

POLICY MANUAL

VOLUME V

**PERSONNEL POLICIES  
FOR  
ADMINISTRATORS AND STAFF**

*(Revised May 2014)*

**GEORGIAN COURT UNIVERSITY**

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**THE MERCY UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY**

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## Volume V

### Personnel Policies for Administrators and Staff

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#### 5.0 Introduction

This Volume V of the Georgian Court University Policy Manual is intended to provide employees with a general understanding of Georgian Court personnel policies.

Volume III the Georgian Court University Policy Manual contains employment policies that pertain to all Georgian Court employees. Additional policies that pertain only to members of the faculty are provided in Volume IV, and general policies that affect all members of the campus community (including students) are set forth in Volume II.

The Policy Manual cannot anticipate every situation or answer every question about employment. It is not an employment contract, and is not intended to create contractual obligations of any kind. Neither the employee nor Georgian Court are bound to continue the employment relationship if either chooses, at its will, to end the relationship at any time.

In order to retain necessary flexibility in the administration of policies and procedures, Georgian Court reserves the right to change, revise, or eliminate any of the policies and/or benefits described in this Volume V and in other Volumes of the Policy Manual, except for the policy of employment-at-will, and where otherwise expressly noted. The only recognized deviations from the stated policies are those authorized and signed by the Chief Executive Officer of Georgian Court.

#### 5.1 Employment-at-Will

Georgian Court University, as an employer in the “at will” employment state of New Jersey, makes the following disclaimer statement to fully inform employees of the legal meaning of “at will” employment. Georgian Court’s actions as an employer are guided by the philosophy of C.A.R.E. (courtesy and respect for everyone) and by the core values of respect, integrity, justice, compassion, and service.

None of Georgian Court’s policies, procedures or practices, including those set forth in this employment Volume V of the Policy Manual are to be viewed as a contract or as creating any promises or contractual rights of any kind. Rather, they are guidelines that can be changed by Georgian Court at its discretion at any time and without prior notice or agreement. This Volume V of the Policy Manual supersedes and replaces all previous handbooks and other statements of Georgian Court policies, rules, and procedures. Only the Chief Executive Officer of Georgian Court has the authority to enter into a contract of employment for any specified period or to make any promises contrary to the foregoing. Any such agreement or promise shall not be enforceable unless set forth in writing and signed by the Chief Executive Officer of Georgian Court. Nothing contained in this Volume V of the Policy Manual or any other manual or policy, work rule, or oral or written statement of Georgian Court is to be viewed as a contract or as creating any promises or any contractual right of any kind to employment or benefits of

employment.

The employment of each person is “at will,” which means employment may be terminated at the employee’s option or Georgian Court’s option, at any time, for any reason or no reason, with or without cause.

## **5.2 Employment Classifications**

It is the intent of Georgian Court to clarify the definitions of employment classifications so that employees understand their employment status and benefit eligibility. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time. Accordingly, the right to terminate the employment relationship “at will” at any time for any reason or no reason, with or without cause, is retained by both the employee and Georgian Court.

Each employee is designated as either NONEXEMPT or EXEMPT from specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws. NONEXEMPT employees are entitled to overtime pay for those hours over 40 worked in a single week under the specific provisions of federal and state laws. EXEMPT employees are excluded from specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws. An employee’s EXEMPT or NONEXEMPT classification may be changed only upon written notification by Georgian Court management.

In addition to the above classifications, each employee will belong to one other employment category:

### **5.2.1 Regular Full-Time Employees**

Regular full-time employees are those who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work Georgian Court’s full-time schedule (at least 35 hours per week, Sunday through Saturday). Generally, they are eligible for Georgian Court’s benefit package, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

### **5.2.2 Regular Full-Time Limited Service Employees**

Regular full-time limited service employees are the same as regular full-time employees with less than a 12-month year. This category is usually 9 or 10 months with a workweek Sunday through Saturday.

### **5.2.3 Regular Part-Time Employees**

Regular part-time employees are those who are not assigned to a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than the full-time work schedule, but at least 20 hours per week over 12 months. Regular part-time employees are eligible for some benefits sponsored by Georgian Court, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

### **5.2.4 Part-Time Employees**

Part-time employees are those who are not assigned to a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than 20 hours per week (less than 1,000 hours per year). While they do receive all legally mandated benefits (such as Social Security and workers’ compensation insurance), they are ineligible for all of Georgian Court’s other benefit programs.

