 5) If you are assaulted, you should:
  - not bathe or change clothes
  - alert police or Public Safety immediately
  - alert Office of Student Life
  - remember you are the victim

Do not let feelings or guilt influence you into making bad decisions. Sexual assault, regardless of what you may hear, is not provoked by the victim's dress or mannerisms. Remember the rapist is emotionally unstable, but may appear normal. A rapist is typically a person who has difficulty relating to others in a permanent or lasting relationship. A rapist can be a friend, a date, a relative, a co-worker or some other acquaintance of the victim.

Consult the [Student Handbook](#) for additional information.

## Other Ringling College Policies

Ringling College of Art and Design reserves the right to change programs, regulations, rules and / or fees noted in this Student Handbook or other Ringling College publications at any time without advance or subsequent notice. It is the intention of the College to offer uninterrupted courses of study to its students. In the event it is unable to continue some or all academic instruction because of a natural disaster or other event over which the institution has no control, tuition and other fees are not refundable.

Ringling College of Art and Design reserves the right to alter, change or add policies at any time. New policies will be distributed to all current students via a broadcast announcement to their @c.ringling.edu email addresses and will be posted online.

The following are additional Ringling College of Art and Design policies:

## Non-Discrimination Policy

Ringling College of Art and Design does not discriminate on the basis of sex, age, gender, color, race, national or ethnic origin, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, sexual identity, disability, veteran status, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by law, in its programs or activities.

No person, because of discrimination as defined in the Non-Discrimination Policy, will be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of or access to any educational program or activity provided by the College. This is not only the policy of the College, it is also the mandate under applicable federal and state laws and includes the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other College administered programs, pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

The College's programs and activities are conducted in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, and with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The College is an equal opportunity educational institution.

The College does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs and activities, or in the context of employment. Sexual harassment, including sexual misconduct as defined in the Ringling College Non-Harassment Policy and the Ringling College Sexual Misconduct Policy, is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. (See Ringling College of Art and Design Title IX Compliance.) Title IX requires that:

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Sexual harassment is also prohibited under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other applicable statutes.

Anyone engaging in practices that violate the Non-Discrimination Policy, including discrimination, harassment or retaliation against someone who complains about discrimination, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion or separation from the College. Anyone who believes he or she has been subjected to unlawful discrimination, harassment, retaliation or other practices in violation of the Non-Discrimination policy should immediately contact the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator, as listed below.

### **Inquiries**

Inquiries regarding compliance with these statutes and referrals to designated coordinators under the ADA/Section 504 and Title IX may be directed to Christine DeGeorge, Title IX Coordinator, or to the Director of the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-1100, 1-800-421-3481. TDD 877-521-2172.

### **Procedures for Complaints**

Student to student complaints will be processed under the Student Code of Conduct system. For student complaints against faculty, staff or others, the procedures outlined in the Non-Harassment Policy or the Sexual Misconduct Policy will be used for handling reports and complaints of alleged violations of this policy.

For employees and others, the procedures outlined in the Non Harassment Policy, the Sexual Misconduct Policy, and the Grievance Procedures in the Ringling College Faculty and Staff Handbooks, will be the mechanism for handling reports of alleged violations of this policy.

The Title IX Coordinator and Deputy Coordinator will assist any individual wishing to inquire, make a report or a complaint and will provide information concerning the options for resolving a report under this policy.

The Title IX Coordinator has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the Title IX program at Ringling College. The Coordinator oversees the administration of grievance procedures for faculty and staff and coordinates training, education and communication of all College discrimination and harassment policies. The Deputy Title IX Coordinator oversees the administration of the grievance procedures for students and coordinates training, education and communication to students.

### **Title IX Coordinator**

Christine DeGeorge  
Vice President for Human and  
Organizational Development  
Office of Human Resources, Joutras 1  
2700 N. Tamiami Trail  
Sarasota, FL 34234  
941-359-7619  
ccarnegi@ringling.edu

### **Deputy Title IX Coordinator**

Dr. Tammy S. Walsh  
Vice President for Student Life and  
Dean of Students  
Office Location: Ulla Searing Center,  
Second floor  
(941-359-7510)  
twalsh@ringling.edu

### **Deputy Title IX Coordinator**

Taylor Parker  
Compliance and Title IX Deputy Coordinator  
Office Location: Kimbrough, 1st Floor  
(941-309-4063)  
tparker1@ringling.edu

### **Title IX Compliance**

Ringling College of Art and Design is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which students, faculty, and staff can work together in an atmosphere free from all forms of

discrimination. Specifically, every member of the College community should be aware that Ringling College is opposed to discrimination, including sexual harassment, and that such behavior is prohibited by College policy (see *Non-Discrimination Policy, Non-Harassment Policy, Sexual Misconduct Policy*). It is the intention of the College to take whatever action may be necessary to prevent, correct, and, if necessary, discipline for behavior which violates this policy. Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) is Federal law which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education, programs or activities. Sexual misconduct and harassment, as defined in the Ringling College of Art and Design Non-Harassment Policy and Sexual Misconduct Policy, is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX, and includes sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. This policy applies to students, faculty, staff and visitors and covers conduct both on and off campus. Off-campus conduct that is likely to have a substantial effect on a complainant's on-campus life and activities or poses a threat or danger to members of the Ringling College community may also be addressed under this policy.

