



COLLEGE
STUDENT
HANDBOOK
2022-2023

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Vision and Mission Statement

Our Vision

To develop passionate visionaries who will shape and lead the world of design

Our Mission

To deliver a rigorous, design-focused educational experience that promotes creativity, technical proficiency, and business acumen

Core Values

SoFA Design Institute nurtures a learning and working environment that values audacity, creativity, drive, dynamism, passion, perseverance, integrity and vision.

History of SoFA Design Institute

SoFA Design Institute is the Philippines' first specialized design college. Inaugurated in 2007 as the School of Fashion and the Arts (SoFA), the college quickly developed street credibility as the country's go-to school for design education.

In 2010, it expanded its range of academic programs to include Interior Design. It has, since then, flourished as an institution with a rigorous, design-focused approach to education promoting creativity, technical proficiency, and business acumen.

SoFA Design Institute graduates are trained to be design leaders and industry-ready professionals who are experts in translating design concepts into pragmatic solutions. Aside from being dedicated to shaping the new breed of design professionals, the college is also committed to promoting design as a positive force in society, economy, and the lives of its students.

In 2017, SoFA Design Institute opened a Senior High School (SHS) Arts and Design track with strands in fashion design and marketing, interior design and architecture, and multimedia arts.

The SoFA Method: Education for the Leaders of the Design Industry

At SoFA Design Institute we continuously aim to foster an environment supportive of creative learning. We help students cultivate their innovative potential through self-expression and discovery.

Our educational process marries conceptual thinking with real-world business values in classes taught by seasoned industry professionals who recognize the value of this balanced approach to design. Our method is a design-focused educational experience promoting creativity, technical proficiency, and business acumen.

As a design school, SoFA Design Institute wishes to distinguish itself from other institutions of higher education - while at the same time serving the best interests of its students, stakeholders, and the Philippine society. We do this by promoting a fundamental understanding that design can be elevated and made profound when design values are predicated on specific ideas - not unclear impulses.

ARTICLE I

DEFINITION OF STUDENT

Section 1: Definition of Student

1.1.1 This Student Handbook covers officially enrolled students of the SoFA Design Institute.

Section 2: Classification of Students According to Academic Programs

1.2.1 Credit students are those taking programs under the mandate of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) or the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

1.2.2 Non-credit students are those taking in-house programs such as 1-year & 2-year courses, certificate courses, short courses, and workshops. Students under this classification may opt to take their classes on "audit" status.

Section 3: Classification of Students According to Academic Standing

1.3.1 Good Standing:

- A student who has no failing grade or has not incurred a failing grade.
- A grade point average (GPA) of 2.00 or higher for regular students.
- GPA of 2.50 or higher if the student is a scholar.
- A student, who, after meeting specific requirements set forth below, has been reinstated back to Good Standing from Probationary or Warning status.

Students who failed to meet the standards required of Good Standing shall be listed as Probationary in the following semester. To be reinstated as Good Standing, the student must be able to:

- Achieve a GPA of 2.00 or higher (regular students)
- Achieve a GPA of 2.50 or higher (scholars)

3.1 Warning:

A student listed as Probationary who is not reinstated back to Good Standing in the next semester shall be considered as Warning status and shall be a candidate for dismissal.

Section 4: Classification of Students According to Educational Background

1.4.1 Undergraduate students are those who have enrolled after

completing secondary education.

1.4.2 Professional students are those who have earned a diploma/degree prior to enrollment at SoFA Design Institute.

Section 5: Classification of Students According to Enrollment

1.5.1 Regular students are those who are following the prescribed curriculum sequence of their respective programs.

1.5.2 Irregular students are those who have deviated from the prescribed curriculum sequence of their respective programs due to failing grades, Leave of Absence (LOA), underload/overload, and other reasons.

ARTICLE II

ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

Section 1: Student Admissions

2.1.1 Student admissions shall be subject to the policies and requirements of the school. Specific requirements and procedures shall be stipulated in its official catalog, which may be secured from the Admissions Office.

Section 2: Scope of Admissions and Enrollment Procedure

2.2.1 This Admission and Enrollment Procedure applies to:

- a. Senior High School programs;
- b. undergraduate programs;
- c. continuing education programs; and
- d. programs offered by the Institute to students studying in the Philippines and offshore, including those enrolled through a partner institution.

Section 3: Application of Admissions and Enrollment Procedure

2.3.1 The Admissions and Enrollment Committee aims to ensure that there:

- a. are clear and thorough procedures and guidelines for:
 - i. all types of admission, including special cases (i.e. applicants with medical restrictions, and/or any such special considerations);
 - ii. deferment of program acceptance and enrollment;
 - iii. readmission after a leave of absence and/or enforced leave; and
 - iv. enrollment for new and continuing students
- b. are fair and equitable admission policies and guidelines in place for all applicant profiles;
- c. are academic pathways that provide access to credit for learning already undertaken;
- d. are admission and enrollment terms and schedules approved and disseminated in a timely and appropriate manner; and
- e. are transparent processes that allow for review and amendment of admission and enrollment provisions as deemed necessary.

2.3.2 The objective of this procedure is to provide well-defined directions to staff and students of the Institute on admission and enrollment.

2.3.3 Where there is an observed need for the processes described in this

procedure to be reworked or apprised, staff should contact the Assoc. Director for Operations & Strategy.

Section 4: Admission

2.4.1 The Academic Office, Registrar's Office, and Admissions Office, in joint consultation, are responsible for prescribing the requirements for program admission. Applicants must meet any additional selection criteria specified for any and all programs offered by the Institute.

2.4.2 The Institute will assess applications on the merits of both academic competence and creative potential of the applicant. Applicants who successfully meet standard admission criteria for his/her/their program of choice will not be rejected on the basis of other prejudices.

2.4.3 The Institute reserves the right to decline or rescind admission to any applicant.

2.4.4 Readmission of a student, including those without a formally-filed leave of absence, and/or students who's declared leave of absence has lapsed, will be determined jointly by the Academic Office, Registrar's Office, and Admissions Office based on the student's previous academic performance at the Institute.

2.4.5 Any student or applicant who has previously been expelled from the Institute will not be granted readmission.

2.4.6 Staff of the Admissions Office will be required to accomplish a declaration on Conflict of Interest if a family member or other personal affiliation is applying for admission to the Institute.

2.4.7 General Admission. To be considered for admission to the Institute, applicants must generally:

- a. meet the corresponding age, academic and/or professional conditions prescribed by the Academic Office for a certain program; and
- b. meet any other supplementary requirements and documentation prescribed by relevant national and local governing entities.

For foreign student admission, the Institute will use accredited resources of both the Department of Education (DepED) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to establish the local equivalence of foreign qualifications. For transfer and degree-holder applicants, the same local standards will be used to determine crediting of learning previously taken under a different local education provider.

2.4.8 Admission to a Senior High School Program. Admission to a Senior High School program at SoFA Design Institute will be determined in accordance with the approved eligibility criteria for the relevant Senior High School program as prescribed by the Academic Office, and other additional admission requirements.

