



# Graduate Student Handbook

**Academic Year 2019–20**

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## Notice to Students

The Minerva Schools at KGI (hereafter referred to as Minerva) reserves the right to make changes to policies, rules and regulations related to academic, financial, and other related matters affecting students at any time. These changes may involve such matters as tuition and all other fees, courses, degrees and programs offered, degree and other academic requirements, academic policies, rules pertaining to student conduct and discipline, fields or areas of concentration, and other rules and regulations applicable to students. Revisions will also be made in the most current version of the Student Handbook available on The Hub.

Please direct questions about the information in this Student Handbook to [studentaffairs@minerva.kgi.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@minerva.kgi.edu).

# Introduction

## Mission and Values

### Our Mission

#### *Nurturing critical wisdom for the sake of the world*

We will strengthen our collective future by ensuring that the most exceptional students in the world are able to fulfill their extraordinary potential. These students will become global leaders who will promote international cooperation and initiate meaningful cultural, political, business, and scientific innovations on the world stage. Minerva draws on the best traditions of top-tier residential universities, using advanced technology and leveraging decades of research on the most effective methods for deep and long-lasting learning.

Minerva will promote student success, continuing to provide support long after graduation. The greatest success for Minerva will be seeing and celebrating the accomplishments of our graduates.

### Our Guiding Principles

These principles work with one other, adding another dimension to our work and decision making, and when all working together the results are extraordinary.

- Being Unconventional
- Being Thoughtful
- Being Confident
- Being Human
- Being Selective
- Being Authentic
- Being Driven

### Community Values

- Respect: We foster mutual understanding.
- Empathy: We seek new perspectives and care for others.
- Curiosity: We explore courageously.
- Focus: We prioritize effectively and investigate deeply.
- Initiative: We take action.
- Resilience: We adapt and persevere.
- Collaboration: We champion mutual success.

## A Brief History of Minerva

Minerva's founder Ben Nelson first conceived of what eventually became Minerva in 1993 as a plan to reinvent an Ivy League university to better prepare graduates for the twenty-first century. Today's great American universities were founded on the notion of a liberal arts education, the idea that a university education meant that its graduates were well prepared to lead the important institutions in society by knowing how to think deeply, while being well versed in a variety of subjects, and possessing deep knowledge in an area of their own choosing. Minerva maintains that the best educational institutions have an important role in training future leaders and creating great citizens of the world. The faculty and staff at Minerva believe passionately that universities must embrace more of their original intent by offering a purposeful education for their students and adopting curricular and pedagogical structures and practices that actually help students to learn.

In 2012, Nelson partnered with Benchmark Capital to create a new university experience based on these venerable ideals in a modern, global context. Minerva (named after the Roman goddess of wisdom) was announced publicly in April 2012. In 2013, the Minerva Project formed an alliance with Keck Graduate Institute (KGI) to incubate the Minerva Schools. KGI is an ideal partner for Minerva because both have a general emphasis on scientific, translational approaches to education. Like the other KGI schools, the Minerva Schools are empirically oriented and rely on students' mastering sophisticated analytic tools. Also in keeping with the general KGI mission and approach, the Minerva Schools are highly interdisciplinary and global, emphasizing team building, collaboration, active learning, and deep student engagement.

Minerva Schools launched in fall 2014 with 29 students in its Founding Class. More than one hundred students enrolled in fall 2015 as the Inaugural Class. These two groups of talented and pioneering students joined together to become the graduating class in May 2019. In fall 2019, Minerva will enroll its sixth first-year class and reach an enrollment of more than 600 students, and will have more than sixty faculty members and dozens of staff members all over the world.

## A Brief History of KGI

The Claremont University Consortium was formally established in 1925 under the direction of James Blaisdell, then President of Pomona College. In its constitution included a commitment to "found and develop new colleges and educational institutions or programs" as needs were identified and resources were made available. Seventy-two years later, Henry E. Riggs, then President of Harvey Mudd College, identified the need that would lead to the founding of Keck Graduate Institute, the seventh and newest of the Claremont Colleges. The vision was a simple one: the world needs scientists and

engineers who can help translate basic scientific discoveries into practical applications that will improve the health of people.

KGI was founded in 1997 with a \$50 million grant from the W.M. Keck Foundation. KGI initially developed the nation's first two-year professional science master's degree, the Master of Business and Science (MBS) degree, which has become a model for more than 300 such programs that have been created since 2000 at colleges and universities across the country. This degree program is designed to educate scientifically oriented individuals for leadership roles in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, medical device, and diagnostics industries through an applied curriculum that integrates science, engineering, management, and bioethics. The curriculum emphasizes inquiry, project-based learning, and team building.

In its first 20 years, KGI has developed several other programs: a Postdoctoral Professional Master of Bioscience Management, a Master of Science in Applied Life Sciences, a Master of BioEngineering, an MBA in Biotechnology with Biocon in India, two Master's degrees in Genetics — Human Genetics and Genetics Counseling, and Human Genetics and Genomic Data Analytics — and a joint master's program with City of Hope in Translational Medicine. In addition, KGI offers two doctoral degrees: a PhD in Applied Life Sciences and a Doctor of Pharmacy. In 2013, the Minerva Schools at KGI were created through an affiliation between KGI and Minerva Project. MSKGI offers the Bachelor's degree with five undergraduate majors and two master's degrees. For more information on KGI's programs, see [www.kgi.edu](http://www.kgi.edu).

## Accreditation

The Minerva Schools at KGI are part of Keck Graduate Institute (KGI), which is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC or WSCUC), 985 Atlantic Avenue, #100, Alameda, CA 94501, (510) 748-9001.

Specifically, WSCUC has approved the relationship between KGI and Minerva Project, the offering of undergraduate degrees at KGI through the Minerva Schools with majors in Arts and Humanities, Business, Computational Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences, two graduate degrees, a Master of Applied Arts and Sciences (which is integrated with the Minerva undergraduate degrees in Arts and Sciences) and a Master of Decision Analysis.

## Academic Calendars

For the part-time Master's in Decision Analysis program, Minerva operates on a semester + summer term system, with three 15-week terms in one academic year. The following are the academic calendars for 2019-20:

<b>Fall 2019</b>	
Orientation	September 3
First Day of Fall Term	September 9
Fall Break	October 14 - 15
Friendsgiving Break	November 27 - 28
Last Day of Fall Classes	December 20
Winter Break	December 22 - January 9
<b>Spring 2019</b>	
First Day of Spring Term	January 13
Spring Break	February 17 - 18
Quinquatria Break	March 25 - 26
Last Day of Spring Classes	April 24
<b>Summer 2019</b>	
First Day of Summer Term	TBD
Break	TBD
Last Day of Summer Term Classes	TBD

## Financial Information

### Tuition and Fees, 2019-20

Students are responsible for all costs associated with attending Minerva. The graduate program is non-residential, so graduate students typically live wherever they were living

before admission. In any case, Minerva does not provide any residential option for graduate students.

### Estimated Annual Costs

The actual amount that you owe will take into account any applicable financial aid loan provisions or other agreed-upon considerations.

<b>Tuition</b>	\$ 39,000
<b>Course Materials (estimated)*</b>	\$ 500
<b>Total Estimated Costs</b>	\$ 39,500

*All amounts in U.S. dollars.*

\* Many learning materials will be provided free of charge. The cost of paid materials varies by year. Students purchase materials from other organizations, not KGI.

### Payment Dates

Tuition is due and payable in five payments of \$7,800 (due on 15-July-2019, 15-December-2019, 15-April-2020, 15-August-2020 and 15-December-2020). Terms of payment will be pursuant to a separate agreement that will be provided under separate cover. Tuition is refunded on a pro rata basis only through the ninth week of the semester. (See Withdrawal and Refund Schedule.)

Students are responsible for paying their bills by these dates. If someone else is paying the student's bill, the student must ensure that timely payments are made. In order for a student to register each term, tuition and fees must be paid in full. Any unpaid balance results in a hold placed on diplomas, transcripts and registration until the balance is paid in full.

### Payment Instructions

Minerva offers four payment options for invoices. These include:

1. Online transfer from a domestic (US) account
2. Online transfer from an international (non-US) account
3. Direct wire transfer
4. US check

Payment instructions are also sent with each invoice.

While online transfers are often completed within 24 hours, direct wire transfers and check delivery can take up to ten days. Please ensure you start your payment early to avoid late payment fees.

### **Payment by Online Transfer from a Domestic (US) Account**

Online payments from domestic accounts are processed by Tuition Management Systems (TMS.) To start a payment with TMS, enter your invoice through a direct link, or through Prepare if paying a term bill. Scroll to the 'Amount Due Today' box and select 'US Bank' from the 'Transfer Type' drop-down menu. Click 'Pay Now' to be directed to the TMS payment website. Follow the prompts to complete your payment.

