

ANNUAL SECURITY & FIRE SAFETY REPORT

FALL 2019

Includes Crime Statistics for Calendar Years (CYs) 2016, 2017, & 2018

AYERS CAMPUS 1801 Coleman Road Anniston, AL 36207	CHEROKEE CENTER 801 Cedar Bluff Road Centre, AL 35960	EAST BROAD CAMPUS 1001 East Broad Street Gadsden, AL 35903	VALLEY STREET CAMPUS 600 Valley Street Gadsden, AL 35901	WALLACE DRIVE CAMPUS 1001 George Wallace Drive Gadsden, AL 35903
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OFFICE OF SAFETY & SECURITY

Gadsden State Community College provides a wide range of support services that enable students, faculty, and staff to function in a diverse collegiate environment. The primary mission of this unit is to ensure that functions are carried out in a safe and secure manner to include an efficient safety/security, postal, and transportation operation with a firm commitment to high standards that is in keeping with the College mission statement. The Office of Safety and Security is responsible for security and emergency response on all Gadsden State Community College campuses. Safety and Security (which includes security, mail, transportation, and severe weather monitoring) is an important component of the educational environment at the College.

To achieve the highest degree of safety and security at all campuses, centers, and sites, we encourage campus community members – students, faculty, staff, and guests – to recognize the importance of following good safety practices. They should also understand that safety is their responsibility, not just that of those officially and formally charged with enforcing the laws, policies, and rules. This includes using the escort service available by calling the duty (security) number posted on each campus, locking valuables, and reporting suspicious or criminal activities. We take a leadership role by providing educational programs on campus safety, preventative patrols, incident investigation and crime reporting, fire safety and prevention, and crime prevention.

Our officers receive training in security and emergency care to include first aid, CPR, and the use of an AED. The College has a Safety and Security Committee whose mission is to assure that appropriate health and safety standards are maintained and that the appropriate federal and state statutes are observed. They are responsible for evaluating campus safety and security issues for students, faculty, staff, and visitors including emergency preparedness procedures.

POLICY FOR REPORTING THE ANNUAL DISCLOSURE CRIME STATISTICS

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Crime Statistics Act is a federal law that requires institutions of higher education in the United States to disclose campus security information including crime statistics for the campus and surrounding areas. To comply with the Act, our office is responsible for gathering crime statistics and providing safety information to all students, staff, faculty, visitors, and prospective students and/or employees. We collect the crime statistics from all of our campuses and from the local law enforcement agencies that have campuses located within their jurisdictions. Incidents reported to any of these sources that fall into one of the required reporting classifications as defined by the Clery Act will be recorded and disclosed as a statistic in the calendar year the crime was reported. A copy of the crime statistics for the most recent three calendar years is located on our web site at <https://www.gadsdenstate.edu/skins/userfiles/files/GSCC%20Crime%20Statistics%20Report%20Form%2016%2017%2018.pdf> and copies may be obtained from our office.

CRIME REPORTING, EMERGENCIES, AND TIMELY WARNINGS

Numerous and diligent efforts are made to advise members of the campus community about crime-related problems. The College's duty to inform the campus community of threatening situations is taken seriously, and as a result, information related to crime and criminal activity is provided in an accurate and timely fashion. Because awareness is essential to effective crime reduction, we will release information that can be used by students and other College community members to reduce their chances of becoming victims by providing individuals an opportunity to take reasonable precautions to protect themselves. We will issue timely warnings or safety alerts to the campus community informing them of incidents/crimes affecting the College community and/or surrounding property.



The alerts are generally written by the Director of Physical Plant or a designee. This information is disseminated to the College community members via use of electronic mail messages, electronic sign, informational flyers posted at highly visible locations throughout campus, Cardinal Alert, crime prevention presentations by Safety and Security personnel, Freshman Focus, all campus orientations, and on-line orientations required of all students.

Cardinal Alert is an emergency notification service that will allow us to contact all enrolled students and employees via cell phone, text message, home phone, and e-mail. For follow-up emergency information to the College community, all of the above media to include postings on our web site, television, and radio will be utilized. Confirmation typically involves the response and assessment of security officers, college officials, local law enforcement, or emergency responders. Campus Safety Alerts are sent to the College community to notify them about specific Clery Act crimes that have been reported and that have occurred on campus or on non-campus property or public property, where it is determined that the incident may pose a serious or continuing threat to them.