While it is often thought of as a law that applies to athletics programs, Title IX is much broader than athletics and applies to all programs at Ringling College. While compliance with the law is everyone's responsibility at Ringling College, the College has a designated Title IX Coordinator and Deputy Title IX Coordinator to oversee its response to all reports of sex discrimination, including harassment and sexual misconduct, and coordinate compliance with the mandates of Title IX. The Title IX Coordinator and Deputy Title IX Coordinator are knowledgeable and trained in the College's policies and procedures, State and Federal laws that apply to sexual misconduct and harassment, and the dynamics of sexual misconduct and harassment. The Title IX Coordinator and Deputy Title IX Coordinator are available to meet with any individual to discuss the options for resolving a report under this policy.

#### **Title IX Coordinator**

Christine Carnegie DeGeorge  
Vice President for Human and  
Organizational Development  
Office of Human Resources, Joutras 1  
2700 N. Tamiami Trail  
Sarasota, FL 34234  
941-359-7619  
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#### **Deputy Title IX Coordinator**

Taylor Parker  
Compliance and Title IX Deputy Coordinator  
Office Location: Kimbrough, 1st Floor  
(941-309-4063)  
tparker1@ringling.edu

The Title IX Coordinator has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the Title IX program at Ringling College. The Coordinator oversees the administration of grievance procedures for faculty and staff, and coordinates training, education and communication of all College non-discrimination and non-harassment policies. The Deputy Title IX Coordinator oversee the administration of the grievance procedures for students and coordinate training, education and communication to students. Grievance procedures are described in the *Student Code of Conduct, the Non-Harassment Policy, and the Sexual Misconduct Policy*.

### **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Compliance**

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was implemented in 1994 in recognition of the severity of the crimes associated with domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, as part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. VAWA was reauthorized in 2000, 2005, and 2013 to strengthen the law.

The Violence Against Women Act provides protection to women against crimes of sexual violence. The act was amended on several occasions and placed new obligations on colleges and institutions to report and conduct educational programs under its Campus Sexual Violence Act (Campus SaVE Act), which amended the Clery Act.

The 2013 VAWA Reauthorization added a non-discrimination provision that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex by organizations that receive funding under the Act and allows an exception for "sex segregation or sex-specific programming" when it is deemed to be "necessary to the essential operations of a program".

Ringling College does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs and activities, or in the context of employment. Sexual harassment, including sexual misconduct as defined in the Ringling College Non-Harassment Policy and the Ringling College Sexual Misconduct Policy.

Sexual violence is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

#### **Definitions:**

**Domestic Violence** – Violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim; by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common; by a current or former cohabitant with the victim; by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred; or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family

violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime occurred.

**Dating Violence** – Violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and where the existence of such a relationship based on a consideration of the following factors:

- Length of relationship
- Type of relationship
- Frequency of interactions between the persons involved in the relationship

**Stalking** – A course of conduct involving more than one instance of unwanted attention, harassment, physical or verbal contact, or any other course of conduct directed at an individual that could be reasonably regarded as likely to alarm or place that individual in fear of physical, emotional or psychological harm or injury. This includes cyber-stalking, a particular form of stalking in which electronic media such as the internet, social networks, blogs, cell phones, texts, GPS or other similar devices or forms of contact are used to pursue, harass or make unwelcome contact with another person. Stalking and cyber-stalking may involve individuals who are known to one another or have an intimate or sexual relationship, or may involve individuals not known to one another.

## Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

The College provides equal employment opportunity to all persons without regard to sex, age, gender, color, race, national or ethnic origin, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, sexual identity, disability, veteran status, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by law.

The policy applies to all areas of employment, including: recruitment, hiring, training and development, promotion, transfer, termination, layoff, compensation benefits, and all other conditions and privileges of employment in accordance with applicable Federal, State, and Local laws.

The College complies with all relevant and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The College will not unlawfully discriminate against any qualified employee or job applicant with respect to any terms, privileges, access or conditions of employment because of a person's physical or mental disability. The College also will make reasonable accommodations wherever necessary for employees or applicants with disabilities, provided that the individual is otherwise qualified to safely perform the essential functions of the job and provided that any accommodations made do not impose an undue hardship on the College.

Although managers and supervisors are primarily responsible for ensuring the implementation of the College's Equal Employment Opportunity policies, all members of the faculty and staff share in the responsibility for assuring that by their personal actions the

policies are effective and applied uniformly to everyone.

Anyone engaging in practices that violate the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, including discrimination, harassment or retaliation against someone who complains about discrimination shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Anyone who believes he or she has been subjected to unlawful discrimination, harassment, retaliation or other practices in violation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy should immediately contact the Vice President for Human and Organizational Development.

For students, the Student Conduct system will be the mechanism for handling reports of alleged violations of these policies. For employees, the Faculty Grievance Procedures and the Staff Grievance Procedures will be the mechanism for handling reports of alleged violations of these policies.

## Non-Harassment Policy

Ringling College of Art and Design maintains a professional work and academic environment in which all employees and students are treated with respect and dignity. A vital element of this atmosphere is the College's commitment to equal opportunities and the eradication of discriminatory practices including harassment, with the goal to provide an academic and institutional climate of non-harassment. Forms of harassment that are encompassed by this policy include harassment based on sex, age, gender, color, race, national or ethnic origin, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, sexual identity, disability, veteran status, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by law. Harassment is specifically prohibited by state and federal law and instances of harassment may result in both civil and criminal liability on the part of the individual harasser as well as the College. Harassment's destructive impact wastes human potential, demoralizes employees and students, and perpetuates the tendency for further unacceptable behavior. For these reasons, the College is opposed to harassment in any form in its workplace and activities. This policy establishes procedures to address problems and questions regarding harassment in a prompt, discreet and fair manner. All employees and students are expected to comply and cooperate with its provisions and in accordance with the code of professional ethics.