You will be given the option to make your payment by 'eCheck' (bank transfer) or Credit Card. The fees associated with the credit card transfer reflect the type of card used and are not set by Minerva. All fees are retained by TMS.

Once your payment has been completed, the status of your term bill should change from 'Currently Due' to 'Paid,' and the payment should appear in the 'Payments/Credits' section of the invoice as pending. This pending status will be removed once TMS has received the funds from your bank account.

In some cases, TMS takes several days to withdraw the funds from your bank account. If you are concerned about your payment, please contact TMS.

### **Payment by Online Transfer from an International (Non-US) Account**

Online payments from non-US bank accounts are processed by Flywire. To start a payment with Flywire, enter your invoice through a direct link, or through Prepare if paying a term bill. Scroll to the 'Amount Due Today' box and select 'Non-US Bank' from the 'Transfer Type' drop-down menu. Click 'Pay Now' to be directed to the Flywire payment website. Follow the prompts to complete your payment. You will then be prompted to select the country of payment origin and sign into your Flywire account.

Funds can be transferred electronically to Flywire, or deposited into a Flywire account through a transaction made at your bank.

Once your payment has been completed, the status of your term bill should change from 'Currently Due' to 'Paid,' and the payment should appear in the 'Payments/Credits' section of the invoice as pending. This pending status will be removed once Flywire has received the funds from your bank account.

## Payment by Direct Wire

If you would like to send your payment to Mineva by direct wire, please contact [bursar@minerva.kgi.edu](mailto:bursar@minerva.kgi.edu) for full account details and instructions. Please remember that direct wire can take up to ten days to process.

## Payment by Check

Checks can be addressed to Minerva Schools at KGI, Office of the Bursar and mailed to 1145 Market Street, Ninth Floor, San Francisco CA USA 94103. Please ensure all checks have the student name or ID included so payment can be correctly applied to the invoice. If a payment is for multiple invoices, please specify which bills are being settled. (E.g. Spring Term Bill, 2020)

## Late Penalty Charges

If full payment is not received by the due date, a late payment penalty of 1.5% of the amount past due will be assessed. Expected financial aid (that is, aid that has been accepted but not disbursed) will reduce the total amount due prior to late fees being applied.

If the payment is more than 30 days past due, a financial hold will be placed on the student account. Such holds may result in any/all of the following: (1) bar the student from classes and examinations; (2) withhold diplomas, scholastic certificates or transcripts; (3) suspend all services and privileges; (4) suspend the student; (5) assign the student debt to a collection agency (students who have been assigned to an outside collection agency may be required to pay in advance for all future registrations and services); and (6) report the student to a credit bureau.

Unless special circumstances have been approved in writing by the Office of the Bursar, once a payment is more than 60 days past due or a balance owed for an upcoming term is not paid prior to the start of that term, one of the following actions will be taken:

- Incoming students will be withdrawn from Minerva and must reapply for admission in the following academic year.
- Continuing students will be blocked from course enrollment for the upcoming term.

## Installment Payment Plan

Students may arrange to pay tuition and fees on an installment plan. The total amount due is payable in three installments. A service fee of 4% of the total amount of tuition and fees charged to the student for the year is added to the first installment. Installment payments are due as follows:

- July 15, 2019 payment
  - July 15, September 1, October 15
- December 15, 2019 payment
  - December 15, January 30, March 15
- April 15, 2020 payment
  - April 15, May 15, June 15
- August 15, 2020 payment
  - August 15, September 30, November 15
- December 15, 2020 payment
  - December 15, January 30, March 15

To set up an installment plan, please contact [bursar@minerva.kgi.edu](mailto:bursar@minerva.kgi.edu).

### Withdrawal and Refund Schedule

If a student withdraws from Minerva Schools at KGI, tuition is refunded on the following schedule. Please note that Student Services fees, if any, are non-refundable. The date of withdrawal is defined as the date that Minerva receives a statement of withdrawal in writing from the student. Reductions of student loans are returned directly to the lenders of the funds.

Date of Withdrawal	Refund Percentage
Prior to the first day of class	Full refund
Up through 60% of calendar days in semester	Pro rata refund
Beyond 60% of calendar days in semester	No refund

### Leave of Absence Payments

If leave of absence is approved prior to the first day of classes, tuition will not be charged. Please see the *Withdrawal and Refund Schedule* above for further information regarding tuition refunds after this time.

### Financial Aid

Minerva follows a need-blind admissions policy. This means that students are admitted without regard to their need for financial aid, and that applying for financial aid does not affect admissions decisions. Through low-interest loans, Minerva offers support to any admitted student requesting such assistance. Based on previous years, we expect the maximum loan amount to be \$20,000, and the interest rate to be 6.5%. Unlike most top

universities, Minerva offers financial aid regardless of country of origin — everyone with demonstrated financial need is eligible. Scholarships and work/study opportunities are not available to graduate students.

The loan will be funded in two parts. Applicants will receive one loan covering up to 50% of the first three terms, and then submit a loan application again for the final two terms. As long as a student remains in good standing and makes payments on time, there should not be any barrier to the students receiving the second part of the loan.

### **Application Process**

*Step 1:* Complete the Minerva Financial Aid Questionnaire in the Financial Aid Center

*Step 2:* Upload documents to the Financial Aid Center

Scan and upload the following documents:

- Tax Returns
  - Your two most recent tax returns (if applicable)
- Bank Statements
  - A copy of your four most recent bank statements for all bank accounts in your name (checking, savings, investments, etc.).

The Financial Aid Office reserves the right to void any award if it is determined that the student provided incomplete, incorrect, false, or misleading information on the financial aid application.

For students applying as independents, please select 'No contact with/support from parents' when starting an application.

### **External Scholarships Awarded to Students**

If a student has funding from an external entity, the amount to be paid by the external entity is deducted from the student's loan amount.

## Student Services

### **Student ID Cards**

The Minerva Student ID card is your official Minerva Schools at KGI identification card. Students can obtain a Student ID card by request; please contact [studentaffairs@minerva.kgi.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@minerva.kgi.edu). The Minerva ID number is the cardholder's 20-character student number.

Should you lose or damage your card, a replacement card can be obtained for a \$15 USD fee, billed directly to your student account by the Bursar. Replacement ID cards may be requested through the Manager of Student Services.

If an ID card is stolen and a police report is filed with a police agency (police reports from other countries are accepted as long as they are in English), the fee will be waived. A copy of the report must be sent via email to the Manager of Student Services prior to the issuance of a replacement card.

## **Student Health**

Minerva does not provide or monitor health insurance coverage or mental health services for graduate students.

## **F-1 Student Visas**

Because Minerva's graduate programs are non-residential, Minerva does not sponsor F-1 student visas, or any other type of visa, for graduate students. In the event that graduate students wish to attend Minerva-related events, including but not limited to commencement ceremonies (i.e., graduation), students must obtain all necessary documentation (typically, a visitor B-2 visa).

## **Courseload Requirements and Exceptions**

Students must be enrolled in all courses required by the relevant phase of the program to maintain student status, but there are circumstances that would allow a student to drop below a standard course load. Those circumstances include but are not limited to: Academic Difficulties, Medical Condition, and Completion of Course of Study. A student who qualifies for one of these circumstances may be granted a Reduced Course Load (RCL). Permission must be granted by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies prior to any change to a student's course schedule.

Request a Reduced Course Load by completing [this request form](#).

Failure to comply with the guidelines or process for requesting a RCL may result in a loss of student status and termination from the Program.

## **Consequences of Continued Academic Probation**

Students must make continual satisfactory academic progress towards their degrees. Failure to make satisfactory academic progress as reflected in probationary status may result in the loss of student status. See the policies in this handbook on academic probation and dismissal for more information.

## Employment

Graduate students may, at their discretion, maintain part-time or full-time employment while enrolled at Minerva. Obligations related to employment do not constitute a valid reason for missing class, failing to adhere to school or course policies (including but not limited to on-time completion and submission of work), or falling below performance thresholds.

## Policy on Accommodations for Disabilities

This policy governing provision of services for students with disabilities has been adopted for students at Minerva from KGI policy.

### Provision of Services

Minerva policies in this regard are identical to those of KGI in general, and hence the following is summarized from the KGI Student Handbook: KGI has an institutional commitment to provide equal educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. To provide equality of access for students with disabilities, accommodations and auxiliary aids and services will be provided to the extent necessary to comply with state and federal laws. For each student, these accommodations and auxiliary aids and services will specifically address those functional limitations of the disability that adversely affect equal educational opportunity. Approved accommodations must not fundamentally alter the essential nature of a course or academic program. KGI and Minerva maintain specific criteria and procedures to implement this policy.