An applicant may be considered for admission on the basis of:

- a. completed Grade 10 secondary education studies as evidence in an official Diploma and Transcript of Records;
- b. completed or partially completed Grade 11 or partially completed Grade 12 secondary education studies as evidenced in an official Transcript of Records;
- c. completed alternate and/or parallel academic pathways such as Alternative Learning System (ALS) or the Philippine Education Placement Test (PEPT); or
- d. overseas qualifications equivalent to the above.

2.8.9 Admission to an Undergraduate Program. Admission to an undergraduate program at SoFA Design Institute will be determined in accordance with the approved eligibility criteria for the relevant undergraduate program as prescribed by the Academic Office, and other additional admission requirements.

An applicant may be considered for admission on the basis of:

- a. completed senior secondary education studies (Grade 12) as evidence in an official Diploma and Transcript of Records;
- b. completed or partially completed higher education studies as evidence in an official Diploma and Transcript of Records;
- c. completed alternate and/or parallel academic pathways such as Alternative Learning System (ALS) or the Philippine Education Placement Test (PEPT); or
- d. overseas qualifications equivalent to the above.

2.8.10 Admission to a Continuing Education Program. Admission to a program under SoFA Design Institute's Continuing Education segment will be determined in accordance with the approved eligibility criteria for the relevant program as prescribed by the Academic Office, and other additional admission requirements.

2.4.11 Guaranteed Admission. Graduates of the Institute's Senior High School program with proven scholastic and character records who wish to continue with the Institute and take an undergraduate program will enjoy the benefit of guaranteed admission pending submission of relevant documentation, if any.

The Admissions Office will facilitate any and all internal processing required to

allow for efficient passage of qualified students. For questions, interested and qualified students may contact the Admissions Office.

The Institute, for any reason deemed judicious, reserves the right to revoke the benefit of guaranteed admission.

2.4.12 Deferment of Program Acceptance. Applicants who have met the standard criteria for admission, who may, for any reason, wish to defer their acceptance may do so for no more than two (2) school years, or four (4) semesters.

Should a previously accepted applicant wish to follow through on his/her/their program placement within the prescribed period from his/her/their initial acceptance will gain renewed placement for the inbound semester. Otherwise, he/she/they will have to re-apply.

The Institute, for reasons deemed judicious, reserves the right to deny or rescind admission even to applicants who defer their program acceptance in accordance with the guidelines above.

2.4.13 Admission and Enrollment Procedure. The admission and enrollment procedure shall be communicated to prospective and continuing students by the Admissions Office and the Registrar's Office respectively.

Section 5: Identification Cards

2.5.1 Issuance. The Admin Office shall issue student identification cards to new students. Thereafter, the ID card shall be validated on a per-semester basis.

2.5.2 Validation. The Admin Office shall validate student identification cards of duly enrolled students on a per-semester basis. A valid identification card entitles the bearer access to the campus and the enjoyment of all rights and privileges of a bona fide student. Invalid identification cards must be returned to the Admin Office. Students must apply for a replacement in case of loss, damage, or defacement.

2.5.3 Surrender. For any of the following reasons, students must surrender their ID to the Office of the Registrar:

- a. Application for a new ID card in case of damage or defacement of the previous ID. The student needs to surrender his/her old ID upon issuance of a new one. In case of lost ID, an Affidavit of Loss is required to request a replacement.

- b. Application for Leave of Absence (LOA)
- c. Application for Transfer Credentials
- d. Application for Total Course Withdrawal
- e. Separation from the school for any reason such as transfer, suspension, dismissal, or expulsion.

2.5.4 No ID, No Entry Policy. When a student's ID card is lost, damaged, or defaced, the student must request for ID replacement from the Admin Office. Unsettled accounts also render an ID card invalid. The Student ID is required to be worn at all times.

Section 6: Enrollment and Adjustments

2.6.1 Enrollment will be on a first-come, first-serve basis.

2.6.2 All students must settle their financial obligations on or before the deadline set by the Finance Office. Otherwise, the concerned students will be considered in arrears and will not be included in the final class enrollment list/s. Students who have not paid tuition fees within the prescribed date will not be considered as officially enrolled.

2.6.3 Students who are in arrears with their accounts with respect to the payment of enrollment and/or tuition and fees, library accounts, instructional materials, other un-liquidated amounts from previous term/s, etc. will not be allowed to enroll for the succeeding semester.

2.6.4 Students who are currently subject to disciplinary sanctions (i.e. suspension, etc.) may not enroll without prior clearance from the Student Affairs Office.

Section 7: Class Size

2.7.1 Generally, classes require a minimum of seven (7) enrolled students for the class to push through. Should a class have less than the prescribed minimum number of students, the Academic Office, in consultation with the Institute's Management Committee, can implement any of the following measures:

- a. Close the class/section, and redirect enrolled students to a different class/section with the consent of the enrolled students;
- b. Close the class/section, and refund all enrolled students; or
- c. Continue with the class

Section 8: Course Loading

2.8.1 The regular load of a student is the number of units prescribed by his/her/their academic program's curriculum every semester.

2.8.2 Enrolling of units less than the regular load is considered underload and is subject to the approval of the concerned Academic Chairperson.

2.8.3 Enrolling of units more than the regular load is considered overload and is subject to the approval of the concerned Academic Chairperson.

Section 9: Adjustments

2.9.1 All adjustments and/or late enrollment transactions require prior written approval from the Academic Office.

2.9.2 The approved course load during the pre-enrollment period will be final. However, students may make the necessary course adjustments (i.e the adding and/or dropping of classes) during the identified Adjustment Period (which is scheduled shortly after course card distribution) for any of the following reasons:

- a. Failure in a prerequisite course. Students who are required to repeat a prerequisite course due to a receipt of a failing grade will make the necessary adjustments during the Adjustment Period. Should the students fail to make the necessary changes during the Adjustment Period, they will be required to drop the course/s due to failure to meet the prerequisite/s.
- b. Dissolution of the course that was enrolled.
- c. On an "as-needed" basis for students who are underloaded. In such cases, the approval from the Academic Office will be required.

2.9.3 Students who need to add or drop courses should proceed to and/or contact the Registrar's Office. Subject to the preceding provisions, the requesting student will be issued an "Enrollment Adjustment Form" (EAF) to accomplish and submit.

Section 10: Dropping of Course(s)

2.10.1 Dropping of course/s is discouraged in order to help ensure that students can complete their respective programs on schedule, and so that students may closely follow their program's curriculum. Approval from the Academic Office is

required.

2.10.2 The period for dropping courses is within the first two weeks of the semester.

2.10.3 Officially dropped courses will not reflect in the student's Transcript of Records (TOR).

2.10.4 Refund policies relating to the dropping of courses as stipulated in Article III, Section 6-7 will apply.

Section 11: Withdrawal of Course(s)

2.11.1 Withdrawal of course/s is discouraged in order to help ensure that students can complete their respective programs on schedule, and so that students may closely follow their program's curricula.

2.11.2 The period for withdrawal of course/s is until the 1st and 2nd week of the semester.

2.11.3 After the 2nd week of the semester, withdrawal of course/s will no longer be allowed unless the student is pulling out from all her courses to file a Leave of Absence (LOA).