**Definition of Sexual Harassment:** Due to the inherent complexity of sexual harassment, the College's policy contains this special section defining sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined by this policy as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is aimed at coercing an unwilling person into a sexual relationship whether or not it involves physical contact; that makes rejecting such conduct the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting the individual; or that unreasonably interferes with the individual's work or academic performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for work or learning.

Examples of sexual harassment are such actions as sexual attacks; sexual violence; the requesting of sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning one's job, grade, letter of recommendation, or similar activities; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; physical contact such as patting, pinching, or unnecessary touching; subtle pressure for sexual activity; sexist remarks regarding a person's body, clothing or sexual activity; or derogatory comments about a person's sexual orientation.

Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature or to welcome social interactions.

Instructional material shall not be the basis for discipline unless an appropriate review by the Human Rights Committee finds the material irrelevant to the subject of the course or finds that the cumulative presentation of specific material is unbalanced to the degree that it establishes an atmosphere of harassment.

A Special Note to Faculty, Teaching Assistants, Staff, and Other Persons in Positions of Power: Harassment occurs when a person who is in a position of trust or authority engages in behaviors or creates conditions that are inappropriate, unwanted and/or non-reciprocal. This is especially true in instances of sexual harassment when an unwelcome personal element is introduced into what should be a sex neutral situation. Because of the difference in power between faculty and students and supervisors and employees, a faculty member or supervisor cannot be certain that a personal relationship is truly welcome or consensual. Moreover, other individuals may be affected by such relationships. Those who abuse, or appear to abuse, their power violate their responsibility to the community. The College expects the faculty and staff to be aware of the potential for problems and conflicts of interest.

The Human Rights Committee: The Human Rights Committee is a fact-finding committee whose purpose is to respond to and resolve harassment complaints. The Committee is a standing committee appointed by the President and comprised of three faculty members, two staff members, and two students. The student members of the Committee will participate only in those cases where other students are involved. The Vice President for Human and Organizational Development will serve as coordinator without vote. If the complaint should be against the Vice President for Human and Organizational Development, one of the committee members is to serve as the coordinator, with vote.

Student to Student Harassment: Student-to-Student harassment complaints are to be processed under the disciplinary procedure established and operated by the Office of Student Life. All other harassment complaints are to be processed by the procedures outlined in this policy.

"On Notice" Option of Complaint: Individuals who feel they have been harassed may choose to put the offender "on notice" that the offender's behavior is unwelcome. Often this direct communication by the individual brings a stop to the harassment, and no further action is necessary.

Use of the "on notice" option is not a prerequisite to initiating the complaint procedures set forth in this policy, and the College will not refuse to investigate a complaint on the grounds that the victim did not have a discussion with the offender. In other words, the victim always retains the right to avoid direct interaction with the offender and to initiate the complaint procedure explained in this policy.

Procedures for Informal Complaint: Individuals who believe they have been the victim of harassment may seek an informal resolution of the problem. Use of the informal complaint procedures is not a prerequisite to initiating a formal complaint. Complaints of sexual assault must be made through the Procedures for a Formal Complaint.

Informal complaints may be oral or written and directed to the Vice President for Human and Organizational Development or to any member of the Human Rights Committee. Informal resolution will generally involve the Vice President for Human and Organizational Development or the Human Rights Committee serving as mediators in an effort to resolve the complaint. The accused will be informed of the existence and nature of the informal complaint and will have an opportunity to respond. The Human Rights Committee or the Vice President for Human and Organizational Development, serving as intermediaries, will seek a resolution that both the complainant and the accused can agree upon. If no mutually satisfactory resolution can be found, the Human Rights Committee, the Vice President for Human and Organizational Development, and/or the complainant can decide if further action is appropriate.

Procedures for a Formal Complaint: Harassment complaints are to be directed to the Vice President for Human and Organizational Development or to a member of the Human Rights Committee. The Vice President for Human and Organizational Development or the contact person on the Committee will prepare a written record of the individual's factual allegations which the complainant will then have the opportunity to review before signing. Although complaints should be brought as soon as possible, preferably within six months after an offensive incident, the College recognizes that the sensitivity involved in certain situations may cause individuals to delay taking action.

Once the initial complaint is prepared, the Vice President for Human and Organizational Development or the contact person on the Committee shall convene the entire Human Rights Committee to review the complaint, and to conduct an appropriate investigation of the allegations. This investigation may be limited to mediation and a negotiated settlement between the complainant and the accused. Based on the evidence collected, a designated member of the Human Rights Committee will prepare a report containing the Committee's findings and conclusions.

Possible outcomes of the investigation are that the allegations

are substantiated, or that allegations are not substantiated, i.e. an inconclusive investigation. In the event the allegations are substantiated, the Vice President for Human and Organizational Development or the Human Rights Committee may endeavor, through mediation, to reach a negotiated settlement of the complaint.

If a negotiated settlement cannot be reached, the Human Rights Committee will refer the matter to the College's Vice Presidents for resolution. The Vice Presidents will not reopen a completed investigation unless it can be shown that the investigating individuals made specific errors in reviewing the facts. The Vice Presidents will consider the findings and recommendations of the Human Rights Committee and, in consultation with the President, render a decision. Decisions will be made using the preponderance of evidence standard (i.e. it is more likely than not that the alleged conduct occurred).