### **5.2.5 Temporary Employees**

Temporary employees are those who are hired as interim replacements, to temporarily supplement the work force, or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Employment assignments in this category are of a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status. Temporary employees retain that status unless and until notified of a change. While temporary employees receive all legally mandated benefits (such as workers' compensation insurance and Social Security), they are ineligible for all of Georgian Court's other benefit programs.

## **5.3 Vacation Benefits**

Vacation time off with pay is available to eligible employees to provide opportunities for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits. Employees in the following employment classification(s) are eligible to earn and use vacation time as described in this policy.

Paid vacation time can be used in minimum increments of one half day. To take vacation, employees must request advance approval from their supervisors using the Request for Time Off form. Requests will be reviewed based on a number of factors, including business needs and staffing requirements.

Vacation time off is paid at the employee's base pay rate at the time of vacation. It does not include overtime.

As stated above, employees are encouraged to use available paid vacation time for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits. In the event that available vacation is not used by the end of the benefit year, employees will forfeit the unused time.

Upon termination of employment, employees will be paid for unused vacation time that has been earned through the last day of work. If an exempt employee works through the 16th of the month, the month will be counted. If the employee leaves prior to the 16th, the month will not be counted for the purpose of calculating accrued vacation. For nonexempt employees their accrued vacation time will be based on the number of hours of their regular schedule worked since January 1. (See also Volume III, paragraph 3.4.1.2, Vacations; and Volume IV Subsection 4.13.4, Vacations and Leaves for Full-time Librarians)

Please refer to Appendix 5.3.1 for the Request for Time Off form.

### **5.3.1 Eligibility**

#### **5.3.1.1 Nonexempt Employees**

1. Regular Full-time Nonexempt Employees (35 to 40 hours per week)
2. Regular Part-time Nonexempt Employees (20 hours or more per week).

The vacation year for non-exempt employees is January 1 to December 31. Vacation time is prorated according to hours worked in the previous year from January through December. Earned vacation time is available for use in the year (January to December) following its accrual. If an employee is on leave, except for workers' compensation, the employee's vacation time is not accrued during this leave.

The amount of paid vacation time employees receive each year increases with the length of their employment as shown in the following schedule:

1. Upon initial eligibility the employee is entitled to 0 vacation days each year.
2. After 1 year (first January) of eligible service the employee is entitled to 10 vacation days each year prorated for the number of hours worked before January 1.
3. After 2 years (second January) of eligible service the employee is again entitled to 10 vacation days each year.
4. After 10 years (tenth January) of eligible service the employee is increased to 15 vacation days each year.
5. After 20 years (twentieth January) of eligible service the employee is increased to 20 vacation days each year.

Note: Temporary Nonexempt, Limited Service Non-exempt and Part-time Nonexempt Employees working less than 1,000 hours per year do not accrue vacation time.

### **5.3.1.2 Exempt Employees**

1. Regular Full-time Exempt Employees
2. Regular Part-time Exempt Employees

The vacation year for administrators and administrative exempt employees is July 1 to June 30. The time is prorated according to the months worked in the previous year. If an employee is on leave, except for workers' compensation, the employee's vacation time is not accrued during this leave. Vacation is awarded on July 1 and is increased to a maximum of 20 days according to the following schedule:

1. After year 1, 10 to 20 days depending on position.
2. After year 3, add 5 days to base for a maximum of 20 days.
3. After year 5, add 5 days to base for a maximum of 20 days if 20 was not reached after year 3.

Note: Regular Full-Time Limited Service Exempt Employees do not accrue vacation.

## **5.4 Job Posting**

Georgian Court provides employees an opportunity to indicate their interest in open positions and advance within the organization according to their skills and experience. In general, notices of all regular, full-time job openings are posted, although Georgian Court reserves its discretionary right to not post a particular opening.

Job openings will be posted on campus bulletin boards, in the e-mail system and the Georgian Court Website, and will remain open for a minimum of 5 business days. Each job posting notice will include the dates of the posting period, job title, department, location, job summary, essential duties, and qualifications (required skills and abilities).

To be eligible to apply for a posted job, employees must have performed competently for at least 6 months in their current position. Employees who have a written warning on file, or are on probation or suspension are not eligible to apply for posted jobs. Eligible employees can only

apply for those posted jobs for which they possess the required skills, competencies, and qualifications.

