



# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



**Human Resources Department**

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# SOUTH FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome! This handbook provides a summary of policies, procedures, resources, and benefits to help you get acquainted with South Florida State College (SFSC). As you read through the handbook, please make note of any questions you may have. Your supervisor or any of the staff of the Human Resources Department will be happy to assist you in finding the answers.

Many of the documents and forms, including policies and procedures, mentioned in this handbook are accessible in Panther Central (our on-line, self-service portal) and/or on the college's website, [www.southflorida.edu](http://www.southflorida.edu).

## **THE SFSC SPIRIT**

SFSC has enjoyed success through the years due to the family atmosphere created by college employees and students. It has been proven that people perform better in a positive, friendly environment.

You probably have fond memories of special people who made a difference in your life by being kind and understanding, whether things were going well or not--people who went above and beyond the call of duty to assist a fellow human being in need. That's the SFSC Spirit college employees have a right to be proud of.

Students and prospective students are our customers and deserve your full attention and respect, regardless of the position you hold at SFSC. Your co-workers certainly deserve no less. Promoting and supporting success through quality internal and external services is everyone's responsibility at this institution. Creating a culture that is conducive to student learning is the reason we are here.

Catch the SFSC Spirit--do the little things daily that will continue to make SFSC a great place to be. Smile, enjoy your work, and perhaps you'll be that special person someone else fondly remembers.

### **SFSC VISION:**

*To become **Aa** globally aware academic destination driving regional transformation through innovative collaboration*

## **SFSC MISSION:**

*South Florida State College is an open-access, higher education institution dedicated to providing a learning-centered environment through quality programs, training, and services. Working in partnerships with organizations and communities, the college provides leadership and a comprehensive range of opportunities for the educational, cultural, and economic development of the service district.*

*The college assists the people of its service district (DeSoto, Hardee, and Highlands counties) regardless of economic, social, or educational background to achieve success in*

- *Completing an associate degree in preparation for pursuing a baccalaureate or other professional degree or credential;*
- *Completing a baccalaureate degree, associate degree, or certificate related to career and technical preparation to enter the workforce or to improve career circumstances;*
- *Completing college preparatory programs of study including those leading to the high school diploma;*
  
- *Obtaining basic skills in literacy, numeracy, and citizenship to prosper as a contributing member of society;*
- *Gaining personal, cultural, and global awareness, appreciation, and understanding needed in a complex contemporary society;*
- *Pursuing advanced academic preparation and credentials available through partnerships with colleges and universities; and*
- *Participating in the social, cultural, environmental, and economic development of the communities served by the college.*

*We believe in the worth of each of our students and, through all of our educational programs and services, we seek to develop human potential and to create brighter futures.*

## **SFSC INSTITUTIONAL CORE VALUES:**

*The attributes that guide our behavior as we pursue our vision are:*

*Integrity: We encourage the free exchange of ideas in an environment that embraces honesty, fairness, personal responsibility, and ethical leadership.*

*Service: We actively seek opportunities to enhance achievement and success in our local and world communities.*

*Community: We embrace cultural diversity, inclusiveness, collaboration, mutual respect, responsive and productive partnerships, and the sharing of resources.*

*Learning: We are committed to providing opportunities for students and staff to succeed in a highly competitive environment so that they can become effective lifelong learners.*

*Excellence: We seek to provide high-quality, innovative, and flexible teaching and learning opportunities in a learning-centered environment.*

*Accountability: We value personal and institutional ownership through integrated planning and assessment of all programs.*

*Responsibility: We honor our commitments in all initiatives and leadership endeavors as well as promote environmental stewardship.*

## **HISTORY OF SFSC**

Furthering the established policy of placing quality higher education within commuting distance of 99 percent of Florida's population, the 1965 Legislature authorized the establishment of a state-supported junior college in Highlands County to serve the needs of the citizens of Hardee and Highlands and to serve as the area vocational school.

The college began operation in August 1966 in temporary facilities provided at no cost to the public by public-spirited citizens of Avon Park. These were renovated, air conditioned, and partly furnished by voluntary contributions of many interested individuals and organizations, in both Highlands and Hardee counties, and by the municipalities of Avon Park, Bowling Green, Lake Placid, and Sebring.

The college established contact with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) during its first year of operation, and was fully accredited during the third year of operation. SACS accreditation has been maintained continuously ever since.

Since 1966, the college has grown considerably in student enrollment and physical facilities. In October 1968, construction of the nine-building permanent campus was begun. The college moved into the new facility in early January 1970. The college's service area was expanded in 1984 to include DeSoto County and the name was changed from South Florida Junior College to South Florida Community College to better reflect its mission. Currently, the Highlands Campus consists of 228 acres with more than 50 buildings, including the 1,460-seat Theatre for the Performing Arts and a 1,500 seat gymnasium. Full-service campuses in DeSoto and Hardee counties were officially opened in 2003. The college offers classes at all of these campuses, at its Lake Placid Center, and many other locations in the tri-county areas. The overall growth of the college reflects the community's support of and participation in its programs.

On July 1, 2012, the college's name changed to South Florida State College in celebration of its approval by SACS and the Florida Legislature to award baccalaureate degrees. The college has partnered with a variety of colleges and universities since 1999 in providing baccalaureate and master's degree course work through the SFSC University Center,

which is located on the Highlands Campus. Local students can now continue their college course work in selected programs with SFSC and its partners while remaining in their own communities.

SFSC, currently, serves more than 19,000 residents in DeSoto, Hardee, and Highlands counties. The college has matured into a responsible and responsive institution of higher learning that provides the community with quality academic programs, specialized occupational training, corporate and continuing education, adult education, community services, cultural experiences, intercollegiate athletics, informational services, and programs which enrich the quality of community life.

A detailed history of SFSC highlighting significant events is available online at [www.southflorida.edu](http://www.southflorida.edu).

## **ACCREDITATION**

South Florida State College (SFSC) is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate and baccalaureate degrees. Contact the SACSCOC at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of SFSC.

## **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)**

SFSC seeks to ensure that programs, services, and facilities are accessible to, and usable by, persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities can help the college accommodate their individual needs by notifying college staff of specific equipment or resources needed. The college will make every effort to reasonably accommodate these specific needs.

All college handbooks can be made available to persons with disabilities in a variety of formats including audiotape. Requests for materials in a different format should include your name, address, and telephone or TDD number. Requests should be made at least two weeks prior to the time you need the publication by contacting the disabilities specialist or ADA coordinator.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

SFSC is a political subdivision of the State of Florida and is directly governed by an eight-member overseeing body, our District Board of Trustees. Members of the Board represent (and reside in) the counties which comprise SFSC's service district: DeSoto, Hardee, and Highlands counties. The governor of Florida appoints board members for terms of four years.

The college president reports directly to the Board and makes recommendations about items that will affect the future of the college, including staffing. All employees of SFSC report directly or indirectly to the president. Organizational staffing charts showing the

various levels of authority and responsibility are available in the College Catalog on the college's website or from the Human Resources Department.

The four classifications of employees at SFSC are Administrative, Faculty, Professional Staff, and Career Service. Administrative positions can typically be identified by the terms "director," "dean," vice president," and "president." Administrators are responsible for overseeing one or more departments and all associated personnel. Faculty positions can be identified by the terms "instructor," "professor," "program manager," "department chair," "counselor," and "librarian." Faculty responsibilities include, instruction, student assistance, oversight of curriculum, and development of programs. Professional Staff and Career Service employees are responsible for the daily operational efficiency of the college. Professional Staff positions require highly advanced training and/or managerial skills. Professional Staff are often referred to as "Other Professionals" in the Florida College System and may also include the title "director." Career Service position responsibilities include facilities maintenance and beautification, clerical assignments, student registration, and a wide-ranging variety of tasks. Career Service positions are classified in four levels (1-4) reflective of the level of complexity and responsibility of the tasks involved.

Review your position description carefully to be sure that you fulfill each of the duties and responsibilities assigned. Each employee must do his/her part if the college is to achieve maximum effectiveness in its pursuit of excellence.

## **GOVERNANCE AND POLICY FORMULATION**

The District Board of Trustees is the policy making body of the institution. The college president, as the chief executive officer, is charged with the overall duty and responsibility for the operation of the college. College employees are encouraged to give input to the president through councils and committees on varied issues. Employees may be assigned to a committee based on the position the employee holds in the college. You may also request to join a committee or task force based on your desire or interest.

The following are key internal organizations of the college that meet regularly to participate in the creation of the college mission, goals, objectives, procedures, curriculum development, and other institution-wide planning activities.

- **Leader Team**

The Leader Team meets regularly to maintain administrative awareness of college-wide events and initiatives, and for reviewing and recommending changes to the college's policies and procedures, strategic planning, budget, institutional effectiveness, and operational directives.

- **Faculty Council**

The Faculty Council reviews and discusses issues pertaining to the faculty and to the college. It may initiate, examine, and recommend objectives, policies, and procedures which encourage effective teaching and learning within a

framework of academic freedom, professional responsibility, and high ethical standards.

The President is authorized to establish college committees as may be necessary to encourage and facilitate participation of students, employees, and representatives of the college district in the governance of the college. Procedure 2180 provides a description and overview of the structure of committees and subcommittees of the college. The following types of college committees may be established:

- Institutional Standing Committees
- Student Issues Committees
- Employee Advisory Committees
- Community and Program Advisory Committees
- Special Purpose or Project Committees

A listing of all current college committees and the Committee Handbook can be found on Panther Central. The handbook describes the functions, purpose, and membership of each college committee. Employees have the responsibility and privilege of assisting in the development, promotion and governance of the college through committee participation. In most instances, time is allowed during normal duty hours for this service. If you are interested in serving on a committee, please make your supervisor aware of your interest or contact the Office of the Vice President for Educational and Student Services.