Campus community members are encouraged to report all criminal actions, emergencies, or other public safety related incidents occurring with the College's Clery geography to the Office of Safety & Security in an accurate, prompt, and timely manner. To report a crime no longer in progress, members of the community should call your Campus Security Officer or the Office of Safety and Security. To report an emergency or a crime in progress, **911** should be called first and then call your Campus Security Officer. We have the ability to notify county emergency dispatchers regarding emergencies occurring on campus. Criminal activity can also be reported to persons in the following positions on each campus: President, Associate Dean and Dean of Enrollment & Retention, Dean of Financial and Administrative Services, Dean of Technical Education and Workforce Development, Dean of Academic Programs and Services, Assistant Dean of Instruction, Deans of Instructional Services, Chief Information Officer, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, Grants, and Special Projects, Dean of Health Sciences, Dean of Outreach Initiatives, Director of Nursing, Director of Advising, Director of Legal Affairs/Title IX Coordinator, Director of International Programs/ALI, Library Employees, Academic and Vocational Division Chairs, Campus Directors/Coordinators, Director of Physical Plant, Director of Student Life, the Residence Hall Clerk, Directors of Talent Search, Directors of Upward Bound, Director of Student Support Services, Director of Enrollment Services, Director of Financial Aid, Registrar, GED Chief Examiner, Coordinator of Continuing Education and ADA, Education Specialist, Community Education Liaison, Director of Distance Education, Faculty Development, and Learning Resources, Testing Coordinator, Safety and Security Employees, Athletic Director/Academic Director for Health, Physical Education & Recreation, and Team Coaches.

It is the duty of all students and employees to report promptly all on-campus crime and suspicious activities to us. The College operates no off-campus housing and does not have off-campus student organizations. While off campus, students and employees are encouraged to contact the local law enforcement agency. Security officers have no arrest authority beyond that of an ordinary citizen; however, they may address offenses and refer them to the local law enforcement authorities. We have a good working relationship with the local law enforcement authorities and state police agencies where campuses are located. They conduct all of our formal investigations of traffic and criminal activity. We operate under a clear mutual agreement with all local law enforcement agencies. Collaborative meetings and training sessions are occasionally held to review issued and incidents occurring within the multiple local jurisdictions. The college's security officers and local law enforcement officers communicate regularly on the scene of incidents that occur in and around the campus area and work closely together when incidents arise that require joint communication efforts.

If you are the victim of a crime and do not want to pursue action through the College or the criminal justice system, you may still want to consider making a confidential report. With your permission, the Office of Safety and Security can file a report on the details of the incident without revealing your identity. The purpose of a confidential report is to comply with your wish to keep the matter confidential, while taking steps to ensure the future safety of yourself and others. With such information, our office can keep an accurate record of the number of incidents involving students, faculty, staff, and visitors; determine where there is a pattern of crime with regard to a particular location, method, or assailant; and alert the campus community to potential danger. Reports filed in this manner are counted and disclosed in the annual crime statistics for the College. We do not have counselors who are not required to report crimes for inclusion in our crime statistics. Students may contact the Associate Dean of Enrollment & Retention for information on local agencies and counseling services who may provide confidential counseling services. Faculty/staff may contact the Human Resources Department for information regarding confidential counseling services.



EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

The College has established procedures to immediately notify the campus community upon the confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of students or employees occurring on campus. These procedures provide for rapid notice to local law enforcement and senior administration to evaluate and confirm an emergency or dangerous situation and if confirmed, for same persons to determine the appropriate segment or segments of the campus community to be notified and the content of the notification.

In the event of a serious incident that poses an immediate threat to members of the College community, the College has systems in place for communicating information quickly. These methods of communication include Cardinal Alert, which is our emergency notification system which utilizes voice messages to phone numbers, text messages to cell phones, e-mail messages, and using faculty and staff to communicate verbally. The College tests the emergency notification process once during each calendar year with the entire campus community.

The College will, without delay, and taking into account the safety of the community, determine the content of emergency/dangerous situation notifications and initiate the notification system, unless issuing a notification will, in the professional judgment of responsible authorities, compromise efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency. The dissemination of emergency information to the larger community shall be coordinated by the Office of the President and the Director of Public Relations.