To apply for an open position, employees should submit an application to the Office of Human Resources listing job-related skills and accomplishments. It should also describe how their current experience with Georgian Court and prior work experience and/or education qualifies them for the position.

Job posting is a way to inform employees of openings and to identify qualified and interested applicants who might not otherwise be known to the hiring manager. Other recruiting sources may also be used to fill open positions in the best interest of Georgian Court. Online sources such as HigherEdJob.com and NJHERC, as well as the GCU website are used regularly. Print ads in appropriate newspapers and journals are also a source.

### **5.5 Employment Reference Checks**

To ensure that individuals who join Georgian Court are well-qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, it is the policy of Georgian Court to check the employment references of all applicants.

The Office of Human Resources will respond to all written reference check inquiries from other employers. Responses to such inquiries will be in writing and confirm only dates of employment and position(s) held. Wage rate will only be confirmed with the written permission of the employee.

### **5.6 Performance Evaluation**

Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis. Formal performance evaluations are conducted annually to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for establishing and meeting performance and professional development goals.

### **5.7 Paydays**

Nonexempt employees are paid biweekly on every other Friday. Exempt employees are paid monthly on the first day of the month. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period.

If a regular payday falls during an employee's vacation, the employee may receive the earned wages before departing for vacation if a written request has been submitted for that pay period prior to departing for vacation.

Employees may have pay directly deposited into their bank accounts if they provide advance written authorization to Georgian Court. Employees will receive an itemized statement of wages when Georgian Court makes direct deposits.

### **5.8 Employment Termination**

Termination of employment is an inevitable part of personnel activity within any organization, and many of the reasons for termination are routine. Georgian Court hopes and expects that



nonexempt employees will give at least two weeks' notice and exempt employees will give at least four weeks' notice in the event they intend to leave Georgian Court's employ.

Since employment with Georgian Court is based on mutual consent, both the employee and Georgian Court have the right to terminate employment at will, with or without cause, at any time. Employees will receive their final pay in accordance with applicable state law.

Employee benefits will be affected by employment termination in the following manner:

1. All accrued, vested benefits that are due and payable at termination will be paid.
2. The employee will be notified in writing of the benefits that may be continued and of the terms, conditions, and limitations of such continuance.
3. Employees are encouraged to meet with a Benefits Specialist to review any questions.

### **5.8.1 Resignation**

Resignation is a voluntary act initiated by the employee to terminate employment with Georgian Court. Georgian Court expects at least 2 weeks' written notice of resignation from nonexempt employees and 4 weeks' notice from exempt employees.

### **5.8.2 Progressive Discipline**

Although employment with Georgian Court is based on mutual consent and both the employee and Georgian Court have the right to terminate employment at will, with or without cause or advance notice, Georgian Court may use progressive discipline at its discretion.

The purpose of this policy is to state Georgian Court's position on administering equitable and consistent discipline for unsatisfactory conduct in the workplace. The best disciplinary measure is the one that does not have to be enforced and comes from good leadership and fair supervision at all employment levels.

Georgian Court's own best interest lies in ensuring fair treatment of all employees and in making certain that disciplinary actions are prompt, uniform, and impartial. The major purpose of any disciplinary action is to correct the problem, prevent recurrence, and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future.

Depending on the severity of the problem and the number of occurrences, disciplinary action may call for any of the following four steps:

1. Verbal warning;
2. Written warning;
3. Suspension with or without pay; or
4. Termination of employment.

There may be circumstances when one or more steps are bypassed.

Progressive discipline means that, with respect to most disciplinary problems, these steps will normally be followed: a first offense may call for a verbal warning; a next offense may be followed by a written warning; another offense may lead to a suspension; and, still another offense may then lead to termination of employment.

Georgian Court recognizes that there are certain types of employee problems that are serious enough to justify either a suspension, or, in extreme situations, termination of employment, without going through the usual progressive discipline steps.

While it is impossible to list every type of behavior that may be deemed a serious offense, the Employee Conduct and Work Rules policy found in Section 5.10 of this Volume V includes examples of problems that may result in immediate suspension or termination of employment. However, the problems listed are not all necessarily serious offenses, but may be examples of unsatisfactory conduct that will trigger progressive discipline.

By using progressive discipline, Georgian Court hopes that most employee problems can be corrected at an early stage, benefiting both the employee and Georgian Court.