# **GETTING STARTED**

## **Identification Codes and Cards**

An employee identification number will be generated for you by the college's administrative software system (BANNER). We call it a G.I.D. This number will appear on your employee I.D. card and is the means by which you are identified for all personnel and student matters within the system.

All employees should make arrangements to obtain a college photo-identification card on their first day of employment or as soon thereafter as possible. I.D. cards are available in the Admissions/Registration Department on the Highlands Campus, and the main administrative offices at the DeSoto Campus, Hardee Campus, and Lake Placid Center.

During your first days of employment, your supervisor will work with you and the Information Technology (I.T.) Department to create a user profile that will allow you appropriate access to the college's online services, including web access, e-mail, network programs, and/or BANNER, according to the needs of your position. As soon as the I.T. Department receives acknowledgment that you have read and agree to abide by the college's Technology Usage Guidelines, they will issue a user I.D. and password for you. The system will automatically prompt you to change your password on a regular basis. Please do not share your user I.D. or password with anyone.

## **Work Assignments**

Your official title and the general duties and responsibilities of your position are outlined in a "position description." This position description was presented to you upon your employment with the college and a signed copy is stored in your personnel file. Your immediate supervisor will assign specific duties and work sequences. You are expected to do your best to carry out these assignments and to maintain a cooperative and helpful attitude in the interest of your co-workers and for the benefit of all the students and public who interact with the college. Employees have the opportunity to provide input in revising their position descriptions. Suggestions should be discussed with your supervisor who may recommend changes.

## **Your Department**

Your immediate supervisor will work very closely with you in the beginning to ensure that you understand each of your assigned tasks. The efficient operation of your department is dependent upon your smooth transition. Please do not hesitate to ask questions, seek advice, or offer suggestions. The relationships you establish with your co-workers and supervisor during the first few days of employment are critical to your success at the college.

## **Work Schedules**

During a seven day week, all college employees in full-time positions are required to work a minimum of 40 hours. The college has established the workweek as the period beginning Friday at midnight through the following Friday midnight. Although normal business hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, some employees may work different schedules to provide for the efficient operation of the college. Typically, employees receive a one-hour meal break for which they are not paid. Variations in schedule, other than those dictated by the specific position, must be approved in advance by your supervisor. All full-time instructional faculty members must be available for scheduled classes and student consultation during regularly posted office hours and are expected to participate in college, professional development, and community activities.

## **Paychecks**

### **Direct Deposit**

Direct deposit of your payroll check (into the bank of your choice) is required for all employees hired on or after July 1, 2007. Forms for initiating the direct deposit process are available in the Business Office, the Human Resources Department and in Panther Central.

### **Electronic Access to Pay and Tax Information**

Pay stubs and yearly W-2 information are accessible on Panther Central. In keeping with our commitment to reduce costs and provide online services, employees hired after January 1, 2015 will not receive a printed version of these documents from SFSC.

### **Time Sheets**

Payroll certifications (time sheets) must be submitted by all Career Service staff, part-time staff, and adjunct faculty teaching in clock hour programs before paychecks can be processed. If you are employed in one of these classifications, a monthly time sheet with complete instructions for submission will be issued to you. It is each employee's responsibility to accurately report his/her status for each assigned workday in a timely manner.

### **Pay Periods**

Employees in full-time positions are paid monthly, on the last workday of the month. The pay period is the first day of the month through the last day of the month. Since payroll submissions (time sheets, etc.) are due approximately one week before each payday, overtime compensation (if applicable) for hours worked late in the month may be delayed until the next month's paycheck. Absence without paid leave late in the month may require the processing of a revised paycheck for the same reason. Employees in full-time, 9, 10, and 11-month positions are paid in 12 monthly installments (to avoid one or two months with no pay).

The pay period for employees in part-time positions varies each month based upon payroll deadlines. These employees are paid for the actual hours worked within the pay period. Time sheets indicating the beginning and ending dates of each pay period are provided to employees in part-time positions by their department payroll liaison. Most part-time employees are paid on the last working day of the month.

## **Payroll Coordination and Information**

The payroll liaison for your department will coordinate the processing of all payroll-related documents, including leave and overtime forms. Questions about leave balances and payroll certifications should be directed to the payroll liaison. Specific questions about your salary or paycheck should be directed to the Human Resources Department. Your pay stub, leave balances, and W-2 information are accessible on Panther Central.

## **Parking**

You may park your vehicle in any non-restricted parking space that is available. On the Highlands Campus, your vehicle must display a valid parking decal to avoid being ticketed. The decal is available at no charge from the Cashier's Office in Building B. Parking areas are regularly patrolled, but you are strongly encouraged to lock all doors and remove or cover valuables, as the college cannot be responsible for personal losses. Reserved parking spaces are set aside for administrators, faculty, and designated professional positions. Ticketing may result from unauthorized parking in a reserved space.

## **Appropriate Appearance**

The college expects its employees to dress and groom themselves appropriately for the positions they hold. Those employees meeting the public on a regular basis should always have a neat and professional appearance.

## **Tobacco-Free College**

SFSC is a tobacco-free college. The use, distribution, or sale of tobacco or any object or device intended to simulate the use of tobacco is prohibited in all indoor and exterior areas of campus, center, and other property (including vehicles) under the control of the college. College employees, students, visitors, contractors, and all others are expected to comply with this policy and the Florida Indoor Clean Air Act at all times.

Employees and students share responsibility for compliance and enforcement of the Tobacco-Free College policy. If you are aware of an individual who is violating the policy, please remind them of the policy in a courteous and respectful manner. If you are aware of an individual who repeatedly violates the policy, please notify the dean of students or the human resources director as appropriate. Violation of the policy by vendors or guests should be reported to the vice president for administrative services.

The college's web site provides information on current cessation classes, educational materials, and other resources. Visit [www.southflorida.edu/tobaccofree/](http://www.southflorida.edu/tobaccofree/).

## **Human Resources Department**

Human Resources (H/R) staff members are committed to serving the college's employees by providing accurate and timely employment-related information. If you have questions related to employee benefits, leave, retirement, personnel policies and procedures, salary issues, or any other employment-related issue, please do not hesitate to call us at

extension 7132. If you would like to stop by to speak with an H/R staff member, our office is located in Building I on the Highlands Campus. A call before your visit would be appreciated.

# **RESOURCES**

## **Purchasing Supplies and Services**

All goods and services must be ordered on a “Purchase Requisition” form, a “Request for Funds” form, or an authorized Purchasing Card (P-Card). “Purchase Requisition” forms are available online in Panther Central under the “Finance” tab. Advance approval at various supervisory levels is required, depending upon the cost and type of item. Upon full approval of a requisition, a “Purchase Order” is issued to the vendor. The department will receive a copy of the “Purchase Order” via e-mail when it has been processed. When the merchandise is received in good order, a copy of the “Purchase Order” should be printed and signed by you or your supervisor and forwarded to Accounts Payable. It is important to note that items ordered/purchased without a “Purchase Order” are subject to be paid for by the individual who ordered the item. College funds can only be committed through the approved college purchasing system.

“Request for Funds” forms are also in Panther Central. Use this form when a check is needed to be prepared for submittal to a vendor such as: magazine subscriptions, conference fees, etc. Upon full approval of the request for funds, a check is issued to the vendor.

Authorized users of college P-Cards must follow established procedures for their use. Details of any authorized purchase must be submitted to the Business Office via the “SFSC P-Card Expense Authorization” form within three (3) business days of the purchase (or upon return to campus if the expense was incurred during college-related travel). This form is available in Panther Central.

Goods or services which cost \$5,000 or more must be competitively priced from three sources, with only a few exceptions. Goods and services costing \$50,000 or more require a formal bid process which takes several weeks and requires substantial interaction between the department needing the products and the Purchasing Department.

The Purchasing Department will assist you in determining availability and best value for your purchases. For more detail, review college Procedure 4040 for purchasing good and services. Catalogs and product information are available in the Purchasing Department.

## **Cost Centers, Indexes and Budget Management**

Cost center index numbers are established for every department of the college. They are the six-digit accounting codes to which all expenses are charged and budgets are apportioned. Different *types* of expenses are indicated by a five-digit “account code”; for example, office supplies are charged to account code 65501. A budget or purchase request should include both the index for the department and the account code representing the expense. All employees should become familiar with the indexes assigned to their departments and the college’s account codes for goods and services.

If you are a budget manager, you will review budget activity showing available budgeted funds and year-to-date expenditure reports for your cost center(s) within the college’s

administrative software system. You are responsible for controlling your cost center(s) within the established budget. As a budget manager, you will be asked to prepare an annual budget for your area(s) of responsibility during the budget development process which usually begins in January. The college operates on a fiscal year beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> and ending June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Purchase requisitions will be reviewed by the Purchasing Department against the budget for your cost center index(es) to ensure availability of funds. When budgeted funds are not adequate, a budget amendment must be prepared, approved, and forwarded to the controller before the purchase will be authorized.

## **College Property**

College property is anything purchased by the college regardless of cost. All college property is assigned to a "property custodian" who is responsible for ensuring its proper use and to adequately provide for protection against theft, loss, or damage. College property may be moved or removed only when it is to be used to perform college-related work at an approved location, or if repairs are to be made. The property specialist must be notified before inventoried property is moved to another location. The college is also governed by policies and state regulations regarding the disposal of inventoried property. Please consult with the property specialist before disposing of any college property.

Employees are responsible for safeguarding all college property and equipment from misuse or theft and may be charged the value or repair cost of any college property that are lost or willfully or negligently damaged. Be advised that the college insurance does not cover your personal property. Please protect your personal items.

## **Cash Collections**

The collection of college funds, cash, and personal checks is to be coordinated through the central Cashier's Office. Deposits must be made daily using sound, internal controls. The financial services coordinator will assist you in establishing appropriate procedures, if applicable.