**Protection of Complainant and Others:** All information regarding harassment will be kept in confidence to the greatest extent practicable and appropriate under the circumstances. The College cannot guarantee that the identity of the complainant will be concealed from the accused harasser, but any retaliation committed by the accused harasser by way of irresponsible, malicious or unfounded complaints will be investigated. If an investigation reveals that the complainant falsely accused another of harassment knowingly or in a malicious manner, the complainant will be subject to appropriate sanctions and/or discipline.

In order to ensure that a complete investigation of harassment claims can be conducted it may be necessary for the College to disclose to others portions of the information provided by the complainant. The College will try to honor any complainant's request that the College not disclose certain information provided, consistent with the College's obligation to identify and correct instances of harassment, including sexual harassment.

**Penalties:** Every claim of harassment will be considered on its own merits. The College will take whatever corrective action and/or disciplinary measures it considers appropriate under the circumstances, including but not limited to counseling, reprimand, probation, suspension, transfer, demotion or immediate termination of an employee or student in accordance with the provisions, policies and procedures outlined in the appropriate Faculty, Staff or Student Handbook.

### **Sexual Misconduct Policy**

Ringling College of Art and Design will not tolerate and will seek to eradicate any behavior by its employees, students, or volunteers which constitutes Sexual Misconduct. Such behavior is prohibited both by law and by College policy. The College is committed to fostering a community that promotes prompt reporting of all types of sexual misconduct and ensures timely and fair resolution of sexual misconduct complaints. It is the intention of the College to take appropriate action to end the misconduct, prevent its recurrence and address its effect.

The purpose of the policy is to

- define the forms of sexual misconduct that violate the policy;
- identify resources and support for members of the Ringling College community;
- identify the Title IX Coordinators and their responsibilities related to the policy;
- provide information as to where a member of the Ringling College community can obtain support or access resources confidentially;
- provide information on how a member of the Ringling College community can make a report;
- provide information on how a report against a member of the Ringling College community will be investigated and adjudicated.

This policy applies to all members of the Ringling College community, including faculty, staff and students. All faculty, staff and students are responsible for their actions and behavior, whether the conduct in question occurs on campus or in a different location. As such, this policy applies to both on-campus conduct and relevant off-campus conduct that affects the Ringling College community.

Vendors, independent contractors, volunteers, visitors and others who conduct business with Ringling College or on College owned or controlled property are also expected to comply with this policy. The College will take timely action in all allegations of sexual misconduct to ensure the safety of the community and to provide an environment free from gender and sex discrimination.

### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

The College is committed to protecting the privacy of all individuals involved in a report of sexual misconduct, and will balance individual privacy with its obligation to conduct a thorough review of allegations to protect the parties and the broader community and maintain an environment free from sexual misconduct.

Faculty, staff and students wishing to obtain confidential assistance without making a report to the College may do so by speaking with a confidential resource listed below. A confidential resource for students is the College counseling staff in the Peterson Counseling Center (941) 893-2855 and the Campus Chaplain (941) 309-0200. A confidential resource for faculty and staff is the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The toll-free phone number of the Employee Assistance Program is (877) 240-6863. When a victim seeks medical treatment for sexual assault, medical personnel are required to report to the police, but victims are not required to file formal charges unless desired.

Note that limitations of confidentiality may exist for individuals



under the age of 18.

The College will respect, to the greatest extent possible, the privacy of individuals who choose to report to any other employee of the College. Except for the confidential resources identified in this policy, all other College staff and faculty who receive a report of sexual misconduct are required to elevate the report to the Title IX Coordinator or the Deputy Title IX Coordinator for investigation and response.

Information related to a report of sexual misconduct will be shared with those College employees who “need to know” to assist in the investigation and/or the resolution of the complaint.

Where the College has received a report of sexual misconduct but the complainant requests that he or she remain unidentified, and/or requests that the College not pursue an investigation, the College must balance this request with its responsibility to provide a safe and non-discriminatory environment for all members of the community. The College is required to take all reasonable steps to investigate and respond to a complaint, but its ability to do so may be limited by the complainant’s request. However, under compelling circumstances - including evidence of a pattern of repetitive behavior, the use of force or threat of force, or the use of a weapon by the respondent - the College may conduct further investigation or take another appropriate measure without the complainant’s consent.

If a report of misconduct poses an immediate threat to the community when timely notice must be given to protect the health or safety of the community, the College may not be able to maintain the same level of privacy. Immediate threatening circumstances include, but are not limited to, reported incidents of misconduct that include the use of force, a weapon, or other circumstances that represent a serious and ongoing threat to the community.

A complainant will be informed whenever possible of any action the College takes to resolve the complaint, including further investigation and correction or disciplinary steps.

Under Florida law, the College is mandated to report any abuse of a minor (under the age of 18) to the Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-(800) 962-2873.

All resolution proceedings are conducted in compliance with the requirements of FERPA, the Clery Act, Title IX, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (VAWA) and College policy. No information shall be released from these proceedings except as required or permitted by law and College policy.

### Prohibited Conduct and Definitions

This policy addresses a broad spectrum of behavior, all of which fall under the broad definition of Sexual Misconduct. The term Sexual Misconduct includes: sexual assault, sexual contact, sex-based communication and sexual exploitation. Sexual Misconduct also includes means actual, attempted or alleged

criminal sexual abuse as defined by the State of Florida.

Complete definitions, under College policy, including what it means to give effective “consent” can be found below and in the Student Code of Conduct.