Following are the titles of the persons responsible for carrying out the actions/procedures described in the above paragraphs: President, Dean of Financial and Administrative Services, Director of Physical Plant, and Director of Public Relations & Marketing.

FIRE SAFETY POLICY

Fire Safety is of paramount importance. Our department manages the campus fire safety program. Fire alarm systems report to Safety & Security and are monitored on a 24-hr basis at an off-site location and include an electronic fire safety control system, strobes, smoke alarms, and a dry sump supply system. Anyone may report an incident of fire by calling **911** first, and when the situation allows, by also calling the Director of Physical Plant, Director of Student Life, or any Safety & Security Employee.

A fire log for residence hall facilities is maintained in the Security residence hall office located in Fowler Hall. It may be viewed anytime during business hours (typically Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., except holidays). The log records information concerning fires occurring inside Fowler Hall. A copy of the fire statistics for the preceding three calendar years is location on our web site at

<https://www.gadsdenstate.edu/skins/userfiles/files/GSCC%20Fire%20Safety%20Report%2016%2017%2018.pdf>.

Three fire drills were conducted in Fowler Hall during 2018 as Safety & Security conducts fire drills there at least once per semester. All residents and guests are required to evacuate when an alarm is activated. During a fire alarm, evacuate the building by using stairs and moving away from the building a distance equal to the approximate height of the building. Do not block parking or service road and entrance areas, as they are needed by emergency responders. Drills will be evaluated for their effectiveness by Safety & Security staff. The College conducts fire/severe weather/emergency drills in other academic and administrative buildings every semester. Emergency Building Evacuation Drills are conducted to familiarize occupants with emergency egress from a building and to establish conduct of the drill to a matter of routine. Drills will include suitable procedures, such as potential room-to-room checks, to ensure that all persons subject to the drill participate. Any person who fails to participate in a drill will be subject to disciplinary action by the appropriate authority. Drills shall be held at expected and unexpected times, and under varying conditions to simulate the unusual conditions that can occur in an actual emergency. Participants shall relocate to a safe location outside the building and remain at such location until a recall signal is given or further instruction.

Each resident receives a copy of the Fowler Residence Hall Handbook. It contains information concerning evacuation procedures, fire safety, prohibited items, and fire equipment. Smoking and any type of open flame are not permitted within Fowler Hall. This includes candles, incense, or any type of open flame. Announced residence hall meetings are held periodically through the year to include orientations where fire safety information is discussed. Attendance to these meetings is mandatory for all residents. Residents should consult our staff if they have a question about any appliance or other fire safety issue. We strive to constantly improve and expand our training sessions that include basic fire safety topics..

MISSING PERSONS POLICY

The Higher Education Act requires that all institutions that provide on-campus student housing must establish a missing student notification policy and procedures. The following applies to Fowler Hall Residents:

- Students who reside in Fowler Hall are encouraged to report when a student has been missing for 24 hours to Safety & Security or a Campus Security Authority. Campus Security Authorities are required to report any official missing student to the Director of Physical Plant and/or Dean of Financial & Administrative Services.
- Each resident will have the option to annually register a confidential contact person to be notified in the case that the student is determined to be missing.
- Only authorized campus officials and law enforcement officers may have access to this information. The contact information will be confidential, accessible only by authorized campus officials and law enforcement, and may not be disclosed outside a missing person investigation.
- Even if a student has not registered a contact person, local law enforcement will be notified immediately if a student has been reported as missing.
- The parent or guardian of a student less than 18 years of age and not emancipated must be notified in the event of a missing person investigation.
- Regardless of whether the student has identified a contact person, is above the age of 18, or is an emancipated minor, a missing student report will be filed with Safety & Security and/or local law enforcement within 24 hours once it is determined that a student has been missing for 24 hours.