Custody accounts are available for use by clubs and organizations affiliated with the college. Contact the Cashier's Office for assistance.

## **Learning Resources Center**

The Learning Resources Center on the Highlands Campus houses the Library, Tutoring and Learning Center (TLC), Student Support Services, and the e-Learning Department. Reference materials, including electronic reference, magazines, newspapers, and a large text collection, are available in the Library to meet your needs. (Your employee I.D. card also acts as a library card.) The TLC provides tutoring services to students and houses an open lab, math lab and writing lab. *Student Support Services* also provides tutoring, mentoring, and other support services to eligible students. The e-Learning Department will assist you with instructional technology and multi-media production.

## **Telecommunications**

If you need assistance with telephone operations, contact the Information Technology (I.T.) Department Help Desk.

Personal telephone calls, incoming or outgoing, are to be kept to an absolute minimum so as not to interfere with the efficient operation of the college. You are not authorized to charge personal long-distance telephone calls to the college under any circumstances. If you have a cell phone, please check with your supervisor about the protocol for your department. In most cases, it is preferred that cell phones be kept in silent mode during working hours.

Facsimile transmission (FAX) machines are available at several locations throughout the college for use when documents must be transmitted or received quickly. FAX machines should only be used for official college business.

A campus telephone directory is available in Panther Central under the Employee tab and electronically on most telephone sets.

## **Electronic Mail**

As public employees, college staff should always and only use work time for college-related issues in the public interest. E-mail falls under Florida Public Records laws and is, therefore, open to public scrutiny. No electronic mail received or sent using the college's system, facilities, or equipment is considered private communication. Before composing/sending e-mail, please ask yourself this question: "Would I be able to defend my actions to the public if this e-mail was published under the headline "Your Tax Dollars At Work" on the front page of the newspaper?" Recipe exchanges, birthday greetings, jokes, and other topics not related to work are considered inappropriate and a waste of resources. Please be careful in your use of e-mail.

## **Panther Central**

Panther Central is SFSC's online portal to self-service employee information and resources, college-wide announcements and events, official college forms and documents, course information, and faculty resources. Panther Central also provides networking tools for clubs, committees, and other campus organizations. To log in from any computer with internet access, go to [www.southflorida.edu](http://www.southflorida.edu), click on the Panther Central icon, and enter your employee I.D. and password. Contact the Help Desk for assistance if needed.

## **Internet**

Your use of the Internet during work time using the college's system, facilities, and equipment should be restricted to college-related matters in the public interest. College employees who have Internet access are expected to use it responsibly, efficiently, and legally in accordance with the vision, mission, and core values of SFSC. Employees should not intentionally access materials that are non-job related. Employees should not abuse the privileges associated with access to online services. Technology Usage

Guidelines and the I.T. Support Manual are located in Panther Central under the “Employee” tab and on our website. New employees must sign a Technology Usage Acknowledgment form before a user I.D. and password are issued.

## **Maintenance Requests**

Requests for maintenance and repairs should be made using the website [www.myschoolbuilding.com](http://www.myschoolbuilding.com). This process allows the Maintenance Department to schedule your request more efficiently. To obtain a user I.D. or for emergency requests, please contact the Maintenance Department directly. The website and instructions may be accessed through Panther Central on the “Employee” tab.

## **Keys**

Requests for building keys must be made by completing a Key Authorization form which is available in Panther Central under the “Forms” and “Employee” tabs. Approved requests are forwarded to the Maintenance Department for issuance of keys. You will be required to sign for building keys because you will be responsible for their safekeeping and eventual return. Never lend your keys. One lost key can cost hundreds of dollars to re-key the facilities and these costs may be passed on to you.

Other keys may be issued on an as-needed basis at the department level. All keys must be returned at the time of separation from the college as part of the clearance process.

## **Mail and Courier Services**

### **Highlands Campus**

The college mailroom is located in Building C-2 on the Highlands Campus. This is where all incoming and outgoing mail is processed, including pick up and deliveries by FedEx, UPS, and other similar services. Mailboxes are assigned by department categories and to individual faculty members. Inter-office college memoranda and other documents are also distributed via these mailboxes.

Outgoing mail is taken to the local post office each day at 3:30 p.m. To ensure timely delivery, you should deliver your outgoing mail to the mailroom no later than 3:00 p.m. You may use the mailroom for your outgoing personal mail; however, you must provide your own postage.

### **Other Campuses/Centers**

Mail is delivered daily to the various campuses and centers in SFSC’s service district by local mail carriers. Outgoing mail is handled by assigned staff at the campus/center in accordance with local mail schedules.

### **College Stationery**

Please note that outgoing college mail must be prepared on official college stationery. College stationery and envelopes are available through the Purchasing Department. Do not use college stationery/envelopes for personal correspondence. Plain envelopes and stamps are available for purchase in the bookstore.

### **Bulk Mail**

Bulk mail offers substantial cost savings to the college but must be prepared in accordance with strict postal standards. The courier will assist you with information and guidelines related to bulk mail, but preparation of the materials is the responsibility of the sending department.

### **Courier Services**

Items that need to go to and from the Highlands Campus, DeSoto Campus, Hardee Campus, Hotel Jacaranda, Lake Placid Center, and other instructional sites, are transported on a regular basis (at least twice per week). The Mailroom is the pick-up and delivery point on the Highlands Campus. Additionally, a courier from the School Board of Highlands County (SBHC) picks up and delivers mail for distribution between SFSC and the various SBHC sites on a daily basis. A box for the SBHC courier is located in the Highlands Campus mailroom.

### **Photocopying**

Copiers are available throughout the college, many with network and imaging capability as well as special finishing options. Use of copiers is restricted to college business and subject to copyright compliance procedures (refer to Procedure 1140).

### **Lost and Found**

Personal items found on the Highlands Campus are to be turned over to the Lost and Found area in the Cashier's Office (Bldg. B). Items not claimed within 90 days will be disposed of. The campus/center directors handle items lost or found at the other campuses/centers.

# **EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS AND INFORMATION**

## **Employment Contract**

Full-time positions established by the District Board of Trustees are subject to annual revalidation by the Board, including the positions of those employees under continuing contract. Reappointment and continuing employment in any full-time position is dependent upon need for the position, available funding, satisfactory job performance, and meeting all college requirements.

*Administrators* - 12-month annual contracts are issued to administrators in full-time positions for the period July 1 through June 30, subject to renewal annually. No explanation or show of cause is required to be given to an administrator whose employment is not continued beyond the contract ending date, although such administrators will typically be notified several months in advance.

*Faculty* - A 9-month, 10-month, 11-month, or 12-month (year-round) contract may be issued to faculty members in full-time positions depending upon the needs of the college. Faculty members employed on a 10-month or 11-month annual contract basis are generally contracted through the end of Summer B term with the understanding that contractual commitments will be fulfilled upon completion of the assigned duty days. For example, if a 10-month faculty member teaches all of Fall, Spring, and Summer A terms, the contract will be fulfilled on the last Summer A term duty day. The number of required duty days varies from year to year for 9, 10, and 11-month faculty members based on the college calendar. Faculty members in 12-month positions are employed from July 1 through June 30 each year.

An annual contract or a continuing contract may be issued to faculty members. Annual contracts provide no expectation of continued employment beyond the contract ending date (or the last assigned duty day, whichever occurs first). Annual contracts are issued to faculty members whose positions are dependent upon special or grant funding, whose position need has not been clearly established, and to those who have not yet achieved continuing contract status. Faculty members on annual contract are subject to reappointment annually. No explanation or show of cause is required to be given for non-renewal of an annual contract, although such faculty members will typically be notified by the end of March.

Continuing contracts are issued to faculty who have completed at least five years of satisfactory service as a full-time faculty member. Satisfactory service in other regionally accredited institutions of higher learning may be considered, but at least three years must be at South Florida State College. The entire period shall not exceed seven (7) years at South Florida State College. Additional eligibility requirements for continuing contract may be located in SFSC Policy 5.07, *Employment Agreements*. Faculty members on continuing contract can expect employment from year-to-year if they remain qualified, demonstrate competence, and exhibit professional behavior, as long as funding is available and there is significant need for the position assigned.

*Professional Staff* – Full-time, Professional Staff employees do not receive a formal written contract. After successfully completing the initial probationary period, Professional Staff employees can expect to be employed through the end of the current fiscal year (June 30), as long as the position assigned is needed, they remain qualified, demonstrate competence, receive satisfactory evaluations, and funding is available for the positions assigned. Full-time Professional Staff employees are subject to reappointment consideration each fiscal year. All positions in the Professional Staff classification meet Fair Labor Standards Act (F.L.S.A.) guidelines for being exempt from overtime pay.

*Career Service Employees* – Full-time, Career Service employees do not receive a formal written contract. After successfully completing the initial probationary period, Career Service employees can expect to be employed through the end of the current fiscal year (June 30), as long as the position assigned is needed, they remain qualified, demonstrate competence, receive satisfactory evaluations, and funding is available for the positions assigned. Full-time Career Service employees are subject to reappointment consideration each fiscal year. Career Service positions are eligible for overtime pay in accordance with F.L.S.A. (Refer to *Benefits and Compensation* section for more information on overtime.)

*Adjunct (part-time) Faculty* are hired on a term-by-term or “per class” basis with no expectation of continuing employment beyond the ending date of the term or class. Letters of Intent (L.O.I.) are issued to all adjunct faculty members, specifying the class(es) to be taught, class meeting dates and times, location, basis for pay (per credit, per clock hour, or per student), pay rate, total pay, and conditions of employment.

Part-time positions are typically established on a fixed term basis and employees are hired “at will” with no expectation of continuing employment. They may be dismissed at any time without explanation or show of cause.