Sexual Misconduct does not include “Sexual Harassment” which is addressed under the College’s Non-Harassment Policy and the Student Code of Conduct. In compliance with the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (VAWA), sexual harassment, including stalking, cyber-stalking, domestic violence and dating violence as defined by the VAWA are prohibited under the Non-Harassment Policy, the Sexual Misconduct Policy and the Student Code of Conduct. See VAWA Compliance and the Student Code of Conduct in the Student Handbook for definitions. Procedures to report and resolve complaints are found in the disciplinary procedures, the Non-Harassment Policy and the Sexual Misconduct Policy, in the Student Handbook.

### Definitions:

Sexual Assault is having or attempting to have sexual intercourse or sexual contact with another individual without consent. Sexual intercourse includes vaginal or anal penetration, however slight, with a body part or object, or oral copulation by mouth-to-genital contact.

Sexual Contact includes kissing, touching the intimate parts of another, causing the other to touch one’s intimate parts, or disrobing of another without permission. Intimate parts may include the breasts, genitals, buttocks, mouth or any other part of the body that is touched in a sexual manner.

Sexual-based Communication is speaking to, or directing any kind of communication, words or images of a sexual nature at another person that is not welcomed by the receiving party. If the communication is unwelcome; that is, if it occurs without the other person’s consent or participation, it may create a hostile learning and living environment. Sexual-based communication can include interactions in person, by phone, electronic messages and photos, written words or images such as graffiti and social media postings.

Sexual Exploitation is when an individual takes non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage of another, for his/her own benefit; or to benefit anyone other than the one being exploited; and that behavior does not otherwise constitute one of the other sexual misconduct offenses. Examples of sexual exploitation include, but are not limited to:

- Prostituting another person (i.e. personally gaining money, privilege, or power from the sexual activities of another person)
- Non-consensual video, photography, audiotaping, or any other form of recording, of sexual activity;
- Non-consensual sharing or streaming of images, photography, video, or audio recording of sexual activity or nudity, or distribution of such without the knowledge and consent of all parties involved;
- Allowing others to observe a personal act of consensual sex

without knowledge or consent of the partner;

- Engaging in voyeurism (being a “peeping tom”);
- Knowingly or recklessly transmitting an STD or HIV to another person;

#### Consent

Consent is the conscious affirmative agreement to voluntarily engage in sexual activity with another person. Consent cannot be given if it results from the use or threat of physical force, intimidation, or any other factor that would eliminate an individual's ability to exercise his/her own free will to choose whether or not to have sexual contact. Consent cannot be given if an individual is incapacitated, under the influence of drugs or alcohol, mentally incompetent or in an altered state of consciousness. Consent may be withdrawn by either party at any time. Previous consent does not automatically provide consent for a current sexual activity. Failure of an individual to say “no” does not imply consent.

#### Retaliation

Any retaliation committed by the accused abuser by way of irresponsible, malicious or unfounded complaints will be investigated. Ringling College will discipline any individual who retaliates against any person who reports alleged Sexual Misconduct or who retaliates against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, a proceeding, or a hearing relating to a Sexual Misconduct complaint. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment.

Definition of Retaliation: Acts or attempts to retaliate or seek retribution against the complainant, respondent, or any individual or group of individuals involved in the investigation and/or resolution of an allegation of Sexual Misconduct. Retaliation can be committed by any individual or group of individuals, not just a respondent or complainant. Retaliation may include continued abuse or violence, other forms of harassment, and slander and libel.

#### False Complaints

Submitting a good faith complaint, concern or report of harassment will not affect the complainant's employment, grades, academic standing, or work assignments. However, an individual found to have made a false complaint or to have knowingly and willingly given false information during an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action.

#### Title IX Coordinators

**Title IX Coordinator** (Faculty and Staff):

**Christine DeGeorge** – Vice President for Human and Organizational Development

Office location: Joutras 1, First Floor

(941) 359-7619

[ccarnegi@ringling.edu](mailto:ccarnegi@ringling.edu)

**Deputy Title IX Coordinator**(Students):

**Dr. Tammy S. Walsh** - Vice President for Student Life and Dean

of Students

Office location:

Ulla Searing Student Center, Second Floor

(941) 359-7510

[twalsh@ringling.edu](mailto:twalsh@ringling.edu)

#### **Deputy Title IX Coordinator**

Taylor Parker

Compliance and Title IX Deputy Coordinator

Office Location: Kimbrough, 1st Floor

(941-309-4063)

[tparker1@ringling.edu](mailto:tparker1@ringling.edu)

The Title IX Coordinator and Deputy Title IX Coordinator are knowledgeable and trained in the College's policies and procedures, state and federal laws, that apply to Sexual Misconduct and Harassment, and the dynamics of sexual misconduct and Harassment. The Title IX Coordinator and Deputy Title IX Coordinator are available to meet with any individual to discuss the options for resolving a report under this policy.

The College provides resources to both the complainant and respondent in making decision, obtaining information about options under this policy, and assisting both parties in the event that a report of sexual misconduct is made.

#### **Reporting and Investigating Procedures**

Reports will be addressed according to the status of the respondent as follows:

If the respondent is a student, the Office of Student Life will utilize the student disciplinary process in the Student Handbook to address the report. If the respondent is a faculty or staff member, or other individual, the Office of Human Resources will utilize the procedure below to address the report.

Employees and volunteers are required to report immediately any case of known or suspected Sexual Misconduct in compliance with Florida law. They must also report incidents to the Title IX Coordinator.

As required by Florida law, upon notification of known or suspected sexual abuse, abandonment or neglect of a child under age 18, employees, students and volunteers should report as described in the Ringling College of Art and Design Child Protection Policy. This policy can be found in the student and employee handbooks.