2.11.4 Withdrawn courses will appear in the student's Transcript of Records (TOR) and marked as "W." The same provisions will apply for a Leave of Absence (LOA) filed while the semester is on-going.

2.11.5 Excessive absences will not be a valid reason for withdrawal and/or LOA. A student with excessive absences will be given a grade of "F" or "0."

2.11.6 Student scholars who withdraw during this period may be required by the Finance Office to pay the equivalent tuition and other fees for the withdrawn courses.

Section 12: Petition Class

2.12.1 Student petitions for the opening of new classes and/or sections may be considered for reasons deemed meritorious by the Academic Office.

2.12.2 Petitioned classes will have a minimum of seven (7) students and will be

submitted to the Academic Chairperson.

2.12.3 A special class may be requested for the following reasons:

- a. Registration is closed but the subject is a requirement for the student to graduate within the term.
- b. The subject was a requirement in the old curriculum but is no longer offered for the student's respective program.
- c. Other cases as approved by the Registrar's Office.

2.12.4 Dissolved courses will be announced during the first week of the semester on all relevant virtual and in-person communication channels. In such cases, students are advised to immediately proceed to the Registrar's Office.

Section 13: Discontinuance of Studies, Leave of Absence and Transfer Procedures

2.13.1 The student will visit the Guidance Office to undergo an exit interview with the Guidance Counselor.

2.13.2 A Certificate of Transfer Credential, commonly known as "Honorable Dismissal," may be used by the Registrar's Office for reasonable cause when requested by students of legal age or by parents and/or guardians of minors. The said certificate may be requested as soon as a student decides to discontinue their studies. This certificate will be released upon the submission of all requirements to the Registrar's Office.

2.13.3 No records will be released to students whose accounts have not been fully settled with the Finance Office. If a student's account remains unsettled during a particular semester, the student will be asked to go on leave during the semester and will not be allowed to enroll for the succeeding semester until payment has been made in full.

2.13.4 Students who desire to secure a copy of their records should fill out a "Request for Documents Form" from the Registrar's Office.

2.13.5 Official transcripts may be issued upon the request of students transferring to another educational institution. Transcripts may not be hand-carried but will be sent directly from the Registrar's Office to the said institution.

2.13.6 Unofficial transcripts, which are complete records of a student's performance, may be secured for evaluation purposes. They may be

hand-carried but will be sent directly from the Registrar's Office to the said institution.

2.13.7 Students who are unable to enroll for the current term must apply for an LOA. Otherwise, they will be tagged as AWOL and would require readmission approval to re-enroll.

Section 14: Readmission

2.14.1 Students who do not enroll and discontinue with their studies without a filed LOA must secure a copy of the "Readmission Intent Form" from the Registrar's Office.

2.14.2 Students who have filed an LOA and return to enroll past the declared period of the LOA must undergo the readmission process. Similarly, he/she/they must secure a copy of the "Readmission Intent Form" from the Registrar's Office.

2.14.3 All cases of readmission will be jointly evaluated by the Academic Office and the Registrar's Office. A student applying for readmission will be appraised based on his/her/their previous academic performance at the Institute or all other post-secondary institutions that the applicant for readmission has attended since leaving SoFA Design Institute.

2.14.4 Returning students seeking readmission must accomplish and submit the "Readmission Intent Form" to the Registrar's Office by email addressed to: studentreg@sofa.edu.ph. If the returning student has pursued studies in another institution while away from the Institute, he/she/they will be required to submit along with the form an official Transcript of Records for all post-secondary studies taken to be reviewed and verified by the Registrar.

2.10.5 Upon receipt of the accomplished form and all other supporting documents, the Registrar's Office will initially appraise the application and route the documentation to the relevant Academic department.

2.10.6 The Academic Office will review the application for readmission and will determine action to be taken. The Academic Office may invite the applicant for an interview as part of the review process, and/or request additional documentation for submission.

2.14.7 Upon formal endorsement of a decision from the Academic Office, the Registrar's Office will file all related documentation to the application and notify

the applicant accordingly.

2.14.8 If the applicant is granted readmission, the Registrar's Office will forward him/her/their Tuition and Subject Assessment Form and he/she/they may now proceed to enrollment.

2.14.9 The Institute, for any reason deemed judicious, reserves the right to deny or revoke readmission of a returning student.

Section 15: Maximum Residency

2.15.1 Completion of academic requirements or degree programs shall not exceed six (6) years. Meanwhile, students who are taking associate and diploma programs have four (4) years to finish their respective courses. Exceeding the maximum years of study requires the student to seek a readmission approval from the Academic Office.

2.15.2 Students who will be unable to complete their academic requirements within the prescribed timeline above, may request to waiver the maximum residency rule. The requesting student must fill-in and submit the "Request for Waiver of Maximum Residency Form" to the Registrar's Office prior to the end of the last semester before he/she/they officially enter the period of maximum residency. A copy of the form may be requested from the same office.

2.15.3 The requesting student must fill-in his/her/their proposed study plan for the period of the extension on the same form. The request for extension and the proposed study plan will be duly evaluated by the Academic Office in conjunction with the Registrar's Office. The Academic Office may, on occasion, request a formal discussion with the student to elaborate on his/her/their request for extension.

2.15.4 Upon receipt of the Academic Office's formal endorsement, the requesting student shall be notified by the Registrar's Office of the result of his/her/their requested extension.

2.15.5 The Institute reserves the right to rescind the extension should the student fail to keep within the approved study plan for the period of the extension, and/or any other reason deemed judicious by the Institute.

Section 16: Probationary Academic Status

2.16.1 A student who incurs at least three (3) or more failed subjects in one (1) semester will be required to accomplish and submit the "Academic Delinquency Waiver". The said waiver is an acknowledgement of deficient academic performance and is a request to be granted PROBATIONARY academic status, which will allow the student to enroll for the succeeding semester with the commitment to improve his/her/their academic performance. The said form must be submitted to the Registrar's Office within thirty (30) days from release of grades for routing and processing in time for enrollment for the succeeding semester.

2.16.2 Upon receipt of the form, the Registrar's Office will route the document to the relevant Academic department, who will then determine action to be taken related to the request.

2.16.3 The decision to grant the request is provisional. The Institute reserves the right to rescind the student's admission and enrollment, especially should the information declared or documents submitted pertaining to the request have been found to be deceitful, fabricated and falsified without prejudice.

2.16.4 Upon formal endorsement of a decision from the Academic Office, the Registrar's Office will file all related documentation to the application and notify the applicant accordingly.

2.16.5 If the applicant is granted the requested change in academic status, the Registrar's Office will forward him/her/their Tuition and Subject Assessment Form and he/she/they may now proceed to enrollment.

2.16.6 The performance and attendance of a student under PROBATIONARY academic status will be closely monitored by the Academic Office. The student may be dismissed from the Institute should he/she/they receive an INCOMPLETE, WITHDRAWN or FAILING GRADE on any of his/her/their subjects while on this academic standing.