## **Probationary Period**

To provide opportunity for a fair appraisal, of the employment agreement, employees hired in full-time positions will be on probationary status for the first 90 days. During this time, the employee and the college have an opportunity to determine if the position provides the right match between the employee's abilities and attitudes and the college's requirements. In spite of expectations on both sides, occasionally a new employee is disappointed with SFSC employment or his/her performance fails to meet college standards. The college or the employee may elect to rescind the employment agreement without showing cause during the 90-day probationary period or the employee may resign without breach of contract.

## **Performance Evaluations**

The college provides a regular program of job performance evaluation through which employees receive feedback on their work performance, habits, and conduct. Discussion between you and your supervisor regarding your performance and goals for the future is expected to take place on an ongoing basis to celebrate accomplishments, identify areas which may need improvement, and ensure that departmental initiatives are clearly

communicated. A more formal evaluation of your performance is conducted annually, generally between January and March, and will include a review of your position description. Faculty members are also evaluated by their students on a regular basis. The college's desire is to provide an opportunity for all employees to develop their skills and abilities to the fullest. Decisions for continued employment are based upon the evaluation process.

If your work performance is deemed unsatisfactory, you may be returned to a probationary status and/or your employment may be terminated. During the probationary period, your supervisor will work with the human resources director to outline a specific plan for improvement and will monitor your progress toward those goals. If you are not able to improve your rating during the probationary period, you may be denied a salary increase or possibly released from employment. Faculty members, until granted continuing contract are considered probationary employees and may be released (not renewed) at the end of the current contract at the discretion of the college with no reason required to be given.

### **Reclassification, Promotion, Demotion**

Position descriptions are reviewed annually and revised as needed. An employee's position may be reclassified to a higher or lower pay grade level because of changes in position responsibilities. Reclassifications do not necessarily provide for a salary adjustment.

The immediate supervisor is responsible for assessing the duties and responsibilities of each position he/she supervises and initiating a reclassification request if appropriate. If the area administrator concurs with a reclassification request, the human resources director is asked to review the suggested changes. The human resources director then makes a recommendation to the appropriate executive administrator (vice president or president). Approved changes are generally in conjunction with the budget planning process and implemented at the beginning of the new fiscal year.

A promotion may occur when the need exists for an employee's talents to be better used and/or recognized. A demotion may occur when an employee is unable or unwilling to fulfill the responsibilities of the position he or she holds and/or is no longer qualified to meet the requirements. If demotion is inappropriate, termination of employment will occur, subject to Board approval. Promotions and demotions are reviewed in the same manner as reclassifications and may result in reassignment or position restructuring.

### **Transfers**

If you wish to be considered for a transfer to another position within the college for which you are qualified, you must submit an application for the open position. You should also notify your supervisor of your intent to apply for the open position, so that he or she can be prepared for the possibility of replacing you. Your application will be considered in the same manner as all other candidates applying for the position. Under certain conditions, your supervisor may request your direct transfer into a new or vacant position within your department. You may also be transferred to a similar position, at the discretion of the

President, as a result of departmental restructuring or due to a need for your talents elsewhere.

## **Professional Development**

Professional development activities are available to all employees, and you are encouraged to participate. As the college continues to grow, opportunities are likely to develop for employees who have demonstrated their desire to develop skills and grow professionally. Faculty members are expected to maintain their professional expertise through ongoing professional development activities.

Faculty members may be considered for a change in rank and salary based upon completion of an advanced program of study. To be considered for advancement in rank, the proposed program of study must be approved in advance by the vice president for educational and student services. [Refer to Procedure 5061, *Advancement in Rank*, for details.] Salary increases resulting from advancement in rank are outlined in the current salary schedule.

## **Employment of Relatives**

The college will not employ a close relative of the president in a full-time position or allow an employee to work full-time in a division of the college in which a close relative is a supervisor.

## **Personnel Records**

All information pertinent to your employment will be kept on file in the Human Resources Department. Pursuant to Chapter 119 of the Florida Statutes, the personnel file of an employee of the state is a public record and open to public inspection. Certain items are exempt from public access, such as social security numbers. Employees may review their personnel files by making an appointment with the human resources director or designee. You will always be advised of and given an opportunity to respond to criticisms of your performance and disciplinary actions that are to be included in your personnel file.

## **Employee Information Change**

If a change occurs in your name, address, telephone number, marital status, or emergency contact information, it is important that you complete an "Employee Information Change" form as soon as possible. These forms are available in the Human Resources Department and in Panther Central under the "Forms" and "Employee" tabs. A new W-4 form must also be completed if a change in marital status or number of exemptions occurs. If a name change has occurred, you must submit your social security card (and drivers license, if applicable) reflecting the name change.

## **Resignation/Separation/Retirement**

Termination of employment by resignation, non-renewal, or retirement, constitutes a break in service with the college. Before you make the decision to resign or retire, you are encouraged to discuss all possible alternatives with your supervisor and the human resources director. If rehired by the college in the future, you will start again as a new employee in terms of salary and benefits.

You should submit a resignation form to your supervisor at least two weeks in advance for Career Service and thirty (30) days in advance for all other staff and faculty so that the college may make the necessary adjustments. Resignation forms are available by contacting Human Resources. Retirements should be announced at least one year in advance. When your retirement date has been determined, please schedule an appointment with the benefits coordinator as soon as possible to discuss terminal pay and other related issues.

The clearance process must be completed prior to the issuance of your final paycheck. This process involves returning all college property and materials, clearing all obligations with the college, and obtaining appropriate signatures on the "Separation/Clearance" form provided to you by the Human Resources Department. The completed form must be signed by you and returned to the Human Resources Department on or before your termination date. Any outstanding obligations, including the value of college property not returned, will be deducted from your final paycheck, unless prior arrangements have been made with the Business Office. Generally, your final paycheck will be issued at the next regularly scheduled payroll date following your termination date.

If you resign to accept a position with another public employer covered by the Florida Retirement System (FRS), your years of FRS service will likely continue. You may also be able to transfer your accumulated sick leave to your new public employer. Some limitations exist for FRS retirees who wish to return to work with a public employer. Be sure to check your status as benefits may be jeopardized by returning to work early.

## **Terminal Leave Pay Out Plan (401a, Bencor National Plan)**

An employee who terminates employment for any reason, including a scheduled separation such as DROP or the Irrevocable Letter of Resignation, and who is eligible for payment of accumulated sick and/or annual leave amounting to \$2,500 or more is automatically enrolled in the Bencor National Plan. This plan provides a tax shelter for terminal pay. For more information on the terminal leave payout plan, please contact the benefits coordinator.

## **Staff Reduction**

A review of all possible options for reducing expenses will take place before a reduction in force is implemented. Should it be necessary, the reduction will be conducted with as much sensitivity as possible including advance notification, review of transfer possibilities, assistance with placement, and consideration for re-employment.

# **RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS**

## **Compliance with Policies**

It is the responsibility of each college employee to know, understand, and comply with all policies approved by the District Board of Trustees, as well as the operating procedures approved by the president. These policies and procedures are designed to ensure the orderly and efficient operation of the college so that a safe and productive workplace and an environment conducive to student learning can be provided. By accepting employment at SFSC, you have agreed to conform to the policies and procedures of this employer, including any changes, deletions, or additions to these policies and procedures during the course of your employment. Copies of the policies and procedures are available on the college's website, the Human Resources Department, the offices of all administrative staff, and the Library. If you have a question concerning policies or procedures, please consult with your supervisor and/or the human resources director.

## **Equal Access/Equal Opportunity (EA/EO)**

The college pledges to provide equal access to education and employment opportunity to all regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, ethnicity, age, disability, marital status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or genetic information. The college is in voluntary compliance with all statutes, regulations, rules, and executive orders that deal with equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination. Concerns should be discussed with the EA/EO student coordinator (currently, the dean of student services) or EA/EO employee coordinator (currently, the human resources director). Formal complaints must be filed with the appropriate EA/EO coordinator.

## **Harassment**

Board policy prohibits any form of harassment. SFSC is committed to providing an educational and work environment free from harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, national origin, ethnicity, age, disability, marital status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or genetic information. The college will not tolerate harassment of its employees or students by employees, students, or vendors and will attempt to protect its students and employees from non-student or non-employee harassment when reported.

All employees are required to participate in harassment prevention training on a periodic basis as directed by the college.

## **Sexual Harassment/Civil Rights Discrimination Grievance Procedure**

An employee who feels he or she has been the victim of sexual harassment or any other type of civil rights discrimination/harassment should immediately discuss the situation with the designated EA/EO coordinator. If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, a formal complaint may be filed. An investigation will be conducted to determine the appropriate action to be taken by the college in accordance with SFSC policies and procedures.

## **Communicating Concerns**

The college and its employees share the responsibility to actively and conscientiously seek a means for resolving complaints and grievances. Employees have a right to express concern about matters that affect their working conditions at the college without fear of reprisal. In all instances, the appropriate channels of communication and authority should be used in reporting and settling an issue.

It is your responsibility to make an appointment with your immediate supervisor to discuss your concern within one week of the occurrence. If you have continuing concerns after speaking to your supervisor, you should refer to SFSC policies and procedures. The human resources director can assist you in determining the appropriate action.

## **Due Process**

As an employee, you have the right of due process which affords you the privilege to be heard in the event charges are brought against you and/or you are recommended for suspension or dismissal. In all instances, Board policy will prevail.

## **Alcohol and Drug-Free Campus and Workplace**

SFSC does not tolerate the use of illicit drugs or the abuse of alcohol and over-the-counter and prescription drugs on campus or at college functions. An employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action including evaluation or treatment for substance abuse and possible termination of employment. Employees may seek confidential assistance with overcoming alcohol and/or drug problems by contacting the SFSC counselors in Student Services or the director of human resources.