### Resources

Student Services is responsible for determining and coordinating appropriate accommodations and auxiliary aids and services for qualified students with disabilities. For additional information and forms, please see The Hub [here](#). Students who have questions or want to confer with the Disability Resources Specialist may email [disabilityservices@minerva.kgi.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@minerva.kgi.edu). It is advisable to consult with the Disability Resource Specialist before you apply for accommodations.

### Eligibility

Students are eligible for consideration for accommodations and/or auxiliary aids and services if they have a documented disability. Students are required to apply for accommodations and to provide required documentation through the enrollment process. Minerva's Disability Resource Specialist reviews documentation, communicates directly

with students, and determines those functional limitations of the disability that require reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids and/or other services.

### **Student Responsibility**

Each student bears the responsibility of initiating a disability-related request for accommodations, auxiliary aids and/or services with the Disability Resource Specialist prior to the time it is needed. If a student has a pre-existing conditions or known disabilities, the earlier a student consults with the Disability Resource Specialist, the better. Students will not receive any informal accommodations in academics or housing unless formal approved accommodations have been granted. If an accommodation is granted, the student must adhere to the policies and guidelines set forth within the approved accommodation.

### **Documentation**

Students requesting accommodations must provide professional documentation to support the request. The documentation must be in English, typed on official letterhead with the title and credentials of the professional writing the report, dated, and signed. If the original report is not in English, it is the student's responsibility to provide a translated copy from a qualified translator. Both the original and the transcribed copy must be submitted.

Documentation from an appropriately qualified professional should provide a diagnosis and describe the functional limitations and current impact of the disability in an academic environment. The Disability Consultant has discretion to determine what type of professional documentation is necessary, and this may vary depending on the nature and extent of the disability and the particular accommodation requested. Guidelines specific to categories of disability such as psychiatric/mental health, learning disability, deaf/hard of hearing, and chronic health conditions can be found [here](#). The request for an accommodation will be evaluated promptly once the documentation has been received.

### **Examples of Accommodations**

Accommodations include not only disability-related accommodations, but also disability-related services and/or auxiliary aids. The term refers to modifications to the course, program or educational requirements as are necessary and appropriate so that such requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating on the basis of disability. Academic requirements that are essential to a course or to the program of instruction being pursued by the student or that relate directly to licensing requirements are not regarded as discriminatory within the meaning of this section.

Potential modifications that may be considered are individualized, based on student needs, course requirements, and appropriate documentation; not all accommodations are

necessarily provided to each student in a particular disability category. The following is a generic list of the kinds of accommodations that institutions may grant. Other kinds of accommodations are also possible. Please note that several of these are not relevant in the Minerva context, e.g., Minerva does not generally not have timed examinations and does not have labs, does not prepare students for specific professional licenses.

- Extensions on assignments when a chronic illness has episodic flares
- Extended time on examinations
- Lab/library assistants
- Conversion of materials into alternate formats (e.g., e-text, large print, Braille)
- Assistive technology, software and/or hardware (e.g., screen readers, speech-to-text applications)
- Use of a scribe
- Sign language interpreting
- Computer-aided real-time transcription (CART)
- Captioned videos

### **Confidentiality**

Minerva treats all student disability information as confidential, and will not share it except as required or permitted by law or as necessary for institutional processes. These processes include facilitating reasonable accommodations, addressing health and safety issues, or investigating claims or charges.

### **Student Privacy Rights and Responsibilities**

In compliance with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), California Public Information Act, and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), students at Minerva Schools at KGI have the following four rights in regard to maintained education records:

1. Students have the right to inspect and review education records. Education records are defined as records in any format that directly identify the student and are maintained by the various offices of Minerva Schools at KGI. Some records may be administered by additional privacy laws and regulations that supersede FERPA, and, therefore, may not be available under this policy. Requests for the inspection and review of education records must be submitted directly to the custodian of the record, following policy and procedure of the office in whose custody the record is maintained.
2. Students have the right to seek to amend education records. In compliance with KGI's policy, individual offices have established procedures for challenging the content of education records. Students may also submit a written request for

review of a particular education record to the appropriate office. Under FERPA, grades are exempted from this provision. Students with concerns about individual grades should contact an Academic Dean.

3. Students have the right to have some control over the disclosure of information from education records. Students may request that Minerva restrict the release of directory information by submitting a written request to the Manager of Student Services (studentservices@minerva.kgi.edu). Such restrictions remain in effect until canceled in writing by the student. Students may declare themselves to be tax dependents of their parents and authorize Minerva to release non-directory information to parents. Such authorizations remain in effect until canceled in writing by the student. Parents/legal guardians are permitted to all non-directory information of their student without a release if the student is under the age of 18.
4. Students have the right to file a complaint with the Federal Policy Compliance Office, a division of the U.S. Department of Education, for any alleged violation of their rights under FERPA. Complaints must be submitted in writing to: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington DC 20202-5920.

In compliance with FERPA and GDPR, Minerva Schools at KGI has designated the following items of information as directory information: name and student username; local and permanent address; local, cellular, and permanent phone numbers; email address; date and place of citizenship; major field of study; dates of attendance; enrollment status; degrees and awards received; most recent previous institution attended; photographs; participation in officially recognized activities. Directory information is defined as information that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. Unless restricted by the written request of a student, Minerva may release directory information without the prior consent of a student. Directory information required for course or classroom participation in courses may not be withheld from faculty and students connected with the particular course.

As permitted by FERPA, Minerva allows access to student directory and non-directory information by education officials when a legitimate educational interest exists for specific education records. A legitimate educational interest exists when an education official demonstrates a need to know specific information to accomplish instructional, advisory, administrative, research, supervisory, or other administrative responsibilities assigned by Minerva. Education officials may include employees, faculty, staff, designated representatives of Minerva, and contracted agents and agencies of Minerva. Minerva may outsource some operations requiring the disclosure of information from education records. Providers of such services include the National Student Clearinghouse. Education officials, including contracted providers, who receive education records, must

comply with all FERPA regulations regarding re-disclosure and the privacy of such education records.

Under FERPA, and in compliance with other federal and local regulations, privacy rights in the postsecondary environment are reassigned from parents to students. Nevertheless, FERPA permits institutions to disclose information from education records to parents and to other third party entities in specific situations and under certain conditions. Among these situations are the following: to schools where the student seeks, intends, or has enrolled; in connection with financial aid; to certain government authorities, including U.S. military recruiters; to certain entities conducting studies or audits on behalf of Minerva, by federal, state, or local education authorities, or by professional and other educational organizations; in compliance with court orders and subpoenas where health and safety are at risk or in the event of student status changes; when violations to federal, state, or local regulations have occurred and violations to institutional policy have been determined in regard to crimes of violence or non-forcible sex acts and, for students under the age of 21, the use or possession of alcohol or other controlled substances; and per additional contingencies set forth in FERPA.

For further information from the United States Department of Education:

<http://www.ed.gov/>

You can find detailed FERPA information at

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpc/ferpa/index.html>

You can find information from the Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO) at

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpc/index.html>. For more information on whether the GDPR applies to you, please contact [studentaffairs@minerva.kgi.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@minerva.kgi.edu).

## Professional Development Agency

A description of resources and opportunities available through the Professional Development Agency will be provided this Fall 2019.

## Academic Policies and Procedures

### Curricular Structure

The Minerva curriculum is designed to help our students become leaders, innovators, broad thinkers, and global citizens. To achieve this goal, the academic team developed a unique curricular structure.

### **Semesters 1-3: Foundations**

During their first year at Minerva, students are taught the “habits of mind” and “foundational concepts” (HCs) that foster critical thinking, creative thinking, and effective interaction. All students take three eight-credit seminars: Advanced Formal Analyses (which focuses on thinking critically), Advanced Empirical Analyses (which focuses on thinking creatively), and Advanced Complex Systems (which focuses on interacting effectively). This material is also used and assessed during the subsequent three semesters of the program.

### **Semester 4: Depth**

Students take two additional seminars: Research Methods and Information-Based Decisions. These courses are designed to help students develop hands-on skill in empirical methods and quantitative / statistical reasoning.

### **Semester 5: Thesis**

During their final semester, students work closely with a primary advisor to conceive and complete an original work, on a topic to be determined in consultation with the advisor.

## **Academic Advising**

During the first three semesters, students are encouraged to consult the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, as well as their course-specific professors, for academic guidance. These meetings are typically held as needed; professors and the Dean make office hours available on the Active Learning Forum, and appointments may also be made by emailed request.