#### **Time Frames For Responding To Reports**

The College will promptly investigate and respond to all reports of Sexual Misconduct. The time frames are guides and may be extended because of extraordinary circumstances. Each case is unique and the process for handling the incident will be impacted by factors such as: the complexity of the investigation, the scope of the allegation, the parties' schedules and availability, and the academic calendar. Parties will be notified in writing of the final outcomes of the hearing

or other action which concludes the complaint process. The College will provide parties with periodic status updates as needed or requested.

### Procedures for a Complaint

#### 1. Student to Student Sexual Misconduct

Student to student sexual misconduct complaints are to be processed under the disciplinary procedure established and operated by the Office of Student Life. All other sexual misconduct complaints are to be processed by the procedures outlined in this policy.

#### 2. Student complaints against faculty or staff and all other complaints

##### Procedures:

The Vice President for Human and Organizational Development or designee, or the contact person on the Human Rights Committee\*, will prepare a written record of the individual's factual allegations which the complainant will then have the opportunity to review before signing. Complaints should be brought as soon as possible. Although the College recognizes that the sensitivity involved in certain situations may cause individuals to delay taking action, all complaints should be brought within six months if at all possible because a delay in reporting impedes the investigation.

A grievant may elect to utilize the informal process, to facilitate a solution without making a formal complaint. The informal process helps parties to reach a mutually agreed upon solution. Participation in the informal process does not mean that an individual gives up any rights to file a formal complaint, and both parties must agree to a resolution. The informal process is not an available option if the complaint is related to sexual assault. The informal process does not preclude the College from conducting an investigation of a complaint or taking disciplinary action.

Once the initial complaint is prepared, the Vice President for Human and Organizational Development will investigate the complaint, engage a third party investigator, and/or convene the Human Rights Committee to conduct an appropriate investigation of the allegations. Complaints will be given an impartial and timely investigation. The Vice President for Human and Organizational Development, the investigator, or a designated member of the Human Rights Committee will prepare a report of the investigation. Should there be a conflict, or for any reason the Vice President or a member of the committee is unable to carry out their responsibilities under this policy in an impartial manner, the College may designate an alternate official to preside over the investigation.

Both the complainant and Respondent shall have the option of assistance by an advisor of their choice from the College faculty, staff, student body or parent (students only), provided the

individual is willing to participate in the process. The advisor's role is to provide support and assistance during the process but not to speak on behalf of the complainant or respondent or in any way interfere with the process.

When a complaint is filed, the Vice President for Human and Organizational Development will notify the respondent and provide him/her with the information regarding the complaint. The respondent may submit a written response to the Vice President for Human and Organizational Development within seven (7) working days.

Upon conclusion of the investigation, the Committee will make a recommendation for resolution to the Vice President over the respondent's department, or their designee, for resolution. The Vice President will consider the findings and recommendations of the investigator(s) and render a decision. The Vice President will not reopen a completed investigation unless it can be shown that the investigating individuals made specific errors in reviewing the facts or if additional credible information comes to light. The Vice President will render a decision within 20 working days. Time limits may be extended at the discretion of the Vice President for Human and Organizational Development. Decisions will be made using the preponderance of evidence standard (i.e. it is more likely than not that the alleged conduct occurred).

If the Committee determination is not acceptable to either the Complainant or Respondent, the decision may be appealed with seven (7) working days to the College's Vice Presidents, or their designees, who will serve as the appeals committee. The Appeals Committee will review the complaint, any response, any documents provided by the Complainant or Respondent, and any other documents. The Appeals Committee also has the option, but not the obligation, to schedule a hearing and/or take testimony from the parties and other witnesses. Upon conclusion of its review and/or investigation, the appeals Committee will deliberate and make a written report, including its conclusions and recommendations to the Vice President. The Vice President will then have the option of amending his/her determination based on the recommendations of the Appeals Committee. The Vice President determination will then be final.

\* The Human Rights Committee is a fact-finding committee whose purpose is to respond to reports of Harassment and Sexual Misconduct. The Committee is a standing committee appointed by the President and comprised of three faculty members, two staff members, and two students. The student members of the Committee will participate only in those cases where other students are involved. The Vice President for Human and Organizational Development or designee will serve as coordinator without vote. If the complaint should be against the Vice President for Human and Organizational Development, one of the committee members is to serve as the coordinator,

with vote.

Any employee or volunteer who is accused in a reported incident of sexual misconduct may be immediately relieved of responsibilities, suspended, or the College may take other actions as it determines. Reinstatement of relieved or suspended employees or volunteers shall occur at the sole discretion of Ringling College.

#### **Disciplinary Proceedings/Action:**

Students accused of sexual misconduct/sexual assault are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Conduct as contained in the Ringling College of Art and Design Student Handbook, whether or not formal criminal charges are filed by the victim.

Disciplinary proceedings will be conducted by College officials who receive training.

The Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights has interpreted Title IX to require schools to evaluate evidence of alleged sexual misconduct under a "preponderance of the evidence" standard, and that is the standard of evidence that is used, meaning it is more likely than not that said violation occurred.

Both the complainant and the respondent are entitled to the same opportunities to:

- a) have an advisor of their choosing accompany them during any related meeting or during any campus disciplinary proceedings – the advisor may not participate or speak for the complainant or respondent.
- b) bring witness;
- c) be notified simultaneously and in writing of the outcome of the proceeding and of appeal procedures;
- d) be notified of any change to the result before it becomes final, and when the result becomes final;
- e) have disciplinary proceedings completed within a reasonable timeframe.