Section 17: Policies and Procedure on Shifting Academic Programs

2.17.1 The student will be referred to the Guidance Office to be evaluated by the Guidance Counselor if there is a need for career counseling. Otherwise, a conference about shifting academic programs will push through. The results of which may lead to any of the following options:

- a. Completing the admissions requirement before shifting from current program to new program; or
- b. Remain in the current program.

2.17.2 The student will secure an "Application to Shift Form" from the Registrar's Office.

2.17.3 In this case the student will present the accomplished form to the Academic Chairperson indicating the reason/s for shifting.

Section 18: Program Upgrades

2.18.1 Interested and qualified students who wish to convert his/her/their program to a longer and more intensive program in the Institute may opt to upgrade courses.

2.18.2 Upgrading students must submit a Letter of Intent addressed to the relevant Academic Chairperson of his/her/their current program. The letter must detail the motivations of the student for requesting a program upgrade. The request will be processed by the Academic Office accordingly. The requesting student may, on occasion, be invited to a formal discussion with the Academic Office to elaborate on his/her/their request.

2.18.3 Depending on the nature of the program upgrade, specifically in the cases of upgrades from a Short Program (webinar, workshop, short course, or certificate program) to a Long Program (SHS programs, undergraduate programs, 1-year programs, or 2-year programs), the upgrading student may be requested to undergo the admission process relevant to the program he/she/they wish to upgrade to. The Admissions Office, in consultation with the Academic Office and Registrar's Office, will review and process any and all admission requirements submitted to determine eligibility of the student for his/her/their desired program upgrade in accordance to the Institute's standards for admission.

2.18.4 Students who wish to vertically or laterally upgrade from one Short Program to another, or from a Short Program to a Long program will be assisted by the Admissions Office. Upgrades of this nature are subject to the joint approval of the Academic Office, Admissions Office, and Registrar's Office.

2.18.5 Students who wish to vertically or laterally upgrade from one Long Program to another will be assisted by the Academic Office. Upgrades of this nature are subject to the approval of the Academic Office.

2.18.6 The Institute, for any reason deemed judicious, reserves the right to deny or revoke requests for program upgrades.

2.18.7 The student may opt to credit relevant subjects previously taken and passed in the Institute against the curriculum of the program they wish to upgrade to. This will be processed in accordance with the Institute's crediting policies as provided in the student handbook.

Section 19: Program Downgrades

2.19.1 Students who wish to convert his/her/their program to a shorter or less intensive program in the Institute may opt to downgrade courses. This generally occurs in cases when a student, for whatever reason, can no longer fulfill or commit to the demands of his/her/their existing program in the Institute.

2.19.2 Downgrading students must submit a Letter of Intent addressed to the relevant Academic Chairperson of his/her/their current program. The letter must detail the motivations of the student for requesting a program downgrade. The request will be processed by the Academic Office accordingly. The requesting student may, on occasion, be invited to a formal discussion with the Academic Office to elaborate on his/her/their request.

2.19.3 The Institute, for any reason deemed judicious, reserves the right to deny or revoke requests for program downgrades.

Section 20: Transferees

2.20.1 Students who apply for and are eligible to transfer to SoFA Design Institute will abide by the Institute's policies and regulations. All transferees may opt to apply for the crediting of the courses taken in their previous school in accordance with the Institute's crediting policies as provided in the student handbook.

2.20.2 The subject crediting process will be facilitated by the Registrar's Office. Upon receipt of the transferee's relevant documentation, the Transferee Reference Slip & Endorsement Form will be routed by the Registrar's Office to the Academic Office to confirm which subjects from the transferee's previous studies can and should be credited against his/her/their program at the

Institute.

2.20.3 Upon receipt of the Academic Office's endorsement on subjects to be credited, the Registrar's Office, in conjunction with the Finance Office, will issue a new Tuition and Subject Assessment Form for the transferee. The latter will be communicated and forwarded to the transferee by the Admissions Office. Subsequently, the transferee may proceed to enrollment.

Section 21: Student Portal

2.21.1 The Student Portal is a password-protected system containing the student's personal information, class schedule and grades. The portal also serves as a messaging platform between students, faculty and school administration. It is imperative that applicants and enrolled students access their student portal regularly for updates pertaining to their application and/or enrollment.

2.21.2 Applicants and students who are unable to access their student portal may contact the Registrar's Office for assistance.

ARTICLE III

PAYMENT POLICIES

Section 1: School Fees and Scholarship

3.1.1 All financial business shall be transacted through the Finance Office from Monday to Friday at 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM ONLY.

3.1.2 Tuition fees are determined based on the number of units enrolled by the student as approved by the Registrar. Miscellaneous fees such as locker rental, IDs, car stickers, etc. are computed separately.

3.1.3 Official student records, which include but are not limited to, Transcripts of Records, Certifications, and Transfer Credentials ("Official Records"), shall be withheld from students with delinquent accounts. The Office of the Registrar shall only release Official Records once the accounts are settled.

3.1.4 Please refer to the following general provisions on the schedule of fees and refunds:

3.1.4.1 Students may opt to pay at the Finance Office in the following payment methods:

a) Cash

b) Check: For security reasons, payment via check is SoFA Design Institute's preferred payment method. An account is only deemed as PAID the moment the check is cleared.

- For Fashion programs, checks are payable to "SOFA"
- For Interior Design programs, checks are payable to "SOFA College of Interior Design Inc."

c) Credit Card/Debit Card

d) Bank Deposit: For payment made through bank deposit, please send a scanned copy of the deposit slip on the day of the transaction. The original copy of the deposit slip shall be required when claiming the Official Receipt.

3.1.4.2 Guidelines in Check Payments

a) Payment by check is encouraged for security reasons, although an account is only deemed "paid" at the moment of check clearance.

b) Marks or alterations on the check (e.g., misspelled words, wrong date of the wrong amount over the correct one, among others) should be countersigned by an authorized signatory.

c) At the back of the check, the following information shall be written:

student's name, ID number, academic program, address, and telephone number.

Section 2: Installment

3.2.1 Credit programs

3.2.1.1 Tuition fees may be paid in 2 or 4 installment terms per semester. Post-dated checks are required for installment.

3.2.1.2 Payment dates are as follows:

Program	Installment	Payment Dates
Credit Programs	1st	Upon enrollment (50% of tuition + full miscellaneous fees)
	2nd	25 calendar days from 1st day of semester
	3rd	50 calendar days from 1st day of semester
	4th	75 calendar days from 1st day of semester

3.2.1 Non-credit programs

3.2.1.1 Tuition fees may be paid in two (2) installments. Post-dated checks are required for installment.

3.2.1.2 Payment dates are as follows:

Program	Installment	Payment Dates
Non-credit Programs	1st	Upon enrollment (50% of tuition + full miscellaneous fees)
	2nd	25 calendar days from 1st day of semester

Section 3: Late Payment

3.3.1 Tuition fee should be paid at least 1 week before the course starts or within enrollment week either in full or installment to be able to attend a class.

3.3.2 Students who fail to pay their tuition fee before the first day of classes will be charged a Late Registration Fee of 1,000 pesos per week until the 2nd week.