When students begin work on their thesis projects, they will choose a Minerva professor as Thesis advisor, by mutual consent with the faculty member. A list of potential advisors and a summary of their expertise will be made available to students in the third semester for this purpose. In addition to the Thesis advisor, students must also identify and enlist an outside reader (who serves as a secondary advisor) for their Thesis project. These readers should be experts in the relevant field, and not members of the Minerva faculty. All readers must be approved by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies.

## **Majors, Minors, and Concentrations**

The Master of Science in Decision Analysis program does not have majors, minors, or concentrations. All students take the same courses, although the nature of the Thesis project introduces considerable variability to each student's experience.

## The Master's Thesis

The Master's Thesis is a four-month-long project that requires students to create a work of professional quality and constituting a novel contribution to their field. The Thesis should effectively leverage the concepts and skills taught in the program and in a way that is legitimately warranted by the selected topic.

In the event that a student or the Thesis advisor determines that the Thesis is not sufficiently complete to successfully defend in the final oral examination, the student may apply for an extension to continue working on the thesis for up to one calendar year from the end of that academic year. If the extension is granted, there will be an additional fee of \$2000, due immediately at the beginning of the extension period. Each student may be granted a maximum of one 12-month extension.

Further details regarding the Master's Thesis are available in the [MDA Thesis Guide](#).

## The Academic Standards Committee

The Academic Standards Committee (ASC) adjudicates academic honor code violations, considers applications for reinstatement when a student has been dismissed for academic reasons or academically withdrawn, and considers petitions for exceptions to the academic policies, procedures, and deadlines defined in this handbook. The committee consists of three members: an academic director, a college dean, and a member of the faculty. A student's thesis advisor (if one has been appointed) serves as a liaison to the committee upon request of the student or when deemed necessary by the ASC.

The ASC operates under the assumption that the academic rules and regulations should be followed in almost all circumstances. Petitions for relief must be clearly articulated and well supported with appropriate documentation. When considering exceptions, the Committee attempts to apply consistent standards while still responding to individual circumstances.

## Course Credit

A standard course of four units (referred to simply as "a course") generally consists of 26 90-minute seminar sessions. Additionally, Minerva expects that each student will complete a minimum of 4-5 hours of pre-class work for each of these sessions. That time is intended to allow students to complete assigned readings, assignments, and conduct whatever auxiliary independent study is needed to maximize learning.

There may be instances in which a course requires fewer synchronous class meetings than the average, but proportionally more out-of-class work. Such cases include courses

involving unusually extensive, mandatory independent work (programming, reading, research, laboratory or field work, and writing). The official KGI credit hour policy is available [here](#).

## Leave of Absence Policy

Students may need to interrupt their formal course of study at the Minerva Schools at KGI for a period of time. To do so, the student must petition the Academic Standards Committee (ASC) for a leave of absence. When it is relevant to the reasons for the leave of absence, the petition should include verifiable documentation to support the request.

The ASC will determine whether or not to grant the leave and the conditions under which the student may return to school, taking into account the following:

- The student must be currently enrolled in academic courses and in good standing, unless there are serious extenuating circumstances.
- After the eleventh week of the semester, a student may apply for a leave of absence for the current semester only for medical reasons or due to military deployment.

The standard maximum leave of absence is two academic semesters. It is the student's responsibility to keep Minerva informed of any [change of address](#) or circumstances while on a leave of absence.

A student returning from an approved leave of absence must submit a petition for reinstatement to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, including a written statement that addresses the student's readiness to return and resume coursework, with documentation when appropriate. The reinstatement petition should be submitted no later than June 15th for returning the next fall term and October 15th for returning the next spring term, unless otherwise stated in an official communication to the student.

When a student returns from a leave of absence, the student will re-enter the program at the point following the last full academic term completed and will be subject to the curriculum, policies, and procedures in place at that time.

Financial information relating to students granted a leave of absence is available in the Financial Information section of this handbook.

Students who do not return at the end of their leave will be withdrawn and must submit a petition to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies for readmission to the program, unless an extension is filed prior to the deadline.

The Leave of Absence Petition Form and the Academic Reinstatement Petition Form are available on the registrar site, [registrar.minerva.kgi.edu](http://registrar.minerva.kgi.edu).

## Registration Policies and Procedures

By default, all students are enrolled in the required courses. Class schedules are released a few weeks prior to the beginning of each academic term.

### Switching Between Course Sections

During the course adjustment period, students may switch between sections of a course at any time if there is room in the desired section.

After the course adjustment period, students may not switch to a section of a course with a different instructor, unless they have a documented reason for the accommodation and there is room in the desired section. Please contact [registrar@minerva.kgi.edu](mailto:registrar@minerva.kgi.edu) to learn more about the application procedure.

After the course adjustment period, students may switch between two sections within a course taught by the same instructor with their instructor's approval, if there is room in the desired section. To request a section switch, students must email [registrar@minerva.kgi.edu](mailto:registrar@minerva.kgi.edu). The course instructor should be cc'd on the email to verify approval.

## Class Attendance

Class attendance is a fundamental part of the Minerva model. It is where students learn and are assessed. Because our approach to active learning is the foundation of our entire model, class attendance is required. Students are required to prepare appropriately for each class session and actively participate in them. Students should read all assigned materials, watch assigned videos, and complete all assigned pre-class work, including solving pre-assigned problems and answering study guide questions. Because all of our classes are seminars, all students must be prepared to be fully engaged participants—to shirk on preparation not only short-changes the individual student, it also undermines the experience for the other students. Instructors have the right to mark students absent if they are not prepared to participate in class.

All of Minerva's courses are taught on the Active Learning Forum, and students are required to be logged on to the ALF and ready to participate in class by the class's stated start time. Details on policies with respect to tardiness and technology and network issues are in each course syllabus.

Students are also required to adhere to assignment guidelines and deadlines, and to contact the appropriate faculty promptly should they need to request an extension. Additional information and consequences for failing to meet requirements are described in each course syllabus. Specific maximum number of absences and assignment extensions for each course are shown in the course syllabus. The syllabus also indicates any assignment for which it is not permissible to get assignment extensions (such as final projects and other assignments due in weeks 14-15). If students do not submit required assignments by the end of the semester, they may be assigned a failing “F” grade. Students are subject to being administratively dropped from a course for violation of attendance or extension requirements, with a “AW” grade notation. If it appears that health or other issues may cause a student to exceed the maximum permitted absences, a voluntary course withdrawal from one or more courses/a lighter course load or a leave of absence is recommended.

Students are responsible for their attendance and therefore for tracking their absences. They should monitor their absences on their ALF dashboard and, if they think their absences are incorrect, they should contact their instructor and [helpdesk@minerva.kgi.edu](mailto:helpdesk@minerva.kgi.edu). If instructors have not excused the absence within one week after submission of makeup work, email [AcademicAffairs@minerva.kgi.edu](mailto:AcademicAffairs@minerva.kgi.edu).

A certain number of absences with appropriate documentation are permitted for each class to cover unexpected circumstances. However, excessive absences overall (whether documented or undocumented) may result in being dropped from a course or a W grade in the course and/or recommendation for the student to consider a Leave of Absence. The maximum number of undocumented absences and total absences can be found on each course syllabus.

## Assessment of Student Work and Grading Policies

Faculty members are responsible for assessing the performance during class and on assignments of each enrolled student on the course learning outcomes using customized rubrics based on the following template:

- 1 (Lacks knowledge): Does not recall or use the skill or concept when prompted, or does so mostly or entirely inaccurately.
- 2 (Superficial knowledge): Recalls or uses the skill or concept only somewhat accurately, by partially quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, outlining, or applying it, or applies the skill or concept in ways that fail to address the relevant problems or goals.
- 3 (Knowledge): Accurately recalls, uses, paraphrases, summarizes, outlines or reproduces standard or straightforward examples of the skill or concept, and does so in a way that addresses the relevant problems or goals.

- 4 (Deep knowledge): Demonstrates a deeper grasp of the skill or concept by explaining it, using it to produce a sophisticated, non-standard example, differentiating component parts, applying critical distinctions, or analyzing relationships between component parts.
- 5 (Profound knowledge): Uses the skill or concept in a creative and effective way, relying on a novel perspective (i.e., not one that was in course materials or is easily located in the relevant literature).

Course grades are based on the student's completion of course requirements and an aggregation of learning outcome scores from class session and on assignments. Please refer to the course syllabi for grading details.

### Letter Grades and Grade Point Equivalents

Grades at Minerva reflect how well a student has mastered the course learning outcomes. The following table defines the performance level and GPA points associated with each grade:

Grade	Grade Point Equivalent
A+	4.0
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C -	1.7
D	1.0
F	0.0
Pass	NA
No Pass	NA

A student must earn a letter grade of at least B- to be granted course credit or to use a course as a prerequisite. If all required assignments/projects are not submitted, the course is subject to an “F” grade.