A student found in violation of the Sexual Misconduct Policy is subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension and/or expulsion from the College.

Any employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in sexual misconduct in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. The College will take whatever corrective action and/or disciplinary measures it considers appropriate under the circumstances, up to and including, but not limited to, probation, suspension, transfer or immediate termination of an employee in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in the Faculty or Staff Handbook.

#### **Maintenance of Records and Documents**

Ringling College shall maintain all records and documentation required by law. The College will take great care with

confidentiality of the victim including publicly available record-keeping (i.e. Clery Reporting) that excludes personally-identifiable information on the victims to the extent permissible by law.

## **Sexual Misconduct/Sexual Assault Information**

### **Medical Attention and Preservation of Evidence**

Immediately following a sexual assault or any type of sexual misconduct, a victim should seek medical attention. The victim may have injuries that need immediate attention and it is important to test for sexually transmitted infections and discuss options about emergency contraception. The victim should not wash, shower, urinate, defecate, change clothes or douche, even though that may be the immediate reaction. This is important for preserving evidence should the victim decide to file formal criminal charges through the Police. Please be aware that information reported to any police official is public information, and is available to local media. It is, however, the general practice of journalists not to release names of victims of sex offenses.

### **Support**

The provision of support for a victim is essential. Support should come from trusted friends and/or loved ones and trained professionals. Ringling College's Office of Student Life staff serve as the primary source of support for students who experience sexual misconduct or assault. The Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students additionally serves as the Deputy Title IX Coordinator (See Title IX).

In order to assure appropriate support for a victim, victims of sexual misconduct/sexual assault are urged to report the incident as soon as possible, regardless of where the offense took place, whether or not the offender is known to the victim.

Victims of sexual assault are not required to file formal criminal charges through the police, even if they report the incident to campus officials.

### **Reporting**

The College encourages all students to report information about any type of sexual misconduct or harassment involving a student, staff, faculty member or visitor. Faculty and staff, except for College Counseling staff, and the Campus Chaplain since they are confidential resources, are required to report information to a Title IX Coordinator about any type of sexual misconduct or harassment. Medical personnel, when a victim seeks medical treatment for sexual assault, are required to reply to the police, but victims are not required to file formal charges unless desired. An incident does not have to occur on campus to be reported to the College. Off campus conduct that adversely affects or has the potential to adversely affect the Ringling College community also falls under this policy. The College will promptly investigate and respond to all reports of

sexual misconduct and harassment.

The College provides resources to both the complainant and respondent in making decisions, obtaining information about options under this policy, and assisting both parties in the event that a report of sexual misconduct or harassment is made.

**Ways to file a report:**

**Campus Safety:** The opportunity to file a report with the College is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling Public Safety (941-359-7500). A complainant or third party can request a campus safety officer to respond and take a report.

**Title IX Coordinator (Faculty and Staff):**

Christine DeGeorge – Vice President of Human and Organizational Development  
Office location: Joutras, First Floor  
(941) 359-7619 [ccarnegi@ringling.edu](mailto:ccarnegi@ringling.edu)

**Deputy Title IX Coordinator (Students):**

Dr. Tammy S. Walsh - Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students  
Office location: Ulla Searing Student Center, Second Floor  
(941) 359-7510  
[twalsh@ringling.edu](mailto:twalsh@ringling.edu)

**Deputy Title IX Coordinator**

Taylor Parker  
Compliance and Title IX Deputy Coordinator  
Office Location: Kimbrough, 1st Floor  
(941-309-4063)  
[tparker1@ringling.edu](mailto:tparker1@ringling.edu)

**Office of Student Life:** A complainant or third party can file a report with any of the professionals within the Office of Student Life.

**Office of Student Life Staff**

**Jekeyma Robinson**

Associate Dean of Students for Student Development  
Office location: Ulla Searing Student Center, Second Floor  
(941) 309-4375  
[jrobinso@ringling.edu](mailto:jrobinso@ringling.edu)

**Chris Shaffer**

Associate Dean for Residence Life  
Office Location: Ann and Alfred Goldstein Hall, First Floor  
(941) 359-7616  
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**James Mitchell**

Coordinator of Residence Life for Operations  
Office Location: Ann and Alfred Goldstein Hall, First Floor  
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[jmitche1@ringling.edu](mailto:jmitche1@ringling.edu)

**Kristin Dunham**

Coordinator of Residence Life  
Office Location: Ann and Alfred Goldstein Hall, First Floor

(941) 309-0111  
[kdunham@ringling.edu](mailto:kdunham@ringling.edu)

**Katie Cuff**

Coordinator of Student Activities and Leadership Development  
Office Location: Ann and Alfred Goldstein Hall, First Floor  
(941) 309-0202  
[kcuff@ringling.edu](mailto:kcuff@ringling.edu)

**E Ramey**

Coordinator of Recreation and Wellness  
Office Location: Ulla Searing Student Center, Second Floor  
(941) 359-6123  
[eramey@ringling.edu](mailto:eramey@ringling.edu)

**Local Law Enforcement:** A complainant may file a report with the Sarasota Police Department or other law enforcement agency (depending on location of incident).

**Coordination with Law Enforcement**

Because the goals and objectives of the College's Sexual Misconduct Policy and Non-Harassment Policy differ from those of the civil and criminal justice systems, proceedings under the College's Sexual Misconduct Policy and Non-Harassment Policy are independent of civil and criminal processes and may be carried out prior to, simultaneously with, or following civil or criminal proceedings off-campus. On-campus adjudication does not preclude, limit or require a student's or employee's access to the state and federal justice system.