Section 4: Returned Checks

3.4.1 The responsibility for ensuring that the validity of the check issued to SoFA Design Institute rests with the students and their respective check-issuers. In case of returned or bounced checks, the failure to make immediate payment in cash shall automatically result in the deletion of the student's name from the official enrollment list.

3.4.2 Students who have paid within the regular enrollment period and whose check was subsequently dishonored shall be charged a penalty of 10% of the total check amount. Students whose checks have previously bounced or been returned will no longer be allowed to issue checks as payment. Subsequent payments to SoFA Design Institute shall be exclusively by way of cash, credit card, or manager's checks.

3.4.3 Provisions of Batas Pambansa (PB) No. 22 or the "Act of Penalizing of Making or Drawing and Issuance of a Check without Sufficient Funds or Credits" shall apply. 3.4.4 SoFA Design Institute will not honor requests to place a check on hold verbally or via phone. A written letter addressed to the Finance Office indicating the reason and the next date for check deposit should be submitted. This will nonetheless incur a penalty fee of 10% of the total check amount.

Section 5: Delinquency in Tuition Payment

3.5.1 Students who fail to pay the balance on the due date will be allowed to complete the remainder of the semester. However, such students will not be allowed to enlist for the next semester. Furthermore, the transcript of records and transfer credentials will be withheld until the settlement of accounts. In addition, a surcharge will be imposed upon payment of the balance:

3.5.2 An additional fee of Php 500.00 shall be charged for every week past the due date.

Section 6: Refund Policy

3.6.1 An application for a refund of tuition should be made by accomplishing an "Enrollment Adjustment Form" available from the Office of the Registrar. No refunds will be allowed unless an official withdrawal form is submitted in the required time period. The date on which the application for a refund is requested is considered the official date of the student's withdrawal.

Section 7: Policy Table

3.7.1 Claims for refund are made according to the policies of the Commission on Higher Education, as follows:

Deadline	Refund
Before the start of the semester	100%
End of Week 1 of the semester	75%
End of Week 2 of the semester	50%

3.7.2 No refund shall be made after the second week of the semester, regardless of whether the student has attended classes or not. All checks for a tuition refund, regardless of the date of dropping within the applicable refund period, are released at the Finance Office within 30 days from the date of refund application.

3.7.3 All miscellaneous fees are non-refundable.

3.7.4 Workshops. Once the workshop has started, students may no longer apply for a refund regardless if they attend or not.

ARTICLE IV ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Section 1: Student Attendance

4.1.1 Students must promptly and regularly attend class meetings for all their courses.

4.1.2 A student shall be marked absent if he/she fails to attend class or arrives 30 minutes beyond the class schedule.

4.1.3 A student shall be considered late if they arrive 15 minutes beyond the class schedule. Incurring three instances of tardiness will be considered as one absence.

4.1.4 A student shall receive a failing grade if he/she has incurred more than 6 absences.

4.1.5 A student may be marked absent by the faculty member if he/she leaves earlier than the prescribed time.

4.1.6 Although all faculty members are expected to begin their classes promptly, unavoidable circumstances may cause some faculty members to be late for class. In such cases, students should wait for their teachers for 45 minutes.

Section 2: Approved Absences

4.2.1 An absence by a student who is sent officially by the School to participate in an academic event, training seminar, or other similar functions, is considered an Approved Absence. This is duly certified by the Student Affairs Office and shall not be counted against the number of allowable absences.

4.2.2 A missed quiz, examination, graded recitation, assignment, seatwork, and the like during an Approved Absence shall not be counted against the student. S/he shall be allowed to make up for those missed activities and/or requirements at the soonest possible time.

4.2.3 Students must secure an "Approved Absence Form" from the Students Affairs Office, properly fill it out, and have it signed by the Student Affairs Head. The students must present the form to their teachers. For classes that do not meet daily, students must present the form at least one (1) class session prior to the absence.

4.2.4 The student shall notify and provide the concerned faculty member with a

copy of the "Approved Absence Form."

4.2.5 Subject to the immediately preceding provision in cases of approved absences, each student shall be held responsible for all assignments and the entire content of the course missed, regardless of the cause of her/his absence.

4.2.6 For Academic work not announced or assigned prior to the student's absence and done during the said absence, teachers concerned are required to give make-up work, assignments, and/or examinations or they have the option of not counting the missed work, assignments, and/or examination, for the duration of the approved absence in the grade computation.

Section 3: Unauthorized Absences

4.3.1 Absences due to sickness are not considered approved absences and should therefore be counted against the students' attendance even if certified by a doctor, parent, or guardian. However, a faculty member may give special consideration to a student who has been absent due to sickness if he or she, aside from showing great scholastic aptitude has been consistently performing well. In case of absences due to prolonged illness, a student or his or her duly authorized representative should notify the school director/chairperson as soon as possible who shall recommend the appropriate action to be taken.

4.3.2 Only students whose names appear on the official class list are considered officially enrolled in any given class. A student should not be allowed to attend a class session if his/her name does not appear on the official class list sent by the Office of the Registrar. Students who are officially enrolled but not on the official class list must first secure clearance from the Registrar.

4.3.3 The Academic Chairperson has the final authority to adjudicate all the problems arising from the class absences.

Section 4: Cancellation of Classes

4.4.1 Classes are automatically suspended with Storm Signal Number 3.

4.4.2 In the absence of typhoon signal warnings from PAGASA, localized suspension or cancellation of classes in both public and private elementary and secondary schools may be implemented as announced by the City Mayor and/or the President of the school.

Section 5: Make-Up Classes

4.5.1 When classes are canceled due to the faculty member's absence and/or lack of a substitute teacher, it is the duty of the faculty member to subsequently schedule and hold make-up classes, upon coordination with the Academic

Department.

4.5.2 Taking possession of textbooks or notes of any kind (unless authorized), giving or receiving information, or any other attempt at communicating with fellow students during final examinations is not allowed. Offenders shall be charged according to the stipulations of this handbook.

4.5.3 Teachers are not obliged to give a special final examination to any student who has failed to take the examination as scheduled or announced except in the following instances;

- a) Absence due to sickness (medical certificate is required);
- b) Official Representation of the school or the country (Approved Absence Form); and
- c) Other cases as determined by the Academic Chairperson

4.5.4 Final grades shall be withheld from students with delinquent accounts. The Office of the Registrar shall release these grades once accounts have been settled.

ARTICLE V GRADING SYSTEM

Section 1. Grading System

SoFA Design Institute follows a numerical grade point system:

5.2.1 Percentage Rating Grade Description

Percentage Rating	Grade	Description
96-100	4.000	Excellent
92-95	3.500	Superior
88-91	3.000	Very Good
83-87	2.500	Good
78-82	2.000	Satisfactory
74-77	1.500	Fair
70-73	1.000	Pass
below 70	F	Failed
	W	Withdrawal
	INC	Incomplete

The passing mark for all subjects is at least 70% or 1.0.