### **Grade Point Average Calculation**

Grade point averages (GPAs) are determined by multiplying the number of grade points for each course letter grade by the number of course units, taking the sum of the resulting product, and dividing by the total number of course units attempted by the student. Minerva calculates GPAs for each semester, and a cumulative GPA. Semester GPAs include all courses taken that semester. The cumulative grade point average listed on a student’s transcript includes all courses taken at Minerva except for the Thesis, which is graded as Pass/No Pass. The grade for the Thesis is not included in GPA calculations.

If a student repeats a failed course (final grade of C+ or lower) and earns a passing grade, the second passing grade replaces the initial failing grade in the GPA calculation.

### **Incomplete Grades**

If a student becomes seriously ill or experiences an emergency that disrupts the student’s ability to complete one or more courses, the student may petition the Academic Standards Committee for an incomplete grade.

Along with a petition, students are required to submit documentation verifying the circumstances that prevent them from completing coursework, a list of the missing work, and a revised schedule for submitting the listed work. ASC approval is dependent on the consent of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. The petition and supporting documentation must be submitted before the last day of the term. The Incomplete Petition Form is available on the registrar site, [registrar.minerva.kgi.edu](http://registrar.minerva.kgi.edu).

If the request is granted, the student is required to submit all outstanding work by the deadline determined in the revised course schedule; typically the date is set prior to the tenth day of instruction in the following academic term.

### **Other Grades and Transcript Notations**

Minerva Schools use the following transcript notations:

- I = Incomplete
- W = Voluntary drop from a course after the course drop deadline has passed
- IP = In Process, denotes a course that is still being taken or is in the process of being graded
- AW = Administratively dropped

- NR = Not Recorded, indicates that a grade is missing because the instructor has not submitted it yet, or it is being held for administrative reasons

## Graduation Requirements

In order to graduate, students must pass all required courses, including the Thesis, and have at least a 3.00 grade point average.

## Honors

Master's degrees are awarded Latin honors based on GPA, as follows:

GPA	Honors
3.75	<i>summa cum laude</i>
3.66	<i>magna cum laude</i>
3.50	<i>cum laude</i>

## Academic Records

A student's academic record includes assessment of all Minerva Schools coursework for which credit can be granted and in which the student enrolled, unless the student withdraws from the class before the drop deadline. Students may view and download unofficial transcripts on the Registrar website, [registrar.minerva.kgi.edu](http://registrar.minerva.kgi.edu).

Students may choose to release their academic records to a third party by submitting an FERPA Education Records Release Authorization Form, and may subsequently revoke access by submitting the Revoke FERPA Education Records Release Authorization Form. Both forms are available on the registrar site, [registrar.minerva.kgi.edu](http://registrar.minerva.kgi.edu).

Official transcript requests must be made directly through the National Student Clearinghouse. There is an administrative fee of \$4.25 per transcript, paid to the National Student Clearinghouse.

## Disputed Grades Policy

If a student believes there is compelling evidence that the student's final course grade was assigned or posted in error, the student should make an appointment with the instructor to discuss the issue. If the instructor decides that the grade should stand as initially assigned, and the student still believes the grade was not assigned or posted properly, the student may petition the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. The petition

should include a detailed explanation as to why the grade should be changed, along with any pertinent documentation. It may not be used to petition for relief from penalties imposed on the student by the ASC due to Honor Code violations. Disputed grade petitions must be submitted no later than the third week of the following semester. Disputed Grade Petition Forms for each college are available on the registrar site, [registrar.minerva.kgi.edu](http://registrar.minerva.kgi.edu).

The Associate Dean may discuss the issue with the student or faculty member, and will decide whether the grade should be changed. This decision is final.

## Early Warning Notifications

Early warning notifications are sent on a course-by-course basis to students identified as being in danger of not passing. These notices are intended to help the students identify areas where additional effort is needed. Early warning notifications are typically sent at the beginning of Week 7 each semester.

Students receiving an early warning notice for a course are required to meet with their professor and, potentially, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, to develop a plan with specific, defined benchmarks for improving the student's course performance.

## Academic Standing

At the end of each semester, the Office of the Chief Academic Officer reviews student academic records to determine each student's academic standing. Academic standing classifications and potential consequences are described below.

### Good Standing

A student is considered to be in good standing if the student:

- is earning a predicted grade of B- or above in all required courses
- earns at least a 3.00 GPA each semester
- meets minimum progress standards on the Thesis project, within the specified time frame.

### Academic Probation

Academic probation is imposed when:

- in any semester, the student earns a C+ or lower in one or more courses;
- a student is administratively withdrawn from one or more courses during a semester;
- a student falls below full-time status due to administrative withdrawal;

- a student is guilty of a honor code violation and probation is a sanction (see below);
- a student earns a semester GPA or a cumulative GPA below 3.00; or
- a student fails to meet minimum progress standards on the student's Thesis project, within the specified time frame.

Students placed on academic probation are required to meet with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies to devise a detailed set of expectations and a plan for substantial improvement of the student's academic performance over the next semester.

### **Academic Dismissal**

Dismissal is issued when:

- a student is administratively withdrawn from or earns a No Pass in two or more courses;
- a student who is required to retake a course does not pass the course after the second attempt;
- a student is on academic probation for three or more reasons in a given semester (e.g., falls below passing in two courses and has a semester GPA below 3.00);
- a student put on probation does not return to good standing within one semester

Students who have been academically dismissed and would like to return to Minerva will be required to apply to the ASC for reinstatement. This application will only be considered when there is strong and compelling evidence of a change in the student's readiness to perform academic work at the required level, including a well-considered academic plan and demonstration of a robust support system. The Academic Reinstatement Petition Form is available on the registrar site, [registrar.minerva.kgi.edu](http://registrar.minerva.kgi.edu). Typically, the reinstatement request should be submitted no later than February 15 for returning the next fall term and October 15 for returning the next spring term, unless otherwise stated in an official communication to the student.

### **Academic Freedom**

Minerva has adopted the Academic Freedom Statement of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP, 1940), which reads as follows:

1. Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.
2. Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter that

has no relation to their subject. Limitations of academic freedom because of religious or other aims of the institution should be clearly stated in writing at the time of the appointment.

3. College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.

## Academic Honor Code

The Minerva Honor Code rests on four pillars: honesty, integrity, mutual respect, and personal responsibility. Minerva students are expected to conduct themselves with the highest levels of these qualities both inside and outside the classroom. Each student serves as an ambassador to the community for Minerva. When one student exhibits inappropriate behavior outside the university, it reflects badly on every student and the institution as a whole (the public tends not to differentiate between individuals in these situations, and attributes bad behavior to the entire student body).

Minerva students are citizens of an academic community whose members are expected to challenge themselves and one another to achieve greatness with honesty, integrity, mutual respect, and personal responsibility. Each individual who joins the Minerva community accepts this commitment in an effort to sustain and enhance personal, professional and institutional reputations.

Principles inherent in this Honor Code include:

- Students shall treat all members of the community with respect and without malicious intent to ensure that all students share equal opportunities.
- Students shall conduct themselves in a manner that upholds the principles for honesty and integrity in order to promote an environment of trust.

To assist students in understanding their responsibilities under the Honor Code, the following is a list of conduct pertaining to academic matters that violate the Honor Code. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:

## Plagiarism

- Knowingly appropriating another's words, ideas, data or code and representing them as one's own
- Use of another's words, ideas, data or code without acknowledging the source
- Paraphrasing the words and ideas of another without clear acknowledgment of the source
- Modifying the code of another without clear acknowledgment of the source
- Falsification or fabrication of a bibliography

## Cheating

- Unauthorized collaboration on assignments
- Use of unauthorized resources during class and on coursework
- Use of previously submitted coursework for alternate purposes without prior approval
- Falsification of data for a class session or assignment

## Obstruction of Honor Code

- Making false statements to an Honor Code investigator

## Falsification of Information

- Knowingly making false statements or submitting misleading information related to academic matters to Minerva faculty or staff
- Fabrication of data on assignments
- Submission of falsified documents, such as transcripts, applications, petitions, etc.

It is not a defense to charges of violating this Honor Code for students to claim that they have not received, read or understood this Code, or are otherwise ignorant of its provisions. A student is held to have notice of this Honor Code by enrolling at Minerva. Students must fully cooperate with investigations into potential violations of the Honor Code.

## Charge of Honor Code Violation

### Initial Charge and Informal Process

A faculty member, staff member, or student who wishes to make a charge of a violation of the Honor Code against a Minerva student must report violations to the Academic Standards Committee. It is the responsibility of students, staff, or faculty who suspect such a violation to make a charge in writing, using the Academic Dishonesty Charge Form. This form is available on the registrar site, [registrar.minerva.kgi.edu](http://registrar.minerva.kgi.edu).