## **Life-Threatening Illness Policy**

The college is committed to ensuring that no applicant, employee, or student is discriminated against because of AIDS, HIV, or other life-threatening illness. The college will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the special needs of employees and students with life-threatening illnesses unless the accommodation produces an undue hardship for the college. Each case will be evaluated individually in accordance with the college's policies on the transmission of communicable diseases (if applicable), and current information available concerning the life-threatening illness. Employees will be treated in the same manner as any employee diagnosed as having any other illness, injury, or disability. Additionally, employees will be accorded confidentiality regarding disclosure of the condition. An employee who is diagnosed with a life-threatening illness should report his/her condition to the college by contacting the director of human resources who serves as the EA/EO employee coordinator. Student-related concerns should be directed to the EA/EO student coordinator located in Student Services.

## **Emergency Response Team**

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) is assembled by the president to implement the college's emergency plans. Team members assist the president in identifying potentially threatening events and stabilizing any situation as quickly as possible. When activated, the ERT continuously evaluates the situation and coordinates emergency response activities in cooperation with local, state, and federal agencies. For more information about the ERT, please refer to the college's safety manual or contact the safety and security director.

## **Safety and Security**

The college actively seeks to provide an environment for employees, students, and visitors that is free from recognizable hazards which might endanger health or well being. Safety, however, is everyone's responsibility and it is important to be safety conscious at all times. Employees should report any hazardous condition to a supervisor or the Maintenance Department as soon as possible.

General security practices expected of every college employee include the following:

1. Be alert to unusual circumstances and loiterers.
2. Safeguard keys provided you by the college and never lend them to others.
3. Lock doors, desks, and filing cabinets when unattended.
4. All classrooms and buildings must be locked when you leave; this discourages theft of college equipment.
5. Report unusual activities to Security.
6. Report all losses to Security.
7. Report any unusual odors such as smoke, gas, etc., to Security.
8. Maintain a safe and secure environment.

For Security assistance on the Highlands Campus, dial (863) **453-0806** to speak directly to Security personnel. If in need of assistance at a satellite campus/center, contact the campus/center director and, if the situation is life-threatening, contact the local authorities (911).

**When you are on campus during hours that the college is closed, you MUST ALERT Security of your presence.**

Emergencies requiring the services of public agencies (Emergency Medical Services, Fire Department, and Sheriff's Department) should always be reported through the college switchboard operator (zero "0" on your telephone). If the operator is not available, then "911" is to be dialed after obtaining an outside line. Evacuation routes are posted in each building on campus. It is your responsibility to become familiar with evacuation routes and procedures.

The college provides security officers on the Highlands Campus around the clock for the safeguarding of students, employees, visitors, and property. College security is also everyone's responsibility. Employees can help by observing the policies and procedures

with regard to securing college property and by reporting any suspicious acts, vandalism, or illegal activities. You may call **Security** at **453-0806** if you need assistance after hours.

## **Search and Seizure**

College officials may search the person or the personal property of any individual on campus upon reasonable suspicion that an illegal act (including alcohol or drug use) or a violation of college policies or procedures designed to protect the health, safety, and welfare of persons and property entitled to such protection is being or is about to be committed. Any property deemed injurious or detrimental to the health, safety, and welfare of persons or property may be seized.

## **Right to Know**

Employees have a right to know about the toxic substances or hazardous materials with which they work. For our employees' safety, Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are readily available in each work area. Your immediate supervisor will provide training in safe handling practices of toxic substances and emergency procedures for your area.

## **Public Trust**

Each employee of the college has an obligation to Florida taxpayers to never violate the public trust. Employees are custodians of public facilities, property, supplies, time, etc. and must never abuse public trust (or create a perception of abuse) by using college resources for personal gain. Employees are not permitted to accept gifts for services they are paid by the college to provide.

## **Release of Information to the Public**

All news releases for the press, radio, television, magazines and all marketing communications via e-mail are produced or edited by Community Relations and Marketing Office staff. All printed pieces are to be cleared for content and layout by the Community Relations and Marketing Office.

If a reporter contacts you, refer him/her to the director of community relations and marketing, your supervisor or the administrator overseeing your department, or to the Office of the President.

## **Confidentiality**

Employees should exercise extreme caution and the utmost discretion in discussing or releasing what is considered to be confidential information. The right to privacy of an employee or student is protected (to some extent) by federal and state laws, but in most instances, information maintained by the college is open for public inspection.

Employee evaluations and disciplinary actions conducted prior to July 1, 2012 may not be shared with persons not directly involved in the evaluation process, nor may information be shared concerning an employee's medical history, or other matters of an

extremely personal nature which are not available to the public. Faculty evaluations conducted after June 30, 2012 will continue to be exempt from public disclosure. Such information may be released only upon permission of the employee, the college president, or court order, subject to Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) guidelines. Unpublished telephone numbers and addresses may not be released except in bona fide emergency, and then only to the appropriate officials of the college or to law enforcement or court agencies. All other information on file is open for public inspection - applications, references, verification of employment, transcripts or placement papers, certifications and licenses, salaries, contracts, staff (non-faculty) evaluations and disciplinary actions conducted after June 30, 2012, and other records related to employment. To avoid concerns related to identity theft, the college will not provide employee social security numbers to any person or entity unless for lawful business purposes as disclosed to the employee.

The Human Resources Department is reluctant to release any information concerning an employee by telephone and prefers that requests be in writing.

For students, confidentiality is protected under the U.S. Department of Education Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Florida Statute 1002.22. This law is very specific about what information may or may not be released concerning a student and defines "directory information" which may be unconditionally released without prior consent of a student unless written notice is filed with the Registrar's Office asking that this not be done. One of the most frequent telephone calls received is a request for transcript copy. Transcripts are released only upon written consent of the student. All requests for student information should be referred to the Registrar's Office. You may refer to the Administrative Procedures for more information.

### **Materials Produced by Employees**

All materials and products developed by employees for the purpose of producing revenues (or such materials that have potential for producing revenues) on campus and/or during duty hours and/or with the use of college materials and equipment shall become the property of the college. Royalties, sales, fees and other income will be shared between the college and the employee upon written agreement. Materials developed for purposes other than producing revenues (or have no such potential) will be the property of the developer except when developed as part of the employee's job duties or assignments. (Refer to Procedure 1160, *Materials Produced by Employees*, for specific details.)

### **Academic Freedom and Responsibility**

Faculty members are free to pursue and convey knowledge in their areas of special training and expertise. Among employees and associates of the college, there must be no attempted intimidation by word or deed of those with differing views and methods. (Refer to Policy 3.01, *Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression*.)

## **College Meetings**

All college employees are strongly encouraged to attend general meetings called by the president. Typically, these meetings are held on the day faculty members return in the Fall term, but others may be called as needed. Pertinent information and the college's long and short-range plans are shared at these meetings to assure that all employees possess accurate and current information. The president, at his discretion, may require attendance.

## **Outside Employment and Activities**

Employees should be available to work when needed and capable of giving their full effort to their duties. As an employee of a public, tax supported entity, you should strive to avoid outside employment and activities which conflict with the mission of the college or which reduce your effectiveness in your position with the college. It is the professional obligation of each employee to keep his/her supervisor informed concerning major civic activities, outside employment, and courses being taken. Employees should refrain from engaging in any outside activities while on duty with the college, unless so assigned for the good of the college.

Employees who consider running for public office are required to notify the president in writing of their intention to run. They are further required to certify that they will conduct their campaign for office and subsequent performance of duties of that office during non-duty hours or request appropriate leave. College employees are prohibited from soliciting support for any political candidate during regular work hours or on college property. Time and space will be made available upon appropriate request.

## **Discipline**

The college normally follows a "progressive discipline" approach that tailors the action to the seriousness of the offense. For less serious offenses or violations of college policies, the following series of actions will be taken in most instances: 1) verbal reprimand, 2) written reprimand, 3) suspension, 4) dismissal/termination.

Some misconduct may warrant immediate disciplinary action up to, and including suspension or termination.

For additional information on the college's standards, disciplinary actions, or right to appeal, refer to SFSC policies and procedures.

# **BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION**

## **Salary Schedule**

As part of the annual budget preparation process, the current salary schedule is reviewed, revised as needed, and submitted to the District Board of Trustees for approval. Starting salary rates for full-time employees, salary ranges for each classification, hourly rates for new part-time employees, and supplemental salary rates are included in this document. Salaries are based upon the level of responsibility of each position, with provisions for the experience and/or educational level of employees hired to fill full-time positions. All college employees are paid in accordance with the provisions of the official salary schedule.

To ensure that the college is able to recruit and retain the highest quality workforce, a committee is appointed periodically to thoroughly review our salary schedule and compare it with those of other state colleges and area employers. Recommendations are presented to the college president for inclusion in the salary schedule for the upcoming year.

The current salary schedule is available in Panther Central under the “Employee” tab. Please contact the Human Resources Department with any questions or concerns.

## **Salary Adjustments**

Employees hired before February 1 and who are in good standing with the college are eligible for any across-the-board increase that may be approved by the District Board of Trustees for the following fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). Additionally, the college conducts in-depth salary studies periodically to ensure that entry level salaries remain competitive for recruiting qualified faculty and staff. As a result, salary adjustments may be awarded to existing employees to ensure that new employees with the same level of education and/or experience do not start at a higher rate.

## **Salary Supplements (Stipends)**

Salary supplements (stipends) may be provided to employees with special responsibilities in addition to current full-time assignments. These assignments are made annually and are subject to renewal. Salary supplements vary based on the level of responsibility and time needed to accomplish the tasks involved.

Some personnel with special responsibilities may be assigned reduced teaching loads and/or extended contracts. Stipends are occasionally offered to part-time employees, but only on a temporary basis.