Notifying the Sarasota Police Department will generally result in the complainant and, in some cases the respondent, being contacted by a police officer. The police department determines if a criminal investigation will occur and if the case will be referred for prosecution. A case not referred for criminal prosecution will still receive a College response.

Under Florida state law, sexual misconduct may constitute a criminal act. However, the College conducts investigations and hearings and renders sanctions in an educational, non-criminal context. An act not criminally prosecuted may still violate College policy. To the extent permitted or required by law, the College will cooperate with outside investigators. However, outside law enforcement agencies do not respond to Title IX violations, and respond only to allegations of criminal behavior. As a result, the College encourages reporting to both the College and to local law enforcement, if the alleged sexual misconduct may also be a crime.

The College process and the criminal justice process are two separate and independent courses of action. If a complainant wishes to file a report with the Sarasota Police Department, a Ringling College staff member is available to assist. The College will not file a police report about the incident on the complainant's behalf unless compelling circumstances, as outlined in the statement of privacy and confidentiality section, exist. The College's response to a report is not impacted by the

complainant's decision to file a criminal complaint or the outcome of the criminal investigation.

### Amnesty

Our goal is that all students report all incidents of sexual misconduct so that those affected can receive the support and resources needed. Therefore, violations of the College's alcohol and illegal substances policies by a student complainant may be exempt from disciplinary action in situations where sexual misconduct or harassment also occurs. However, the College may initiate an educational discussion about the use of alcohol or drugs and their impact.

### Interim Support and Reasonable Protection

After a report is made, the College will provide interim support and reasonable protection against further acts of misconduct, harassment or retaliation as well as provide services and resources to provide a safe educational and employment environment.

After the initial review of the report, the College will determine the necessity and scope of any interim measures. All individuals are required to report instances of another individual's failure to abide by any restrictions imposed by an interim measure. The College will take action to enforce a previously implemented interim measure.

The range of interim measures include:

1) No contact order: The complainant or respondent may request, or the College may impose, communication and contact restrictions to prevent further potentially harmful interaction.

2) Academic, Employment or Living Arrangements: The complainant or respondent may request a change in academic, employment or living situation after a report of sexual misconduct or harassment. Upon request, the College will inform the complainant or respondent of the options and will accommodate the request if those changes are reasonably available. In some cases the College may initiate these changes without a request. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Changing class or work schedule, including the ability to stop a course without penalty
- Limiting an individual's or organization's access to certain College facilities or activities pending resolution of the matter
- Providing an escort to ensure safe movement between classes and activities
- Providing academic support services

3) Emotional Support: The College will provide counseling services through the Peterson Counseling Center as part of Health Services or Employee Assistance Program or assist in providing a referral to off campus agencies. Counseling and emotional support is available to any member of the College community.

### Additional Campus Resources

TBD – Campus Chaplain (Confidential Resource)  
Office Location: Ulla Searing Student Center, Second Floor  
(941) 309-0200

### Peterson Counseling Center

(Confidential Resource)  
Office Location: Health Center  
(941) 893-2855

**Health Center** (Required Reporter to Police) Office Location:  
Health Center  
(941) 309-4000

### Off-Campus Community Resources

SPARCC (Safe Place and Rape Crisis Center)  
2139 Main Street  
Sarasota, Florida 34237  
(941) 365-0208  
You can also reach SPARCC through the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-500-1119.

Sarasota County Sheriff's Office  
Victim Assistance Unit  
(941) 861-4942  
victimassistance@scgov.net

The Sarasota County Sheriff's Office Victim Assistance Unit provides services to any victim of any crime, including secondary victims and witnesses to crime. In addition, they provide short-term crisis support for persons experiencing traumatic situations that are not crime related (such as suicides). Services include crisis intervention, accompaniment through medical, legal, and judicial appointments related to the victimization, assistance with filing Injunctions for Protection (restraining orders), assistance in applying for Crime Victim Compensation where applicable, practical assistance, exploration of options, and community information and referral.

HOPE Family Services  
www.hopefamilyservice.org  
24 Hour Help-line: 941-755-6805  
Outreach Office: 941-747-8499

Manatee Glens Rape Crisis Services  
www.manateeglens.org  
Rape Crisis Hotline: 941-708-6059  
Main number: 941-782-4100

### RAINN

RAPE, ABUSE, & INCEST NATIONAL NETWORK (RAINN)  
The nation's largest anti-sexual assault organization.

**Florida Council Against Sexual Violence (FCASV)** FCASV is an excellent resource regarding the current trends in reported sexual assaults within Florida, current research, outreach, and survivor training, and resources for survivors.

### Awareness Programs

The Office of Student Life works closely with the Office of Public Safety to promote awareness about rape, sexual assault, and other forms of sexual misconduct, and educational programs are offered each year.

## Drug & Alcohol Laws

The illegal use of drugs or alcohol is a violation of State and / or Federal laws, punishable by fine, imprisonment or both. Florida State law prohibits the sale to, and the consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages by persons younger than 21 years of age.

The "Controlled Substance Act" [(970, amended 1984) and the "Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986" provide penalties for unlawful manufacturing, distribution and dispensing of controlled substances.

Other penalties are sanctioned under Florida State and Local laws.

The sale of tobacco products to persons under the age of 18 is against Florida law. Proof of age is required for purchase. Selling, delivering, bartering, furnishing or giving tobacco products to persons under 18 years of age is prohibited. Possession, misrepresenting age to purchase and purchasing from a vending machine is prohibited.