Upon receipt of an Academic Dishonesty Charge, the Academic Standards Committee or a designee conducts a meeting with the accused student. Prior to the meeting, the ASC notifies the accused student in writing that a Charge of Academic Dishonesty has been submitted for a specific class, informs them of their rights under the Honor Code. The initial meeting is recorded with the prior approval of the student, to provide an accurate record of the discussion. During the meeting the student is shown the charge and evidence in support of the charge. The student may request that their advisor or another witness also participate in the initial meeting. If requested by the student, the ASC member will schedule the meeting such that the advisor or other witness can attend.

If the accused student admits responsibility for academic dishonesty during the course of the initial meeting/preliminary investigation and this is a first violation, the student is asked to sign a form documenting admission of guilt. The ASC determines the appropriate sanction (see Sanctions section below) and the student is informed of next steps.

### **Hearing Process**

If the accused student does not admit responsibility for academic dishonesty, the matter proceeds to a hearing. The hearing is recorded with the student's permission and is attended by ASC members, the student, and the faculty or staff member who brought the charge. The student has the right to present witnesses and exculpatory information. After hearing all witnesses and considering all evidence presented, the ASC decides whether a violation of the Honor Code has occurred and determines the appropriate sanction (see below). Students may appeal the ASC decision to the Chief Academic Officer. See Appeal section below.

The ASC informs the faculty member responsible for the course or associated academic activity of the outcome of the investigation and the process.

The student's rights include the following:

- The right to notice of the nature of the honor code violation and the activity and course or courses in which it is alleged to have taken place
- The right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty
- The right to solicit advice from others
- The right to have the matter be handled in a confidential manner
- The right to have the student's academic advisor present at the initial meeting and any subsequent hearing that occurs
- The right to a prompt hearing, which can be waived if the student admits responsibility for the violation in the initial investigative meeting

- The right to a reasonable amount of time to prepare for the hearing, no less than five days after the initial investigative meeting is completed, and
- The right to present witnesses and exculpatory information at the hearing.

## Sanctions

If the ASC determines the student committed no wrongdoing or there was insufficient evidence to proceed, no sanctions are imposed. If the student admits responsibility or the ASC determines that the student has violated one or more of the provisions of this Academic Honor Code after the hearing, the ASC will impose sanctions. Sanctions may include but are not limited to Academic Warning or Academic Probation, a reduced or failing grade for an assignment, a reduced or failing grade for a course, Dismissal, revocation of financial aid eligibility, and/or withdrawal of an awarded degree/certificate.

- Academic Warning is a temporary sanction that is not on the student's permanent record.
- Academic Probation is not reported on the official transcript or diploma, and is only reported to external 3rd parties when permitted via signed release.
- Academic Dismissal is reported on the official transcript (no diploma is typically awarded), and is only reported to external 3rd parties when permitted via signed release.

Multiple violations of the Honor Code may result in the imposition of more severe sanctions such as academic Dismissal, or revocation of an awarded degree.

Students have the right to appeal the ASC decision and sanction following the Academic Appeal Process described in this Handbook.

## Class Session Recording Retention and Access Policy

In order to provide assessment of students' contributions to classroom discussions, each Minerva class session is video recorded. These recordings are available to students enrolled in the class section so that they can view the personalized feedback/assessments written by the professor and review the class discussion. These recordings are not to be shared or distributed by students without the explicit written permission of the course faculty member and college dean overseeing the course.

The video recording of discussion in a particular section of a course will be made available to the students enrolled in that section shortly after the discussion concludes, and will remain accessible to the students until the first day of the following academic year. Access to a recording from previous academic years can be requested for the purpose of appealing a grade or selecting video clips to include in a personal academic

portfolio. Requests will be reviewed by the dean of the associated college. The Video Access Request Form is available on the registrar site, [registrar.minerva.kgi.edu](http://registrar.minerva.kgi.edu).

## Student Conduct Policies and Procedures

### Principles of Community

The Minerva Schools at KGI are first and foremost an institution of learning and teaching, committed to serving the needs of society. The community reflects and is a part of a society comprising all races, creeds and social circumstances. Minerva confronts and rejects all manifestations of discrimination, including those based on race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, status within or outside Minerva, or any of the other differences among people that have been excuses for misunderstanding, dissension or hatred. Minerva recognizes and cherishes the richness contributed by diversity. Minerva recognizes that everyone has an obligation to the community of which they have chosen to be a part. All of us must give as much as we receive, and must be active and enthusiastic participants in the educational process. Minerva will strive to build a true community of spirit and purpose based on mutual respect and caring.

### Basic Rules of Conduct and Policies

#### Minerva Conduct Policies and Rules

The Minerva Honor Code (also defined in the [Academic Policies](#) section of this Handbook) rests on four pillars: honesty, integrity, mutual respect, and personal responsibility. Minerva students are expected to conduct themselves with the highest levels of these qualities both inside and outside the classroom. Minerva students are citizens of an academic community whose members are expected to challenge themselves and one another to achieve greatness with honesty, integrity, mutual respect, and personal responsibility. Each individual who joins the Minerva community accepts this commitment in an effort to sustain and enhance personal, professional and institutional reputations.

Principles inherent in this Honor Code include:

- Students shall treat all members of the community with respect and without malicious intent to ensure that all students share equal opportunities.
- Students shall conduct themselves in a manner that upholds their reputation for honesty and integrity and to promote an environment of trust.

Any member of the Minerva Schools at KGI community may report conduct by a student or students that may be a violation of the Principles of Community, Honor Code, and/or other policies covered by this Student Handbook.

Violations of the Honor Code that are not academically related and violations of other Student Affairs policies may lead to disciplinary action. (Minerva's [disciplinary procedures](#) are described below.) The following list of specific violations is not all-inclusive and other conduct that violates the Principles of Community may be considered as a basis for discipline:

- Discrimination and unlawful harassment are prohibited by state, federal and local laws in the United States, and in this Student Handbook. Discrimination of all types will be subject to discipline. Retaliation against a person who reports, complains about, or participates in the investigation of harassment is likewise prohibited. Harassment is defined as persistent, repetitive, pervasive, or severe conduct (physical, verbal or visual) that creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile working or academic environment, or that substantially interferes with work or academic performance based on a person's protected status. For conduct to be deemed intimidating, offensive or hostile, both the person complaining of harassment and a reasonable person standard must be met. Generally, statements and/or conduct legitimately and reasonably related to Minerva's mission of education do not constitute harassment (e.g., a debate about protections afforded to protected categories). Please see the [KGI policy on discrimination and harassment](#) for further details.
- Any form of dishonesty not covered by the academic honor code, such as misrepresentation on a resume or in another communication related to work-study, internships and employment; purposely furnishing false information to any member of the faculty or staff; concealing or misrepresenting information in a conduct or honor code matter; or theft of any kind.
- Intentional destruction, theft of, or damage to Minerva property or the property of Minerva faculty, staff or students.

## Social Media Policies

The use of social media is governed by the Honor Code and federal and state laws. Students are responsible for their own use of social media outlets, which may or may not be monitored or regulated. It is up to each user of a social media outlet and participant in a virtual discussion to regulate content that is added or shared with the community.

Within these general guidelines, students are prohibited as follows:

- Students may not post any content that is discriminatory, including any posts that are vulgar, false, obscene, harassing, or disparaging to the race, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability of any individual with whom a student comes into contact as a result of being a member of the Minerva community.
- Students may not disclose any financial, proprietary, or other confidential information of Minerva.
- Students may not present themselves as official representatives of, or spokespersons for, Minerva unless asked to do so by a Minerva staff or faculty member.
- Students may not utilize Minerva's trademarks or logos without permission of the Marketing staff at Minerva.
- Students may not represent themselves as another person, real or fictitious, or otherwise attempt to obscure their identity as a means to circumvent the prohibitions included in this policy.

If found in violation of these policies, students will be subject to disciplinary actions including warning, probation, or suspension pending withdrawal from Minerva. Violations of federal and state laws may also result in criminal or civil actions.

### **Guidelines on Anonymous Postings on Social Media**

One of Minerva's guiding principles is Being Authentic, explained as follows:

We communicate openly and candidly, addressing people directly and conveying heartfelt emotion. We welcome honest dialogue, even about sensitive or controversial topics. We impart accurate information with genuine sincerity, building trust and establishing mutual respect. We avoid anything artificial, false, or contrived; hyperbole breeds suspicion and erodes credibility.