## **Overtime Compensation**

Career Service employees are eligible for overtime compensation when the work hours exceed forty (40) within a workweek. An “Overtime Request” form must be submitted and approved in advance by the appropriate vice president or the president. Overtime

compensation is approved for hours worked over forty (40) at the rate of one and one-half times the regular hourly rate when added to the paycheck or at one and one-half times the overtime hours when time is to be taken off at a later date (compensatory time).

Faculty members, in full-time positions, who are scheduled to teach beyond their normal faculty loads, are entitled to overload pay. Overload pay is at the credit hour or contact hour rate as provided in the salary schedule.

Administrative and Professional Staff employees of the college are not eligible for any form of overtime compensation. Job responsibilities may require additional time beyond the scheduled forty (40) hour workweek on occasion. In some positions, additional time may be required on a regular basis. The salary assigned to administrative and professional positions is partially based upon this premise.

If qualified and selected to teach outside of the scheduled workday, full-time employees will be eligible for compensation at the overload rate in accordance with the current salary schedule. Qualified part-time employees will be eligible for compensation as an adjunct instructor in accordance with the current salary schedule.

### **Shift Differentials**

Employees working in full-time Career Service positions during afternoon and evening shifts are paid shift differentials. Those who are regularly scheduled to work more than half of their hours after 3:00 p.m. will be paid a second-shift differential of twenty-five (25) cents per hour. Those regularly working more than half of their scheduled hours after midnight will be paid a third-shift differential of thirty-five (35) cents per hour.

### **Call-In Pay**

Career Service employees who are called back to work after leaving a shift will be compensated for at least three hours, even if it takes less than three hours to complete the assignment. Call-in pay only applies when the employee returns to work to resolve an urgent need at the request of the supervisor. Time spent traveling to and from the work site is not compensable.

### **Sick Leave**

Employees in full-time positions earn one day (8 hours) of sick leave for each calendar month of service or major fraction of a calendar month of service. Sick leave may be accumulated from year to year. (*Refer to "Time Away From Work" section for information on using Sick Leave.*)

## Vacation (Annual) Leave

1. Full-time, 12-month employees (excluding administrative staff) will earn vacation leave at the following rate:
  - a. one day (8 hours) for each month of service during the first five years of employment (12 days per year);
  - b. one and one-fourth days (10 hours) for each month of service following the completion of five years of employment through ten years of employment (15 days per year);
  - c. one and one-half days (12 hours) for each month of service following the completion of ten years of employment (18 days per year).
  - d. Employees in this classification may carry over a balance of up to 44 days (352 hours) on December 31 of each year. The maximum pay out at termination of employment is 30 days (240 hours).
2. Full-time, 12-month administrators (excluding Senior Management staff) will earn vacation leave at the rate of 1.833 days for each month of service (22 days per year). Employees in this classification may carry over a balance of up to 44 days (352 hours) on December 31 of each year. Maximum pay out at termination of employment is 44 days (352 hours).
3. Full-time, 12-month employees filling Senior Management Service Class positions will earn vacation leave at the rate of 2.5 days for each month of service. Employees in this classification may carry over a balance of up to 60 days (480 hours) on December 31 of each year. Maximum pay out at termination of employment is 60 days (480 hours).
4. Vacation leave credits accumulated in excess of the maximum end-of-year balance as indicated above will be transferred to a special sick leave account called "carry-over sick leave." Carry-over sick leave is not used in the calculation of an employee's terminal sick leave pay. It may only be used for time away from work with pay in accordance with the college's Sick Leave procedures.
5. Only active service is considered when determining vacation leave earnings. Employees must work or be on paid leave for at least one-half of all workdays in the calendar month to earn vacation leave for that month.
6. Vacation time must be scheduled and approved in advance so that there will be minimal disruption to the operation of the college. (Refer to the "*Time Away From Work*" section for information on requesting Vacation Leave.)
7. Prior full-time service at a Florida public community or state college may be used when determining the monthly vacation leave rate.

## **Retirement**

All eligible full-time and part-time employees filling regularly established (non-temporary) positions are enrolled in one of the retirement programs listed below. Currently, employees are required to contribute a small percentage of their earnings toward this benefit.

1. The Florida Retirement System (FRS) Pension Plan is a defined benefit plan with lifetime retirement benefits based on length of service and final average compensation.
2. The FRS Investment Plan is a defined contribution plan with benefits based on return of investment.
3. Administrators, Faculty, and those Professional Staff employees who are classified as instructional supervisors have a third option for retirement enrollment by “opting out” of FRS and joining the State Community College Optional Retirement Program (CCORP). The CCORP is a defined contribution plan with benefits based on return of investment. Eligible employees may contribute additional funds to this program beyond their required contributions and those made on their behalf by the college. This is a “portable” plan with immediate vesting. Employees who select the CCORP are not eligible for DROP (see below) or the retiree health insurance subsidy available to FRS retirees.

New employees are automatically enrolled in the FRS Pension Plan until they select either the Investment Plan or, if eligible, the CCORP. There is a time limit (starting from the date of hire) to enroll in each of these programs. These deadlines will be provided to you by the benefits coordinator at your intake appointment.

Vesting in the FRS pension and investment plans varies based on years of service and employment dates.

All information contained in this handbook related to FRS is subject to current Florida statutes and FRS guidelines.

### **Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP)**

An employee enrolled in the FRS Pension Plan who has reached eligibility for normal retirement may elect to participate in the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP). The employee “retires” but continues to work at his/her regular salary and benefits for up to sixty (60) months while his/her retirement benefits are paid into an investment account. These funds become available to the employee following actual separation from the college, either as a lump sum distribution or for rollover to another investment plan.

### **Retirement Websites and Planning Resources**

You may obtain more detailed information, including eligibility requirements, by logging on to the Florida Retirement System websites – [www.dms.myflorida.com](http://www.dms.myflorida.com) or [www.MyFRS.com](http://www.MyFRS.com).

FRS also provides access to free retirement planning resources that can help you make sound investing decisions. The toll free MyFRS Financial Guidance Line is 1-866-446-9377, Option 2. You can speak with an unbiased financial planner who can answer your goal-setting and retirement planning questions. The MyFRS Financial Guidance Line is available Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 pm., ET.

## **Group Health Insurance**

The college provides its full-time employees with employer-paid health insurance coverage through *Florida Blue* (Blue Cross-Blue Shield of Florida). Coverage begins on the first day of the month following the date of hire. Employees may choose from several different options based on their individual needs. If employees have health coverage through another source (i.e. spouse's employer), they may choose a **secondary** plan (HDV) which provides hospital indemnity, dental, and vision. Eligible dependents may be added within 30 days of the date of hire (or qualifying event). However, premiums for dependent coverage are employee-paid through payroll deduction. Employees may elect to "tax-shelter" these deductions under the Cafeteria Plan (see details below).

During annual Fall "open enrollment," employees may elect to change their health insurance options and add/drop eligible dependents.

As an added benefit, *Florida Blue* provides a website that allows its members to view and print claims details, locate network providers, and access information about benefits and coverage. Secure access to the website, [www.bcbsfl.com](http://www.bcbsfl.com), is available after an initial log-in process. For assistance or additional information about SFSC's health insurance plans, please contact Human Resources.

## **Wellness**

The Wellness Program was established to encourage and promote the physical well-being of employees. Various wellness activities are scheduled throughout the year and employees may participate during their normal work schedules (with supervisory approval).

Each year, the college holds a health fair sponsored by *Florida Blue* and the Florida College System Risk Management Consortium. The goal of the health fair is to increase employee awareness of personal health issues and encourage healthy and productive lifestyles.

For more information, please contact Human Resources.

## **Flexible Spending Account (Cafeteria Plan)**

Employees may reduce the cost of insurance premium deductions (including dependent health coverage), out-of-pocket, un-reimbursable medical expenses and dependent care expenses by enrolling in the SFSC Flexible Spending Account. Sometimes referred to as a cafeteria plan, flex plan or a Section 125 plan, the Flexible Spending Account (FSA) lets you set aside a certain amount of your paycheck into an account to cover these

expenses – before paying income taxes. The plan is voluntary and includes a Premium Only Plan, an Unreimbursed Medical Expenses Account, and a Dependent Care Account. Employees may enroll in any or all three (3) of the plans within thirty (30) days of hire or during the open enrollment period each fall. You may obtain more information about the Cafeteria Plan by logging on to the Custom Benefits Service website- [www.ezflexplan.com/cbs](http://www.ezflexplan.com/cbs). Reimbursement for claims can be submitted online at [www.myflexonline.com](http://www.myflexonline.com).

## **Health Insurance for Retirees**

A full-time employee who “officially” retires and draws a retirement benefit from the Florida Retirement System (FRS) or the State Community College Optional Retirement Program (CCORP) is eligible to participate in SFSC’s group health insurance program by paying the monthly premium to the college. If the retiree is eligible for Medicare Part A and B, they may choose the Blue Medicare PPO plan. Retirees must elect to remain in the college’s group for insurance purposes within 30 days of termination date. FRS retirees receive a health insurance subsidy which is included with their monthly retirement checks.

## **Group Life Insurance**

The college provides full-time employees with basic group term life insurance in an amount equal to their annual salary. New employees, within 30 days of their hire, may purchase supplemental group term life insurance in an amount equal to their annual salary without evidence of insurability. Subsequently, employees may purchase supplemental life insurance at any time in increments equal to their annual salary, up to three times their annual salary; however, they will be required to provide evidence of insurability. Basic coverage may not exceed \$200,000; supplemental coverage may not exceed \$500,000.

## **Group Life Insurance for Retirees**

A full-time employee who “officially” retires and draws a retirement benefit from the Florida Retirement System (FRS) or the State College Optional Retirement Program (SCORP) is eligible to remain in the life insurance program provided they are enrolled in the program at date of retirement. Medical insurability is not required for the basic \$5,000 of term coverage. A retiree may apply for supplemental term life insurance coverage of up to \$20,000 which decreases with age. Medical insurability is required for the supplemental coverage. Retirees may also apply for a whole life policy that does not require medical insurability. Premiums are based on age and number of units selected. Accidental death and dismemberment coverage is excluded from retiree life benefits.