### **5.8.3 Problem Resolution**

Georgian Court is committed to providing the best possible working conditions for its employees. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any problem, complaint, suggestion, or question receives a timely response from Georgian Court supervisors and management.

Georgian Court strives to ensure fair and honest treatment of all employees. Supervisors, managers, and employees are expected to treat each other with mutual respect. Employees are encouraged to offer positive and constructive criticism.

If employees disagree with established rules of conduct, policies, or practices, they can express their concern through the problem resolution procedure. No employee will be penalized, formally or informally, for voicing a complaint with Georgian Court in a reasonable, business-like manner, or for using the problem resolution procedure.

If a situation occurs when employees believe that a condition of employment or a decision affecting them is unjust or inequitable, they are encouraged to make use of the following steps:

1. The employee presents the problem to the immediate supervisor after the incident occurs. If the supervisor is unavailable or employee believes it would be inappropriate to contact that person, the employee may present the problem to the Office of Human Resources or any other member of management.
2. The supervisor responds to the problem during discussion or after consulting with the appropriate management, when necessary. The supervisor documents the discussion.
3. The employee presents the problem to the Office of Human Resources if the problem is unresolved.
4. The Office of Human Resources counsels and advises the employee, assists in putting the problem in writing, visits with the employee's manager(s), if necessary, and directs the employee to the Vice President, Provost, Associate Provost, or Dean of the unit in which the employee works if the problem is still unresolved.
5. If the problem is not solved on the Vice President, Provost, Associate Provost, or Dean level, the employee may appeal to the President, in writing, for a final review.
6. The President reviews and considers the problem. The President informs the employee of the decision and forwards a copy of written response to the Office of Human Resources

for the employee's file. The President has full authority to make any adjustment deemed appropriate to resolve the problem.

The employee may discontinue the procedure at any step.

Not every problem can be resolved to everyone's total satisfaction, but only through understanding and discussion of mutual problems can employees and management develop confidence in each other. This confidence is important to the operation of an efficient and harmonious work environment.

Although Georgian Court will make documented efforts to resolve problems raised by employees, Georgian Court maintains its right, as does the employee, to terminate the employment "at will," with or without cause, or any time, for any or no reason, with or without notice.

## **5.9 Business Ethics and Conduct**

The successful operation and reputation of Georgian Court is built upon the principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct of Georgian Court employees. Georgian Court's reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and letter of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as a scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity.

The continued success of Georgian Court is dependent upon trust, and Georgian Court is dedicated to preserving that trust. Employees owe a duty to Georgian Court, its students, and stakeholders to act in a way that will merit the continued trust and confidence of the public.

Georgian Court will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects its trustees, officers, and employees to conduct business in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct.

In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide employees with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. If a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of action, the matter should be discussed openly with the immediate supervisor and, if necessary, with the Office of Human Resources for advice and consultation.

Compliance with this policy of ethics and conduct is the responsibility of every Georgian Court employee. Disregarding or failing to comply with this standard of business ethics and conduct could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment.

### **5.10 Employee Conduct and Work Rules**

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, Georgian Court expects employees to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all employees and the organization.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following are examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment:

1. Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property;
2. Falsification of timekeeping records;

3. Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
4. Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment;
5. Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace;
6. Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace;
7. Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer-owned or customer-owned property;
8. Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct;
9. Violation of safety or health rules;
10. Smoking in prohibited areas;
11. Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment;
12. Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace;
13. Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice;
14. Unauthorized absence from work station during the workday;
15. Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, or other employer-owned equipment;
16. Unauthorized disclosure of business “secrets” or confidential information;
17. Violation of personnel policies;
18. Unsatisfactory performance or conduct; and/or
19. Conviction of a felony.

Employment with Georgian Court is at the mutual consent of Georgian Court and the employee, and either party may terminate that relationship at any time, with or without cause, and with or without advance notice.

## **5.11 Working Conditions**

### **5.11.1 Work Schedules**

Work schedules for employees vary throughout the Georgian Court organization. Supervisors will advise employees of their individual work schedules. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate variations in starting and ending times, as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week. The work week for Georgian Court is Sunday through Saturday. Full time employees work a minimum of 35 hours per week.

Flexible work schedules are permitted, with prior supervisory approval. Except that those employees in nonexempt positions who work more than 40 hours per week are subject to the provisions of section 5.11.3 Overtime below.