In keeping with this principle, we do not support or value anonymous platforms as appropriate means of communication in the Minerva community. Anonymous posts are likely to spread confusion, misperceptions, and uncertainty, without holding anyone accountable for being authentic. They undermine our collective intentions to promote honest dialogue in a context of respect for one another. Furthermore, we believe that an anonymous post is likely to provide the author with a false sense of privacy, while breeding an environment in which others are motivated to uncover the author's identity.

We recognize that students might write anonymous posts as a way of sharing harmless, fun, or lighthearted thoughts or feelings. Although such posts do not carry inherent risks,

they are not consistent with the principle of being authentic in our communications with others. We encourage students to consider how such messages might be better expressed openly, with a sense of accountability to one another.

Anonymous posts might also be seen as a means of venting, or expressing dissatisfaction about some aspect of life at Minerva. If directed at other students, an anonymous post could cause hurt feelings or anger, without a means of responding personally. If directed at staff or faculty, we are unable to provide direct feedback. However, we actively seek student feedback in a number of ways: via UserVoice and Town Halls, through the State of Minerva surveys, feedback groups, through Associated Students of Minerva, and in direct personal communications. For additional avenues for student feedback, please contact the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies.

As Minerva seeks to create and foster a community, cohesion among members of the community is paramount. We do not endorse and strongly discourage the creation and/or facilitation of anonymous platforms and we will not monitor the content of such. We urge all members of the Minerva community to have a zero tolerance policy for anonymous communication, especially the kind that can cause discord or panic. Those specifically seeking to cause such harm to the Minerva community will be subjected to the same student conduct rules at Minerva as facilitators or originators of uncivil discourse in general.

## Computing Policies

Minerva seeks to provide education in an environment where the free exchange of ideas is encouraged and protected. Minerva makes available computing and network facilities (CNF) resources for use by students. These services are provided for educational purposes and to carry out the legitimate business of Minerva Schools at KGI. Responsible, considerate, and ethical behavior expected by Minerva extends to use of computing and network facilities resources. These CNF resources may include but are not limited to:

- Active Learning Forum
- Data networking equipment systems, including remote and wireless access
- Computer software
- Electronically stored institutional data and messages
- All other similar resources owned, controlled, and/or operated by Minerva
- Google Apps for EDU
- Services to maintain these resources.

## Ownership

Minerva retains absolute ownership rights of the CNF resources.

## **Privacy and Security**

Students' personal documents, files and electronic mail stored on a Minerva-networked computer or server are normally accessible only by the student. However, any file or document placed on a Minerva-owned computer or network is subject to access, and thus, should not be regarded as private or confidential. All staff members working in information technology have clear guidelines that prohibit violations of privacy and confidentiality and, in the normal course of their work, do not view the contents of user files or email. However, authorized Minerva personnel will take appropriate steps to investigate when there is a suspicion of inappropriate use of computing or networking resources.

Many educational and business activities at Minerva require network access to resources on the Internet. To ensure adequate bandwidth to these sites for primary educational and business purposes, Minerva IT staff may restrict the amount of traffic to particular sites and the amount of traffic of specific types.

From time to time, these network monitoring activities may allow systems managers to identify individuals whose activities downgrade the performance of the campus network or a segment of the network, or which appear to violate the general guidelines for appropriate use of campus computing and network resources. In such instances, Minerva staff may ask you to cease these activities. If you continue such activities, or if they include illegal activities, appropriate authorities may be notified. In extreme cases, network privileges may be revoked on an interim basis pending resolution of the issue.

## **Passwords**

Individuals who are entrusted with or inadvertently discover logins and passwords are expected to guard them responsibly. These passwords are not to be shared with others. Passwords may be used for the purpose of security, but the use of the password does not affect Minerva's ownership of electronic information.

## **Access to Resources**

Access to CNF resources is a privilege. All users must understand and abide by the responsibilities that come with the privilege of use. Such responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Students are expected to understand and comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws.

- Students must not intentionally seek information about, browse, copy, or modify non-public files belonging to other people. Students must not attempt to “sniff” or eavesdrop on data on the network that are not intended for them.
- Students are authorized to use only computer resources and information to which they have legitimately been granted access. Sharing passwords with others is expressly forbidden. Any attempt to gain unauthorized access to any computer system, resource or information is expressly forbidden. If students encounter or observe a gap in system or network security, they should report it immediately to Minerva IT staff.
- Minerva’s policies on harassment and use of social media apply equally to electronic displays and communications as to more traditional (e.g., oral and written) means of display and communication.
- Messages, sentiments, and declarations sent as electronic mail or postings must meet the same standards for distribution or display as physical (paper) documents.
- Unsolicited mailings and unauthorized mass mailings from campus networks or computing resources (i.e., “spam”) are prohibited.
- Spoofing, and attempts to spoof or falsify e-mail, network or other information used to identify the source, destination or other information about a communication, data or information are prohibited.
- Students must not degrade computing or network performance in any way that could prevent others from meeting their educational or business goals. This includes preventing others from using shared resources by running unattended processes, by playing games or by “locking” systems without permission.
- Students must conform to laws and policies regarding protection of intellectual property, including laws and policies regarding copyright, patents, and trademarks. When the content and distribution of an electronic communication would exceed fair use as defined by the federal Copyright Act of 1976, users of campus computing or networking resources must secure appropriate permission to distribute protected material in any form, including text, photographic images, audio, video, graphic illustrations, and computer software.
- Students must not use campus computing or networking resources or personal computing resources accessed through campus network facilities to collect, store or distribute information or materials, or to participate in activities that violate federal, state or local laws or Minerva policies or guidelines. This includes, but is

not limited to, policies regarding intellectual property and sexual or other forms of harassment.

- Students must not create or willfully disseminate computer viruses, worms, or other software intended to degrade system or network security. Students must take reasonable steps to prevent their systems from being used as a vehicle for such actions. This includes installing system and software patches as well as anti-virus signatures files.
- The use of CNF resources for advertising, selling, and soliciting for commercial purposes or for personal gain is prohibited without the prior written consent of Minerva.
- The disclosure of individually identifiable non-directory information is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Willful or unauthorized misuse or disclosure of information owned by Minerva or KGI will also constitute just cause for disciplinary action, including dismissal from school, regardless of whether criminal or civil penalties are imposed. It is also expected that any user will report suspected abuses of CNF resources. Failure to do so may subject the individual to loss of CNF access and/or the disciplinary action.
- Minerva may immediately suspend service to an individual or computer found to be significantly degrading the usability of the network or other computer systems. Inappropriate use will be referred to the appropriate authority to take action, which may result in discipline up to and including dismissal from Minerva.

## Disciplinary Procedures

The process described below is administrative in nature and is separate and distinct from the criminal and civil legal systems and the Minerva policy on academic dishonesty. Resolution through this process does not preclude someone from pursuing legal action now or in the future. If the conduct in question is alleged to be a violation of both Minerva policy and law, Minerva will normally proceed with its usual conduct process, regardless of action or inaction by outside authorities. Violations of the conduct code, policies, and residential agreements may also be resolved informally through staff in each residential hall and city. If student conduct places the community at immediate risk, Minerva may take whatever steps are necessary to protect the community and institute formal proceedings as soon as reasonably possible after the event.

The process of adjudicating alleged violations of the conduct code or other regulations cited in this section is the responsibility of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies

(hereafter, the Dean) or his or her designee. When violations are referred to the Dean, the Dean conducts the initial investigation and determines if disciplinary proceedings should be commenced. The Dean may delegate all or part of the investigation to another designated staff person as circumstances require. The investigation commences within a reasonable time, usually within 30 days of notification. The Dean informs the student of the commencement of proceedings in writing, stating the rules, laws, regulations or policies violated, and gives the student the opportunity to prepare a written statement for submission in the proceeding. The student is given a reasonable amount of time to submit such a statement, usually 10 days.

The Dean or designee appoints three persons, one or two each from the Minerva faculty and staff, to serve as a Student Conduct Committee within 10 days of completion of the investigation. Each committee member should have no prior meaningful involvement with the student(s) as an advisor, mentor, or supervisor, and no involvement with any incident that gave rise to the proceeding.

The Dean or designee provides the Student Conduct Committee with the investigation report, the student's statement, if any, and recommendations for sanctions, if any. The Committee convenes within 10 days of appointment. It may investigate further or ask the Dean to investigate further, as appropriate, to ensure that all relevant information is considered.

The Committee shall consider:

- **Information**
  - Is there any additional information needed to make a decision?
  - Is there anything in the record that is incomplete or unclear?
- **Responsibility**
  - Has the student admitted to the conduct?
  - If not, is there substantial evidence that the student engaged in the alleged conduct?
  - Is the conduct a violation of the law, residential agreement, student code of conduct, and/or other Minerva policy?
- **Fair and Appropriate Sanction**
  - Considering the conduct in question and the record of the student, is the sanction recommended fair and appropriate?
  - Has the student been given notice and a chance to address their participation in the conduct?
  - Is the sanction proportional to the gravity of the conduct?
  - How does the student's previous record affect the kind of sanction that should be imposed?
  - Has the student been a good member of the Minerva community?