## **Other Insurance**

A variety of additional voluntary insurance plans are available through payroll deduction including **Dental, Vision, Cancer, Disability, and Life**.

Contact Human Resources Department staff for information on any of these plans.

## **COBRA Insurance Coverage**

Full-time employees and/or eligible dependents may continue group health insurance coverage following certain qualifying events including termination of full-time employment or loss of dependent status. A COBRA participant is required to pay the monthly premiums plus a 2 percent administrative fee and may continue coverage for a period of eighteen (18) months up to thirty-six (36) months, depending on the nature of the qualifying event.

## **Workers' Compensation**

All employees at SFSC are protected under the provisions of the Florida Workers' Compensation Act which provides for coverage of medical expenses and compensation for lost wages due to illness or injury arising out of their employment. Employees who have been injured on the job or contract a work-related illness must complete an Accident/Incident report as soon as possible and maintain communication with their supervisors and Human Resources staff until the incident is fully resolved. Contact the Human Resources Department with specific questions related to Workers' Compensation.

## **Social Security**

The college pays social security tax on wages earned by all employees except adjunct instructors and work-study students. Your equal match to this payment will be deducted from your gross earnings.

## **Medicare**

The college pays Medicare tax on wages earned by all employees except work-study students. Employees' match to this payment will be deducted from gross earnings.

## **Staff and Professional Development (SPD)**

Full-time employees who have successfully completed the 90-day probationary period are eligible to participate in SPD funded activities. SPD funding is available for activities such as educational grants, program initiation and development, seminars, conferences, workshops, and meetings. Approval for participation by new employees may be granted for special job-related activities. If requested by the employee's supervisor, part-time employees may also participate in funded activities if the activity is consistent with the college's mission.

Employees seeking degrees or additional certification must have an Education Program Plan approved in advance by the appropriate vice president. Multi-year educational programs may be proposed, but funding will be on a term-by-term basis and subject to availability of funds. Employees who use SPD funds to earn degrees or complete long-range development projects must agree to remain at the college for some time after program completion or to return funds paid by the college. Complete SPD guidelines and forms are available from the SPD Committee chairperson.

Many opportunities for continuing education, in-service training, professional updates, and program development are available through SPD. For more information about Staff and Professional Development, please refer to SPD policies and procedures which are available in Panther Central under the “Forms” tab or by contacting the SPD Committee chairperson. Applications for funding are reviewed monthly by the SPD Committee and must be submitted with all necessary supervisory approvals 24 hours before the scheduled meeting. Approval must be granted before the beginning of any activity.

## **Dependent Fee Waivers**

Matriculation, tuition, student activity, financial aid, and laboratory fees may be waived for eligible dependents of full-time employees who have successfully completed the 90 day probationary period. “Eligible dependent” is defined as the employee’s spouse living in the same household and each unmarried child, under age 23, receiving principal support from the employee. The Financial Aid Office will assist you in providing information on application and registration requirements.

## **Payroll Deductions**

In addition to processing your paycheck (refer to “*Getting Started*”), the Business Office ensures that deductions for Social Security and Medicare, federal withholding tax, applicable insurance premiums, etc. are appropriate and correct. There are many opportunities for voluntary payroll deductions, including: AFC membership dues, contributions to the SFSC Foundation, Inc., United Way, Panther Spirit Card (cafeteria, bookstore, and Hotel Jacaranda dining charges), tax-sheltered annuity and custodial accounts, and additional insurance premiums. The Human Resources Department will assist you in arranging for these deductions.

If you wish to make any changes in insurance coverage (through a qualifying event) or other payroll deductions for you or your dependents, the paperwork must be completed in the Human Resources Department on or before the 15th of the month for the changes to become effective the following month.

## **Tax-Sheltered Investments**

Eligible employees may participate in the benefits that a 403(b) and/or 457(b) provides through an array of investment products by way of a Salary Reduction Agreement. These products provide an opportunity for long-term investment while reducing your current federal income tax burden. Information on requirements and enrollment may be obtained our Plan Administrator, TSA Consulting Group, Inc., at [www.tsacg.com](http://www.tsacg.com).

## **President’s Awards**

The president, at his discretion, annually presents awards to the outstanding employee of the year in each employment classification: Faculty, Career, Part-time, Professional Staff, and Administrative. Additionally, a Panther Spirit award is presented to the employee who exhibited the highest level of enthusiasm and support for SFSC. The president also recognizes the outstanding volunteer of the year. The most coveted prize

is the president's award to the overall outstanding employee of the year. In addition to the public recognition, each recipient receives a cash award and a plaque.

## **TIME AWAY FROM WORK**

### **Leave of Absence Reporting Procedures**

When you need to be off for part or all of a scheduled workday, you must request the time off in advance from your immediate supervisor except in the case of sudden illness. In case of illness, you should make every effort to notify your supervisor before the beginning of your scheduled workday by calling him or her directly. If he or she cannot be reached, you must contact the individual designated by the supervisor for such purposes. If you are ill for several consecutive days, you must call your supervisor each day (unless you provide written evidence that you are under the extended care of your doctor.) An absence of three (3) consecutive days without proper notice to the college may be considered voluntary resignation and termination of employment.

Employees in full-time positions must submit a completed "Leave Request" form to their immediate supervisor for approval to request or report time off. "Leave Request" forms are available in the Panther Central under the "Forms" and "Employee" tabs. When your leave request has been approved, maintain a copy of the approved form for your records and submit the original and one copy to your Payroll Liaison. Failure to report leave will result in your being placed on unpaid leave and may subject you to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Leave must be used for the purpose or cause set forth on the request.

You are expected to be ready for work and at your assigned work location at the beginning of each workday. Excessive absenteeism is considered cause for termination or non-renewal of employment. Excessive tardiness may result in disciplinary action.

### **Vacation (Annual) Leave**

Full-time employees in 12-month (year-round) positions are eligible for vacation leave (also referred to as annual leave). Vacation leave must be scheduled and approved in advance. (Refer to "*Benefits and Compensation*" section for information on vacation days earned and terminal pay out).

### **Personal Leave**

Full-time employees may use a maximum of thirty-two (32) hours of accrued sick leave for personal reasons each fiscal year. Paid personal leave is deducted from the sick leave balance. A "Leave Request" form must be submitted and, except in cases of emergencies, advance approval should be obtained from the supervisor. Leave for personal reasons is not cumulative.

### **Sick Leave**

Sick leave may be used for personal sickness, accident, disability, or extended personal illness, or because of illness or death of the employee's father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, child or other close relative or member of the employee's own household.

The college may request a physician's statement when sick leave exceeds three (3) consecutive days. When sick leave exceeds ten (10) consecutive duty days, a doctor's certificate attesting to the employee's ability to return to work and perform assigned duties is to be submitted to the immediate supervisor at the time the employee returns to duty. The college may require physical and/or psychiatric examinations of any college employee in accordance with Florida statutes, State Board of Education regulations, and contracts for employment.

An employee on extended paid sick leave (with expectations of returning to employment) will continue to earn sick leave credits during the absence.

Upon retirement or resignation, employees with ten (10) years of service may receive credit for unused sick leave either in the form of a terminal payout or a transfer to another Florida agency, as applicable. Payment of accumulated sick leave is subject to current SFSC procedures and state regulations. Please contact the benefits coordinator in the Human Resources Department for retirement/resignation planning.

### **Transfer of Sick Leave**

Accumulated sick leave may transfer from another Florida community or state college, the Florida Department of Education, the State University System, a Florida District School Board, or a Florida state agency. Transferred hours shall be credited to the employee's accumulated sick leave balance at the same rate as hours earned.

### **Sick Leave Pool**

Full-time employees who have been employed for one year and meet contribution requirements may participate in the Sick Leave Pool. To meet the requirement, an employee must have accumulated a minimum of ninety-six (96) sick leave hours: 16 hours to donate to the sick leave pool and a balance of 80 hours for the employee's use. Eligible employees may join the Sick Leave Pool only during an open enrollment period. Any participant who meets the criteria may draw up to three hundred and twenty (320) hours of sick leave time from the pool after having exhausted all of their own annual, and sick leave.

An employee drawing from the Sick Leave Pool will not earn vacation or sick leave credits for any month in which they did not work at least one-half of all workdays in the month.

### **Unpaid Leave**

When annual, sick, and/or personal leave has been exhausted or not yet established, a "Leave Request" form must be completed and approved by a college administrator prior to the absence (unless for emergency illness) and marked "unpaid leave." The number of hours absent will be deducted from the next paycheck based on the employee's hourly rate. Except as provided under the Family Medical Leave Act, employees in unpaid leave status for more than half of the work days in a calendar month are responsible for payment of all group insurance premiums (for both the employee and the employee's dependents) in order to maintain continued coverage.

## **Court-Related Leave**

An employee called for jury duty or subpoenaed as a witness when not a principal in the litigation, shall receive court-related leave with pay, shall retain any fees earned, and shall not be paid by the college for meals, lodging, or travel. When a principal in personal litigation, an employee shall not receive court-related leave and must use vacation, personal, or unpaid leave. When involved in litigation on behalf of the college or due to action in the line of duty as an employee, college personnel shall be considered on duty and shall turn over to the college any fees received from the court. Requests for such leave must be submitted in writing on the "Leave Request" form and supporting documents must be attached.

## **Military Leave**

Employees called to active training with the reserve components of the U.S. Armed Forces or the National Guard will receive pay for up to 17 days per calendar year. When called to active duty, employees will be granted extended military leave in accordance with Florida statutes. Requests for military leave must be submitted in writing on the "Leave Request" form along with supporting documents.