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION PROGRAM AND PROCEDURES

Gadsden State Community College prohibits the crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking (as defined by the Clery Act) and reaffirms its commitment to maintaining a campus environment that emphasizes the dignity and worth of all members of the college community. In the event of sexual assault, a variety of campus and area resources are available to victims. The College supports the victim's right to choose which avenues of assistance are best for the individual. These resources include the following: Safety and Security, where all crimes including sexual assaults should be reported (a designated employee is assigned to assist victims of sexual assault); the Title IX Coordinator; the local police agency with jurisdiction; and the Emergency Department of the local hospital. An individual who has been sexually assaulted has the following rights:

- An opportunity to contact the law enforcement authorities. We will assist the student in this notification;
- Transport to the nearest medical facility approved for the collection of rape evidence;
- Awareness of pastoral and professional mental health counseling in the community; and
- Alternative academic and living arrangements if requested and reasonably available.

Due to the severity of sexual assault, we encourage individuals who have been sexually assaulted to contact the police. Reporting the incident to the police immediately will greatly increase the possibility of successful prosecution if criminal charges are brought. Preserving all evidence of a sexual assault is extremely important. An individual who has been sexually assaulted will be offered the chance to make a formal complaint against the offender through the College's disciplinary process pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct. The College may pursue charges regardless of whether charges are filed by the victim of the assault. The College will initiate internal proceedings in incidents of sexual assault when a student requests such proceedings and/or when subsequent investigation produces evidence of a violation of College policy.

The College routinely conducts various educational programs to make both students and employees aware of and to attempt to prevent rape, acquaintance rape, and forcible and non-forcible sex offenses. The following are some of the programs conducted by or offered: safety and security programs during freshman orientation, sexual assault programs throughout the years, self-defense and avoidance courses such as R.A.D. (Rape Aggression Defense), alcohol and drug awareness programs, and generalized safety and security programs for students in the residence hall.

CAMPUS SAVE ACT

In March of 2013, the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (Campus SaVE Act) was passed by congress as part of the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). The new law is aimed at increasing transparency by expanding the types of sexual violence incidents that must be disclosed in the annual security report (ASR) submitted by colleges and universities.

The new law represents a regulatory emphasis on specific categories of sexual abuse suffered by members of the college community.

All Individuals have the right to a safe campus environment free from threats of violence. Harming another person by committing any form of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, as defined under Alabama State Law, is strictly prohibited. "Domestic violence" includes asserted violent misdemeanor and felony offenses committed by the victim's current or former spouse, current or former cohabitant, person similarly situated under domestic or family violence law, or anyone else protected under domestic or family violence law. "Dating violence" means violence by a person who has been in a romantic or intimate relationship with the victim. Whether there was such relationship will be gauged by its length, type, and frequency of interaction. "Stalking" means a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for her, his, or others' safety, or to suffer substantial emotional distress. It is a violation of State law to commit a sexual act without the consent of the individual. "Consent" is an act of reason and deliberation. The law states that the lack of consent results from: 1) Forcible compulsion, and the 2) Incapacity to consent. A person is deemed incapable of consent if they are: forced, threatened, unconscious, drugged, less than 16, mentally or developmentally disabled, mentally incapacitated, physically helpless, chronically mentally ill, or believe they are undergoing a medical procedure.

- Know your own limits and communicate what you don't want
- Say "no" out loud if you don't feel comfortable
- Don't be afraid to tell them to "stop"
- "No" means no! If they don't stop when you tell them to, they have committed a sexual assault.

Bystander intervention means safe and positive options that may be carried out by an individual or individuals to prevent harm or intervene when there is a risk of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. It includes recognizing situations of potential harm, understanding institutional structures and cultural conditions that facilitate violence, overcoming barriers to intervening, identifying safe and effective intervention option, and taking action to intervene.

With no intent to victim blame and recognizing that only abusers are responsible for their abuse, the following are some strategies to reduce one's risk of sexual assault or harassment (taken from Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network, www.rainn.org)

- **Be aware** of your surroundings. Knowing where you are and who is around you may help you to find a way to get out of a bad situation.
- Try to **avoid isolated areas**. It is more difficult to get help if no one is around. You also do not want to be **isolated** with someone you don't trust or someone you don't know.
- **Walk with purpose**. Even if you don't know where you are going, act like you do.
- **Trust your instincts**. If a situation or location feels unsafe or uncomfortable, it probably isn't the best place to be. If you feel unsafe in any situation, go with your gut. If you see something suspicious, contact law enforcement immediately
- **Try not to load yourself down** with packages or bags as this can make you appear more vulnerable.
- **Make sure your cell phone is with you** and charged and that you have cab money and/or an on-demand driver app loaded.
- **Avoid putting music headphones in both ears** so that you can be more aware of your surroundings, especially if you are walking alone.
- **When you go to a social gathering, go with a group of friends**. Arrive together, check in with each other throughout the evening, and leave together. Knowing where you are and who is around you may help you to find a way out of a bad situation.
- **Don't leave your drink unattended** while talking, dancing, using the restroom, or making a phone call. If you've left your drink alone, just get a new one.