- Based on past and this conduct, is the student likely to be a good member of the community in the future?
- Does the student pose any risk to the community?
- **Aggravating and Mitigating Circumstances**
  - Are there aggravating or mitigating circumstances that affect the sanction?
  - Did the student openly admit the misconduct?
  - Did the student take responsibility for the misconduct?
  - Did the student express remorse about the conduct?
  - Did the student indicate that they learned anything from this incident?

The Committee deliberates and makes a recommendation to the Dean within 10 days, unless further investigation is required, in which case the Committee must reconvene within 10 days of completion of additional investigation and make a recommendation at that time.

The Dean informs the student of the outcome of the proceeding by email, including the sanction and rights of appeal.

The student may appeal the decision to the Chief Academic Officer (CAO). The appeal must be in writing directly to the CAO within 10 days of the date on which the student receives the Committee's decision. The CAO reviews the written record and may interview the Dean and/or the Student Conduct Committee. The CAO interviews the student by phone or video conference. The CAO acts promptly on the appeal, usually within 21 days. The CAO informs the student of the decision by email and sends a copy of this communication to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. If the appeal is granted, the Dean will carry out the next steps accordingly. If the appeal is denied, the Dean will inform the student by email of the right of appeal to the President.

If the appeal to the CAO is denied, the student may appeal to the president of KGI within 10 days of being informed of the denial of the appeal. To grant the student's request for appeal, the appeal must be based on at least one of the following grounds: 1) a substantial mistake of fact; 2) a fundamental misinterpretation of the policies, rules, or regulation involved; or 3) a substantial procedural error. The student must include the basis for the appeal and provide clear information on the basis for appeal. The President reviews the written record and may interview the Dean, CAO, Student Conduct Committee, and/or the student as deemed necessary to make a decision. The President acts promptly in the appeal, usually within 21 days. The President informs the student by email and sends a copy of this communication to the Dean. If the appeal is granted, the Dean carries out next steps as set forth by the President. If the appeal is denied, the Dean implements the original decision.

## Sanctions

Any one or more of the following sanctions may be imposed on a student who is found responsible for a violation:

1. **Restitution:** Reimbursement by the student to Minerva, the complainant(s), and/or a member of the Minerva community to cover the cost of damage to property or other loss.
2. **Fine:** A monetary penalty assessed as appropriate to the violation.
3. **Educational Program/Project:** Programs and activities designed to help the student become more aware of conduct policies and understand the inappropriateness of the student's behavior, including, but not limited to, participation in an educational program.
4. **Referral for Counseling:** A referral for an assessment with an appropriately trained therapist and a mandate to follow any recommendations resulting from the assessment.
5. **Loss of Privilege(s):** Denial of specific privilege(s) for a defined period of time. Privileges include, but are not limited to participation in student government.
6. **Restricted Access:** Conditions which specifically dictate and limit the student's presence in Minerva-controlled locations and/or participation in Minerva-sponsored activities. The restrictions may include, but are not limited to, presence in certain buildings or locations or a no-contact order in relation to a particular individual(s).
7. **Warning:** Conduct warning is issued when a student has violated a policy and is being warned that further violations will escalate the matter to a formal proceeding.
8. **Conduct Probation:** Formal, written notice that the student's behavior is in violation of the Principles of Community and/or other policy and an expectation that the student exhibit good behavior for a defined period of time. Any violation during the probationary period may result in suspension or expulsion from Minerva.
9. **Suspension:** Separation from Minerva for a defined period of time. During the suspension period the student is not permitted in any Minerva-controlled building and is not permitted to participate in any Minerva-sponsored or affiliated program or activity. The terms of the suspension may include the designation of special conditions affecting eligibility for readmission or special conditions to be in effect upon readmission.
10. **Expulsion:** Permanent separation from Minerva. A student who has been expelled is not permitted to participate in any Minerva-sponsored or affiliated program or activity.

Sanctions 10-13 may be imposed only through a formal Disciplinary Procedure.

## Prohibited Sexual Conduct

The mission of Minerva is to nurture critical wisdom for the sake of the world. We apply critical wisdom in establishing policies and procedures that are fair and impartial, including our policy regarding prohibited sexual conduct.

Minerva has enacted the Prohibited Sexual Conduct Policy in order to:

1. maintain our community values and expectations that all community members are free from sexual misconduct and all forms of sex and/or gender discrimination and harassment,
2. describe our procedures for determining when this policy has been violated, and
3. provide recourse for individuals and the community in response to policy violations.

Minerva's [Prohibited Sexual Conduct Policy](#) applies to all members of the Minerva community and complies with U.S. federal and state laws that prohibit sex and/or gender discrimination.

Minerva is committed to the principles of academic freedom, including free inquiry and expression. This policy is not intended to stifle the freedom of Minerva students, faculty, and staff to properly engage in vigorous discussion and debate and to express ideas that may be controversial, provocative, or unpopular. However, this protection of free speech has limits, such that speech or conduct that rises to the level of unlawful harassment on the basis of gender is neither legally protected expression nor an exercise in academic freedom. Minerva supports an environment free of sex or gender-based harassment and misconduct.

Minerva does not tolerate acts of Prohibited Sexual Conduct. This term refers to the following forms of behavior:

- Sex or Gender-Based Harassment
- Sexual Misconduct, which includes Sexual Assault, Non-Consensual Sexual Contact, Sexual Exploitation, and Stalking
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Prohibited Relationships by Persons in Authority
- Retaliation against a person who inquires, reports, or otherwise participates in good faith regarding this policy

Any report of Prohibited Sexual Conduct will be taken seriously and addressed promptly. Minerva will act to end the prohibited sexual conduct, prevent its recurrence, and

appropriately sanction responsible parties. Individuals who violate these policies are subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment at Minerva (faculty or staff), expulsion (students), and/or other appropriate sanctions.

The full policy, which can be accessed on the Hub [here](#), defines terms and prohibited conduct; describes Minerva's consent culture and related educational programs; sets forth reporting processes and the rights of parties to a reported matter; establishes procedures for investigation, review, and appeal; and provides local resources.

Anyone who wishes to report a possible violation of this policy should contact any Minerva staff or faculty member or the Title IX Coordinator at [tix@minerva.kgi.edu](mailto:tix@minerva.kgi.edu).

## General Complaint Procedures

All faculty and staff at Minerva take student complaints seriously. We encourage you to resolve areas of concern informally through dialogue with the individuals involved.

However, we have established procedures to give aggrieved students a process by which they may express complaints without fear of retribution, especially if they believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, or handicap. The process described here is not intended to be used to question a rule, policy, or procedure established by an authorized faculty or administrative body. Rather, a person or persons shall use this procedure for a hearing and due process if they believe that a rule, policy, or procedure has been applied in an unfair or inequitable manner, or that there has been unfair or improper treatment.

Students who have a complaint regarding an academic-related grievance may present their complaint in person or in writing to the relevant faculty or staff member. If students have any other form of grievance, they may present their complaint in person or in writing to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. The relevant person will provide the student with an explanation of the process for addressing the particular complaint(s) and answer any questions to ensure a fair process.

If the student and staff member are not able to resolve the grievance informally, or if the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies is not able to assist the student in resolving the matter, the student may submit a written, signed statement to the Chief Accreditation and Policy Officer (CAPO). The CAPO will provide a copy of the complaint to the person involved who will be given an opportunity to respond in writing no later than five (5) business days after receipt of the complaint. In the event that the issue is still not resolved, the written complaint and response will be taken to the person's immediate supervisor. The immediate supervisor will then respond in writing to the appeal. If the student does not accept the decision, the CAPO will meet with the student, hear the

grievance, review written materials and respond in writing with a decision within five (5) business days after receipt of the complaint. The CAPO's decision is final.

If a student is not able to resolve a complaint and believes that Minerva is in violation of accreditation standards, the student may also direct a complaint to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges – Senior College and University Commission (WASC) at <http://www.wascsenior.org>.

If a student believes that the complaint continues to warrant further consideration after exhausting the review by Minerva Student Affairs staff and/or WASC, the student may contact the California Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education as follows:

**California Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education**

2535 Capitol Oaks Drive, Suite 400

Sacramento, CA 95833

Telephone: 916-431-6924

Fax: 916-263-1897

Website: <http://www.bppe.cal.gov>

Nothing in this disclosure limits any right that you may have to seek civil or criminal legal action to resolve your complaints.