### **5.11.2 Rest and Meal Periods**

Each workday, employees in full-time nonexempt positions working 7.5 to 8 hour days are provided with 2 rest periods of up to 15 minutes in length. To the extent possible, rest periods will be provided in the middle of work periods. For employees in nonexempt positions working less than a full day but more than 4 hours, one rest period of up to 15 minutes in length will be available in the middle of their work hours. Since this time is counted and paid as time worked, employees must not be absent from their work stations beyond the allotted rest period time.

Normally, work schedules include meal periods of 30 minutes or more. Employees who are relieved of all active responsibilities and restrictions during meal periods will not be compensated for that time. Employees who are not scheduled for a meal period are permitted to eat while working – supervisors will make the appropriate arrangements.

Employees are not permitted to work more than 16 continuous hours without a minimum 8 hour rest period. Employees will be relieved of all active responsibilities and restrictions during this rest period and will not be compensated for that time.

### **5.11.3 Overtime**

When operating requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours, employees in nonexempt positions either will be given the opportunity to volunteer for or will be required to work overtime work assignments. All overtime work must receive the supervisor's prior authorization. Overtime assignments will be distributed as equitably as practical to all employees qualified to perform the required work.

Overtime compensation is paid to all employees in nonexempt positions in accordance with federal and state wage and hour restrictions. Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Time off on sick leave, personal holiday, vacation, or any other absence will not be considered hours worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations.

For employees normally scheduled for fewer than 40 hours per week, hours worked in excess of the normally scheduled weekly hours will be paid at straight time up to 40 hours for the week. Overtime pay (time and one-half) is paid for all hours over 40 worked in a single week.

Compensatory time cannot be given to employees in nonexempt positions in lieu of overtime pay.

### **5.11.4 Security Inspections**

Georgian Court wishes to maintain a work environment that is free of illegal drugs, alcohol, firearms, explosives, or other improper materials. To this end, Georgian Court prohibits the possession, transfer, sale, or use of such materials on its premises. Georgian Court requires the cooperation of all employees in administering this policy.

Desks, lockers, and other storage devices may be provided for the convenience of employees but remain the sole property of Georgian Court. Accordingly, they, as well as any articles found within them, can be inspected by any agent or representative of Georgian Court at any time, either with or without prior notice.

## **5.12 Timekeeping**

Accurate recording of time worked is the responsibility of every nonexempt employee. Federal and state laws require Georgian Court to keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits. Time worked is all the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties.


Employees in nonexempt positions should accurately record the time they begin and end their work. They should also record the beginning and ending time of any split shift or departure from work for personal reasons.

For those departments that use a time clock, that time record cannot be altered. Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee's time record may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. If corrections or modifications need to be made to the time record, both the employee and the supervisor must complete and sign the Time and Attendance Exceptions Request Form and forward the completed form to the Payroll Department.

Supervisors are responsible for maintaining time off records for exempt staff in their department. When employees in nonexempt positions are absent, the approved Request For Time Off form is to be forwarded to the Payroll Department within 2 work days.

Supervisors are responsible also for advising the Benefits Office immediately when any employee is absent due to a work-related injury or is absent for more than 3 days due to a non-work related illness or injury.

**5.12.1 Appendix 5.3.1: Request for Time Off Form**



**GEORGIAN COURT UNIVERSITY**  
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**REQUEST FOR TIME OFF FORM**

Date of Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to request the following: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
(if partial days, specify number of hours requested)

Purpose:     Vacation     Bereavement  
            Personal         Jury Duty  
            Sick                 Time off without pay\*

(\* May not be requested until all other paid time off has been used)

Employee's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_


Approved                       Not Approved

Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Both the Supervisor and Employee must keep a copy of this request for records. Supervisors are responsible for providing the Payroll Office with summary information each pay period for hourly paid employees.

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**REQUEST FOR TIME OFF FORM**

Date of Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to request the following: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
(if partial days, specify number of hours requested)

Purpose:     Vacation     Bereavement  
            Personal         Jury Duty  
            Sick                 Time off without pay\*

(\* May not be requested until all other paid time off has been used)

Employee's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved                       Not Approved

Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Both the Supervisor and Employee must keep a copy of this request for records. Supervisors are responsible for providing the Payroll Office with summary information each pay period for hourly paid employees.

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