5.2.2 Percentage of Grade Allocation. SoFA Design Institute recognizes and values academic freedom in the educational process entrusted to its highly qualified faculty members. Hence, the breakdown of the grades and the corresponding components are left to the discretion of the faculty member, with the endorsement of their Academic Chairpersons and the approval of the Dean. The school encourages its teachers/instructors/lecturers/professors to reflect this grading system in their syllabi to be discussed with the students on the first day of classes.

5.2.3 Auditing Students or “auditors” are those who are enrolled in certain classes only for the purpose of increasing their knowledge of the subject matter or acquainting themselves with certain classroom procedures and do not have any intention of earning the units for these subjects. Student auditors, therefore;

- a) have no limits with absences, and
- b) are not required to take tests or examinations or to submit course requirements

5.2.4 The grade point average (GPA) for all credited courses taken within the semester (except PE and NSTP) shall be obtained through the following procedure:

- a) Credit units for each course are multiplied by the grade earned to obtain the honor points per course.
- b) The resulting honor points are added.
- c) The total number of honor points is divided by the total number of credit units to obtain the GPA. The GPA is then computed to 3 decimal places.
- d) For G.P.A. computation purposes a grade of F shall be equivalent to 0.0. *The following is an example of a G.P.A. computation following the above procedure:

Subject	Credit Units	Grade Point	Honor Points
PhilFas	3.0	2.0	6.0
Fashcon	3.0	2.0	6.0
Fastext	3.0	3.0	9.0
Paternm1	3.0	3.0	9.0
Sewing1	3.0	2.0	6.0
Fatrend	3.0	3.0	9.0
TOTAL	18.0		45.0

$$\text{Total honor points} / \text{Total credit units} = \text{GPA}$$

$$45.0 / 18 = 2.5$$

- e) The cumulative G.P.A. at the end of the school year is obtained by applying the above procedure.

5.2.5 All courses shall utilize the numerical grading system.

5.2.6 Students have the right to verify the bases for their grades. Teachers must show the breakdown of grades to the students.

5.2.7 Students must exercise self-objectivity and be cognizant of their own academic performance. In general, students must accept and respect their

teacher's evaluation of their performance in the course. Only in instances where the teacher committed an error in recording the grade should a student request for a change of grade.

5.2.8 Grade changes shall be followed only within the prescribed period. Students who wish to petition for a change shall go through the procedure for a change of grade.

- a) Students shall initially discuss the matter with the teacher concerned. Changes may only be applied by the Registrar within two (2) weeks after the official date of release of grades.
- b) If both parties reach an agreement, the faculty can secure a Change of-Grade Form from the Office of the Registrar.
- c) If both parties fail to reach an agreement, the grievance procedure may be applied as provided in this handbook.

Section 2: Minimum Requirements of the Course

5.2.1 A student successfully passes a class by getting a grade of at least 1.00 or higher.

5.2.2 Students should maintain a GPA of 2.50 or higher every semester to remain in Good Standing.

5.2.3 Students in warning status will be subjected to the terms and conditions prescribed by the Academic Department in order to continue their program.

5.2.4 Scholars are required to maintain the GPA prescribed on their scholarship agreement.

Section 3: Crediting Policies

5.3.1 Students transferring to SoFA Design Institute may apply for credit only up to 25% of the total units towards a degree program. The Office of the Registrar shall compute crediting as follows:

$\text{No. of Units of the Program} \times .25 = \text{Maximum Units Allowed for Crediting}$

5.3.2 Courses for credit should meet the grade requirement of 80% or 2.0.

Section 4: Dean's List

5.4.1 Outstanding academic performance during the current semester shall be recognized through the publication of the Honors' List the following semester.

5.4.2 Students who qualify for the Honors' List/Dean's List shall receive a Certificate of Recognition at the end of the semester.

5.4.3 To qualify for the Honors' List, a student should

- a) Have a semester GPA of at least 3.000 for honors
 - b) Have a load of at least six (6) academic subjects
 - c) Not have been found guilty of a major offense
 - d) Not have a grade below 2.00 in any academic subjects
 - e) Not have failed or incurred F in any academic or non-academic subject.
- 5.5.4 Any request for an interpretation or a clarification of the rules regarding semestral honors should be forwarded to the Office of the Registrar.

ARTICLE VI INTERNSHIP

Section 1: Industry Training

6.1.1 Industry Training is an internship in which the students will have the opportunity to learn, be trained, and build on the knowledge and skills acquired from SoFA Design Institute.

6.1.2 The Student Affairs Office shall offer available internship opportunities to deserving students endorsed by the Academics Department. Candidates are subject to the following criteria:

1. Acceptable Grades - The student should have a G.P.A of at least 2.5 to be an eligible candidate for internship.
2. Good Professional Conduct – The student needs to complete all institutionalized training without violating any of the School Rules and Regulations stated in the students' handbook. Once he/she is caught in violation of any of the school rules and regulations, he/she will be forfeiting any kind of endorsement or recommendation from the school for internship or employment purposes.
3. Student Clearance - All course requirements are completed and payments to the school are paid in order to be eligible for an internship.

6.1.3 For students who were not granted internship slots for not meeting the requirements stated in 6.1.2, the Student Affairs Office will still be in charge of processing needed documents as they apply for internships on their own.

6.1.4 An agreement will be furnished between the school and the company to ensure that the student intern will meet all the necessary industry training needed under his/her program. All internships should be approved by the Student Affairs Office for them to be credited.

Section 2: Internship Duration

6.2.1 Required minimum number of hours for internship depends on what is prescribed by the student's academic program and as governed by regulatory bodies such as CHED and TESDA.

Section 3: Rules and Regulations

6.3.1 Students who are enrolled in programs that require internships will need to apply for slots from among the openings provided by the Student Affairs Office.

6.3.2 The school will provide eligible students with a Letter of Request for an Internship to assist them in applying.

6.3.3 Students who do not finish their internship within the allotted period of time shall be removed from the list of candidates for graduation. They will be reinstated on the list after completion of the required number of internship hours. Students are required to update and inform us of their internship status at all times; Failure to update will result in an 'AWOL' status and the internship will not be credited.

6.3.4 Accuracy of Contact Information: The Student Affairs Office gets in touch with student interns through emails and SMS. Hence, student interns are required to provide accurate and updated contact information.

6.3.5 Student interns are required to inform updates to the Student Affairs Office every 15th and 30th of the month.

6.3.6 Termination - Termination of a student's internship due to violations of any of the venue's rules and regulations, will serve as grounds for dismissal from SoFA Design Institute.

6.3.7 Forging Information - Students who forge information regarding hours completed and performance evaluation shall be grounds for dismissal from SoFA Design Institute.

6.3.8 Grading - Internships are considered a graduation requirement of students. Therefore, they need to get a passing grade in the internship evaluation to satisfy the academic requirements of their respective programs.