## **Holidays**

Full-time employees in year-round positions are eligible for holiday pay, provided they work the scheduled day before and after the holiday or are on previously approved paid annual or sick leave. The following holidays are recognized:

New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Birthday, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and such other days as specified in the college calendar approved annually by the Board of Trustees.

Most areas of the college will be closed on official holidays. For those eligible employees who are assigned to work on a college holiday, the supervisor will arrange an alternate holiday date.

## **Extended Leave of Absence**

Extended leave without pay (in excess of 30 consecutive days) may be granted for up to 12 calendar months upon approval of the President. Such leave may be granted only when it can be accommodated without undue hardship on the operations of the college.

Employees returning from an approved extended leave of absence will return at the same pay and rank and will be assigned duties best meeting the needs of the institution at that particular time.

## **Absence Due to Bad Weather**

The college will remain open unless you are notified by local news media, by telephone call, or in person. The decision to close the college is based on documented widespread danger to everyone, as with a hurricane. In inclement weather, an employee should make every effort to report to work as quickly as possible. Employees, who cannot report to work on time, must either use leave time or arrange with their supervisor to make up the time.

## **Lunch Periods**

Hourly-paid employees (Career Service and special part-time classifications) are expected to take a lunch period away from their desks. Foregoing lunch or working through lunch periods on a daily basis is not acceptable and cannot be used to accumulate "comp time." If the supervisor has requested the employee to work through a lunch period for the benefit of the college, an adjustment in the work schedule may be made, by either leaving early or arriving late on another day during the same workweek. Actual work hours must be accurately recorded on the timesheet. Rare exceptions for workshops, courses, or special needs are at the supervisor's discretion.

## **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

The Family and Medical Leave Act requires the college to provide eligible employees with up to 12 workweeks per year of job-protected leave, with continued medical benefits, for the following reasons:

- To care for the employee's newborn baby;
- Because of the adoption or foster care placement of a child with the employee;
- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition;
- Because of the employee's own serious health condition;
- Because of a qualifying military emergency involving the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent, or when the employee is the next of kin of a covered service member.

If you have any questions or would like further information on FMLA leave, please contact the Human Resources Department.

## **Temporary Official Duty (TOD)**

If you travel outside of Highlands, Hardee, or Desoto counties on official college business, you must obtain advance approval by completing a "Leave Request" form and marking "Assignment for Temporary Duty." Supporting documentation related to the assignment must be attached to the leave form. When you travel on official business you are a representative of the college. Please conduct yourself accordingly.

Career Service and other hourly employees will be paid for their normal work hours or the actual hours related to the temporary assignment, whichever is greater. Employees will not be paid for travel time, nor will it count towards overtime, unless the employee is a

career or other hourly employee and driving to the temporary assignment. Travel time as a passenger is not considered worktime.

## **Travel Expenses and Use of College Vans**

College vans are available for employee use when traveling on official college business. To reserve a van, you must contact the Athletic Department to provide advance notice of the activity or event. To become an approved driver, you must submit a legible copy of your valid Florida driver's license to Human Resources at least two weeks before college van usage. Authorization to drive a college van is subject to review of the employee's driving record as provided by the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, and may be subject to approval by the employee's immediate supervisor. Contact the Human Resources Department for additional information on becoming an approved driver. For insurance purposes, the only persons authorized to ride in a college van are active employees, approved volunteers, and registered students. College vans may not be used for personal business. When driving a college van, seatbelts must be used and you are to drive in accordance with all applicable laws. (Refer to the college's *Safety Manual* for more information.)

You may provide your own transportation and be reimbursed at the approved mileage rate. To be reimbursed for travel costs (personal car mileage, meals, incidental, or "per diem") a travel voucher must be completed, approved, and forwarded to the Accounts Payable Department for processing. Attach all expense receipts and a copy of the event agenda as backup. To minimize transportation expenses, the college requests "carpooling" when two or more are attending the same event.

Registration fees and hotel charges should be approved in advance in accordance with the college's purchasing guidelines. State rates are available at hotels in most destinations. Upon request, the Purchasing Department will provide you with a listing.

# **CAMPUS SERVICES ACTIVITIES AND ASSOCIATIONS**

## **Athletic Activities**

Free admission to all home athletic events is provided. Join the spirit behind Panther sports!

## **Panther Spirit Card**

After the 90-day evaluation period, full-time and long-term part-time employees may apply for a Panther Spirit "charge card" which can be used at Kelly's Korner (the cafeteria located on the Highlands Campus), dining at the Hotel Jacaranda, and the Bookstore (except for books). Charges will be deducted from your monthly pay. Applications are available in the Human Resources Department.

## **Bookstore**

This self-service facility has a variety of books, office supplies, greeting cards, and SFSC logo items. Employees receive a ten percent (10%) discount on most items except books. Purchases may be charged on the Panther Spirit card.

## **Cultural Programs**

The college brings a broad spectrum of music, art, and drama presentations to the campus throughout the year. Contact the box office for performance information. Full-time employees are entitled to two (2) tickets at half-price for Artist and Matinee Series events.

## **Museum of Florida Art and Culture (MOFAC)**

SFSC MOFAC provides an exhibition venue for contemporary Florida regional artists and preserves Florida's history and heritage through its art. The museum also serves as a repository for the discoveries unearthed by members of the Kissimmee Valley Archaeological and Historical Conservancy.

MOFAC is located adjacent to the SFSC Theatre for the Performing Arts on the Highlands Campus. It is open to the public October through May, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 12:30-4:30 p.m., and by appointment for group tours. SFSC Artist and Matinee Series patrons may visit the museum one hour prior to every performance.

## **Flower Fund**

Periodically, full-time employees are encouraged to contribute to the flower fund. This fund is used to purchase stuffed animals when an employee or employee's spouse is hospitalized. Flowers are sent in case of death of an employee or employee's spouse, parent, or child. The executive assistant to the president is responsible for collection of

funds and ordering flowers. Remembrances on behalf of part-time employees are made on a departmental basis.

## **Food Services**

Kelly's Korner, the college's cafeteria, is open daily during class sessions with a varied menu and daily specials at reasonable prices. Kelly's is located in Building J on the Highlands Campus, along with other food and vending services. Purchases may be charged on the Panther Spirit card.

Vending machines are located on each campus.

## **Panther Tales**

The college employee newsletter, "Panther Tales," is produced by the Community Relations and Marketing Office. Employees are invited to submit items for the newsletter, including departmental news, academic papers presented, announcements of upcoming events, awards, achievements, etc. The newsletter was established to provide a line of communication within the SFSC "family." No advertising (paid or otherwise) is permitted in the newsletter. Panther Tales is accessible on the college website and in Panther Central on the "Employee" tab.

## **Bulletin Boards**

All advertisements and notices to be placed on college bulletin boards must be approved in advance by the Community Relations and Marketing Office.

## **Recreational Facilities**

Tennis, swimming, gymnasium facilities, and fitness equipment are available on the Highlands Campus. Contact the Athletic Department for details on using these facilities.

## **Association of Florida Colleges (AFC)**

AFC is a professional organization providing representation in Tallahassee on legislation which may impact state colleges and employee benefits. Membership in the association also provides discounts for many services, products, and area attractions. The campus chapter is very active, and membership fees may be paid by check or payroll deduction. Book scholarships are also available through AFC.

## **South Florida State College Foundation, Inc**

The SFSC Foundation, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation organized under Florida law in 1984. Its purposes are to enhance community awareness of the college, to encourage, solicit, and accept gifts, to receive bequests, and to account for, manage, and help appreciate monies or property donated to the Foundation. Such contributions are tax-deductible. In addition to scholarships and short-term loans, the Foundation also provides educational facilities and low-cost housing opportunities for SFSC students.

Contributions to the Foundation may be made by gifts of cash, real or personal property, securities, by provision of a will, by gifts of insurance policies, or by the establishment of trusts. Contributions may be made for specific purposes or given without restriction as to use. SFSC employees may make regular monthly contributions to the Foundation via payroll deduction. Forms are available through the Foundation Office.

## **Occupational Programs**

- A comprehensive **Cosmetology** program is located on the Highlands Campus. Employees are invited to take advantage of the excellent service provided at very reasonable prices. All types of hair, skin and nail care are available. Make an appointment to ensure availability of service. Employees are not permitted to substitute regularly scheduled work hours for appointments.
- The **Dental Education Center**, also located on the Highlands Campus, is open to the public and available to employees for dental hygiene services. An initial screening appointment (at no charge) is required. Further services are offered at very reasonable prices and are scheduled by our dental hygiene students.
- **The Hotel Jacaranda** in downtown Avon Park provides student housing as well as hands-on training for students enrolled in Hospitality Management programs. Rooms in the beautifully restored hotel are available at modest rates and one of the area's finest restaurants is open for your dining pleasure. Banquet services are a specialty but be sure to make arrangements early as key dates are often booked months in advance. Employees receive a 10 percent discount on meals and can use their Panther Spirit card.
- Repair and construction services from the **Auto Collision Repair and Refinishing, Air Conditioning, Automotive Service Technology, and Electronics Technology** departments are available on our Highlands Campus at very reasonable prices. However, due to the progressive nature of the training, some types of repairs may be unavailable at the time you are in need of service. Automotive programs are also located at the college's DeSoto Campus.

## **EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

This handbook provides a summary of information necessary for you to understand your responsibilities and obligations, as well as your rights and privileges, as an employee of SFSC. This handbook is intended for orientation and instructional purposes only. It does not constitute a contract of employment, nor does it guarantee employment for any length of time or under any particular conditions. Official college policies and procedures will prevail if a conflict of interpretation should arise.

SFSC reserves the right to amend, replace or abolish this handbook at any time, with or without prior notice. A current version of the Employee Handbook is posted on the college's website and in Panther Central under the "Employee" tab.