SEXUAL OFFENDER REGISTRY AND ACCESS TO RELATED INFORMATION

In accordance with the Campus Sex Crimes Act of 2002, institutions of higher education are required to issue a statement advising the campus community where information about registered sex offenders may be obtained. It also requires sex offenders already required to register in a state to provide notice, as required under state law, of each institution of higher education in that state at which the person is employed, carries on a vocation, or is a student. In the State of Alabama, information regarding registered sex offenders may be obtained from local municipal police departments, the county sheriff's office, or the Alabama Highway Patrol. This information can also be found online if one visits <http://app.alea.gov/Community/> and searches under the Sex Offender Registry.

ACCESS TO COLLEGE FACILITIES

Most of the College's buildings and facilities are accessible to members of the College community, guests, and visitors during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., except holidays, and are typically secured during the late evening hours, depending upon special event scheduling and community usage. Schedules for campus buildings fluctuate depending on the nature of their operations, as well as special events and class schedules. Security regularly patrol the interiors and exteriors of all campus facilities. Faculty and staff who wish to enter any facilities after hours should notify Safety and Security.

Access to Fowler Residence Hall is restricted to residents, their approved guests, Physical Plant personnel, and other approved members of the College community. Guests of residents must be accompanied at all times by the resident whom they are visiting, and must sign in and out at the front desk and leave their student ID cards or driver's licenses.

MAINTENANCE OF CAMPUS FACILITIES

Facilities and landscaping are maintained in a manner that minimizes hazardous conditions. Physical Plant personnel regularly patrol all campuses and report malfunctioning lights and other unsafe physical conditions directly to the Director of Physical Plant for correction. Other members of the Campus community are encouraged to report equipment problems or unsafe conditions through an online service response ticketing system operated through Spice Works called Fixit or to the Director of Physical Plant.

POLICY ON DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND WEAPONS

The presence, possession, manufacture, use, sale, or distribution of any controlled substance or drug paraphernalia as defined by Federal or Alabama law and/or alcohol is prohibited on College property. Possession of any firearm or dangerous weapon or destructive device is prohibited. All information regarding or relating to violations of the College policy on drugs, alcohol, and weapons will be surrendered to the proper authorities for investigation and use as they see fit. Violators are subject to criminal prosecution. Legal sanctions may include fines and/or imprisonment. Student violators are subject to disciplinary action under provisions of the Student Code of Conduct. College employees are subject to disciplinary action under personnel disciplinary policies.

Any College community member who feels that they have a drug or alcohol problem is urged to voluntarily seek assistance. For information, call the Human Resources Department, check the Employee Handbook, call Student Support Services, and check the Catalog and Student Handbook.

HELPFUL WEB SITES

Additional information can be found on our web site at <http://www.gadsdenstate.edu>, in our Catalog and Student Handbook at <http://www.gadsdenstate.edu/catalog/home>, and in the Employee Handbook at http://www.gadsdenstate.edu/employee_handbook.

SAFETY & SECURITY CONTACT NUMBERS

Office of Safety & Security - (256) 549-8611

Director of Physical Plant - (256) 312-2136

Security 24/7 - (256) 312-2132

Ayers Security 1st Shift - (256) 312-2128 or 2nd Shift - (256) 310-8365

Cherokee Security 1st Shift - (256) 613-7535 or 2nd Shift - (256) 312-2144

Gadsden Security 1st Shift - (256) 312-0335 or (256) 613-5359

Gadsden Security 2nd Shift - (256) 312-0335 or (256) 613-4818

Valley Street Security 1st Shift - (256) 312-2130

Gadsden Switchboard - (256) 549-8300

Security Manager - (256) 458-4386

Mail Services - (256) 312-4517