Section 4: Internship Application Procedures

6.4.1 Secure and fill out an application form from the Student Affairs Office

6.4.2 Assessment of academic standing will be done by the Student Affairs Office.

6.4.3 An orientation on internship policies and procedures shall be given by the Student Affairs Office.

6.4.4 Processing of job placement shall be done by the Student Affairs Office.

6.4.5 Submission and signing of the Internship Agreement will be scheduled.

6.4.6 Commencement of internship shall be advised by the Student Affairs Office.

6.4.7 Student interns will submit their internship reports to the Student Affairs Office.

6.4.8 Evaluation and grading of student interns will officially end the Internship.

Section 5: Extra-Curricular Activities (Industry-Related Activities)

6.5.1 The school takes part in industry events such as fashion shows and photoshoots where students are given the opportunity to work with industry practitioners. These are subject to the following guidelines:

1. All activities will be coursed through the Student Affairs Office. The Student Affairs Office will decide which courses will be relevant to the activity.
2. Extra-curricular activities are not substitutes for classes. They should not be used as an excuse for missed classes/assignments/projects.
3. Students who will participate will have to be cleared by the Academic Office for any conflict in the class schedule and to assure that it will not affect their class standing.
4. Activities held in the evening will not be considered as an excuse for tardiness or absence from their morning class the following day.
5. An orientation will be conducted prior to the actual event and a Post-evaluation is required to be submitted three (3) days after the actual event to assess the student's learning experience. This will be assigned by the Student Affairs Office to the Teacher of Assigned/Partner Subjects. Otherwise, the Student Affairs Office will provide the Post-evaluation forms to be filled out by the participants.
6. No post-evaluation form submitted may be grounds to disallow the student's participation in other upcoming events

ARTICLE VII STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Section 1: General Provisions

7.1.1 As an academic institution, SoFA Design Institute has a set of rules and regulations that will be followed by the students. All of the following cases and concerns will be reported to the Student Affairs Office and will be processed immediately.

7.1.2 All parties concerned will be invited for a formal investigation. We will abide by the Student's Handbook for all related matters. SoFA Design Institute reserves the right to evaluate and apply appropriate corrective action for offenses that are not stated in the handbook, as well as offenses that school officials deem as serious cases.

Section 2: Violations

7.2.1 Unauthorized possession of deadly weapons such as but not limited to knives, firearms, harmful chemicals, and explosives.

7.2.2 Disrupting or causing disturbance of academic functions or school activities on/off-campus.

7.2.3 Brawls; engaging or involving oneself in physical fights and/or acts of violence; inflicting or causing physical injuries upon another on/off-campus; hooliganism

7.2.4 Acts of indecency or immorality; bringing in, displaying, sending, creating, copying or distributing pornography or foul and malicious messages in whatever form or means. This includes accessing prohibited Internet sites.

7.2.5 Any act, omission, condition, status, or circumstance tending to cause dishonor or discredit to, and/or contempt for, the name of the School or any member of the community; acts that bring the name of the School or any of its members into disrepute; any form of student organization-related misconduct whether committed within or outside school premises.

7.2.6 Forging, falsifying, or tampering with academic or official records or documents of any kind [securing or using forged school records, forms, documents of any kind; intentionally making a false statement or misrepresentation of any material fact [practicing or attempting to practice any deception or fraud in connection with one's admission to, registration in, or graduation from SoFA Design Institute or any official school activity or function from SoFA Design Institute or any official school activity or function.

7.2.7 Gambling in any form on school grounds.

7.2.8 Unauthorized collection or solicitation of funds [exaction of money, checks, or other instruments of monetary equivalent and/or any material or object in connection with matters pertaining to the school.

7.2.9 Breach of computer policy or violations of its rules and regulations such as but not limited to the following:

- a) Accessing a school computer or computer network without authority or beyond authorized access.
- b) Introducing false information preventing authorized use of information.
- c) Preventing normal operation of computer networks of the school.
- d) Sending offensive emails.
- e) Altering information; damaging or destroying information.
- f) Computer password disclosure: Disclosing passwords or similar access information of the computer network of the school knowing that the disclosure is without written approval from the school.

7.2.10 Entering a class in which a student is not officially enrolled; joining a school function without the permission of concerned parties or authorities.

7.2.11 Loitering in corridors during class sessions.

7.2.12 Violation of school parking/traffic regulations, including those directives issued by the City Municipality to keep the traffic in order on the immediate vicinity or street/s adjacent to the school.

Section 3: Disciplinary Sanctions

7.3.1 The penalty to be imposed for violations shall depend on the nature and/or gravity of the offense/violation. A just and reasonable disciplinary action shall be rendered for any offense or violation.

7.3.2 Type of Disciplinary Sanctions

- a) loss of privilege/s
- b) probation
- c) records hold
- d) revocation of a degree previously conferred; non-conferment of degree; deferral or withholding of a degree, diploma, and/or certificate
- e) suspension
- f) exclusion (dismissal)
- g) expulsion

7.3.3 Sanctions for Minor Offenses

Any or a combination of the following sanctions may be imposed on the student:

- a) Verbal or written admonition
- b) Submission of a letter of apology and/or a written explanation to all parties concerned.
- c) Render unpaid service/work (e.g. deliver mail, lost and found notices on school, etc.)
- d) In case of a third minor offense, the student's charge will be elevated to a major offense.

Section 4: Procedures in Discipline Cases

7.4.1 Filing of Complaint/Response

7.4.1.1 A written complaint report must be submitted to the Student Affairs Office within five (5) days from the date of the event; however, the prescriptive period may be extended at the discretion of the Student Affairs Office.

7.4.1.2 Upon receipt of the written complaint or report, the Student Affairs Office shall send a notice of complaint with a copy of the written complaints and require the concerned parties to submit a written response within five (5) days from receipt of the notice.

7.4.1.3 Failure of the respondent to answer the complaint within the period specified is deemed an admission of the act or acts complained thereof.

7.4.1.4 Upon receipt by the Student Affairs Office of the response, s/he will investigate and evaluate the case and, depending on the facts gathered, s/ he may decide on the case or dismiss the complaint.

Section 5: Major Offenses

7.5.1 Mishandling of School Equipment. Students are required to leave their ID and log in with the Academic Assistant when borrowing tools and equipment. Damaged or lost tools and equipment should be replaced by the student.

7.5.2 Stealing. Stealing and cheating in any form will not be tolerated by SoFA Design Institute. First Offense: Dismissal

7.5.3 Vandalism. Any willful or malicious destruction of school property will result in expulsion. First Offense: Dismissal

7.5.4 Insubordination. Everybody should follow the agreed rules and regulations as well as respect the authority of their instructors, school officials, and the school itself. First Offense: A score of zero in attitude grade. Second Offense: Dismissal

7.5.5 Inflicting Physical Harm to Others. Any act of physical harm towards others will result in expulsion. First Offense: Suspension. Second Offense: Dismissal.

7.5.6 Harassment. SoFA Design Institute will not tolerate any form of harassment. Any serious offensive behavior that is threatening or disturbing towards Instructors, Office Staff, and co-students is unacceptable. First Offense: Suspension. Second Offense: Dismissal *Particularly for sexual harassment, we will follow RA 7877.

7.5.7 Use of Cell Phones, Musical Devices, Laptops, & Tablets. All cell phones, musical devices, video games, and laptops must be switched off during scheduled class hours. Any student caught using the aforementioned devices during classes without permission will be reprimanded.

First Offense: Verbal Warning.

Second Offense: A score of zero in attitude grade.

Third Offense: Suspension

7.5.8 Sexual Misconduct. Sexual misconduct in any form will be dealt with accordingly and could be grounds for suspension or expulsion depending on the gravity.

7.5.9 Coming to School under the Influence of Alcohol and Prohibited Drugs Automatic Expulsion will be given to anyone caught under the influence of alcohol and/or prohibited drugs. Students are prohibited to enter the school premises under the influence of alcohol. Mere possession of alcoholic beverages and dangerous drugs inside the school premises will be grounds for expulsion.

7.5.10 Relationship with a faculty member

7.5.11 Plagiarism. Usage or close imitation of the language and thought of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work will result in expulsion. First Offense: Written Warning. Second Offense: Dismissal

Section 6: Dress Code

7.6.1 While SoFA Design Institute is a school that fosters an appreciation for fashion, it is an educational institution more than anything. Hence, all students are expected to wear clothing that is appropriate for school. Clothing that

distracts students, disrupts the educational process, or poses a health or safety threat to anyone is not acceptable.

7.6.2 Parents and students are encouraged to review and adhere to the following standards:

- a) No bellies, cleavage, or bottoms showing
- b) No see-through clothing
- c) No undergarments showing (males or females)
- d) No halters or tube tops
- e) No shorts or skirts that are too short for school (Students know what "too short for school" means. If unsure, don't wear the outfit)
- f) No clothing with alcohol, drug, violent or sexual connotations
- g) No clothing with derogatory language or pictures

7.6.3 SoFA Design Institute reserves the right to interpret inappropriate clothing. Violators will be penalized accordingly.

ARTICLE VIII STUDENT GRIEVANCES

Section 1: Grievance System

8.1.1 In an academic community the grievances of students against administrators, faculty members, support staff, administrative personnel, maintenance unit, and security staff, are best settled through dialogue and discussion. Only as a last resort, shall formal procedures be taken to settle such grievances.

8.1.2 Proper communication is absolutely necessary for the satisfactory settlement of grievances. Affected parties must not wait for a crisis situation to develop, and instead, attempt to informally and amicably settle matters as soon as possible. Only when a grievance is expressed in writing and duly signed does it become a formal complaint requiring a formal procedure for settlement.

8.1.3 A grievance refers to any controversy between a student as the aggrieved party and a member of the academic community as a respondent that may be the case of a complaint. An academic grievance is one that arises from any controversy related to learning or performance in academic courses. A behavioral grievance is one that arises from the manner a person conducts himself or herself toward another. In this connection:

8.1.3.1 All pleadings should be in writing, including complaints, answer memoranda, recommendations, consequent decisions, and excerpts or transcripts of proceedings, all of which should be signed by the parties concerned and/or participants on a given occasion. All original records of proceedings shall be placed in the custody of the School/Center concerned.

8.1.3.2 Complaints against students and faculty may be forwarded to the Academic Chairperson. Should the Academic Chairperson deem it appropriate under the circumstances, they may ask the respondent to write a response within seven (7) working days after the request.

8.1.3.3 Complaints against school concessionaires and school employees may be forwarded to the Human Resource Department.

ARTICLE IX

GUIDANCE SERVICES

Section 1. Guidance Services

The Guidance Office is under the Academics Department of SoFA Design Institute. It works to complement the instructional program of the Senior High School and College. Students are encouraged to visit the Guidance and Office during office hours whenever they feel the need to do so. The office will provide the following services to assist students in their holistic growth:

1. Individual Inventory – A record of students updated systematically which can be used in different guidance services.
2. Information Services – Growth group activities through group guidance, seminar workshops, bulletin boards, and other means of information dissemination methods.
3. Counseling Services – Individual counseling and group counseling for students in need of the service to develop, prevent, enhance, explore, reinforce, and remediate the goals of the counselee.
4. Referral Services – Refer students in need of specialized attention from specialists or professionals capable of responding to the concern to be addressed.
5. Placement – Help students prepare for their adjustment to a new environment.
6. Research and Surveys – Discover new information for program development.
7. Program Evaluation - Determine the effectiveness, adequacy, and efficiency of the conducted activities and the implemented Guidance Program for the school year

Section 2. How to Avail Counseling

ARTICLE X

GRADUATION

Section 1: Graduation Requirements

10.1.1 Only students who have successfully completed all the requirements in their academic and non-academic courses will be eligible for graduation.

10.1.2 Prospective graduates must file letters of intent (LOI) to graduate and submit these to the Office of the Registrar during their last semester.

10.1.3 Only students who have filed their LOI and completed all their requirements on time shall be allowed to join the graduation ceremonies.

Section 2: Residency Period

10.2.1 Completion of academic requirements for degree programs shall not exceed six (6) years. Meanwhile, students who are taking associate and diploma programs have four (4) years to finish their respective courses. Exceeding the maximum number of years of study requires the student to seek readmission approval from the Academic Department.

Section 3: Graduation Honors

10.3.1 Students who have maintained required academic standards may be recommended for graduation honors of Summa Cum Laude, Magna Cum laude, Cum Laude, and Honorable Mention. Latin Honors are awarded only for degree (4-year) programs

10.3.2 To graduate with honors, at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the total credits toward the degree must have been earned in residence at SoFA Design Institute Design Institute.

10.3.3 The GPA of graduating students refers to their cumulative GPA The following cumulative GPA requirements apply to students graduating with honors who have enrolled in the 4-year and 2-year programs.

Honors	GPA
Summa Cum Laude	3.800-4.000
Magna Cum Laude	3.600-3.799
Cum Laude	3.400-3.599
Honorable Mention	3.000-3.399

10.3.4 When students transfer to SoFA Design Institute from other schools or shift from one program to another within the College, the grades of all the courses including failures and withdrawals taken in other schools or in previous SoFA Design Institute programs, shall be counted in the computation of their GPA.

10.3.5 A student shall be disqualified from graduating with honors if s/he has:

- a) two grades of 1.5 in any academic courses
- b) a grade of 1.0 in any academic course
- c) a grade of F in any course, whether academic or non-academic
- d) been found guilty of a major offense
- e) incurred more than the maximum allowable number of course withdrawals during his/her entire study in the School (as well as in the previous schools attended, in case of transferees)

Section 4: Sanctions on Delinquent Graduating Student

Candidates for graduation in their last semester who have committed offenses punishable with exclusion may, due to consideration, be suspended for one-semester and allowed to enroll in the following semester to complete the required academic requirements to finish the program. After completion of the requirements, the delinquent student will be allowed to graduate but will not be allowed to attend the graduation ceremony.

Section 5: Revocation of Degree/Honor/Distinction

If proven that the graduate

ARTICLE XI FINAL PROVISIONS

Section 1: Repealing Clause

10.1.1 All administrative orders or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Manual are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Section 2: Separability Clause

10.2.1 If any provision of this Manual is held invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Section 3: Effectivity Clause

10.3.1 This Manual shall take effect from November 2017. Clarification on the interpretation of the Student Manual provisions may be referred to the Office of Student Affairs.

MEMBERS OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Student Handbook Revision
2022-2023
(Sgd.)

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