

Dear UGM Community,

I hope you are having a safe, happy, and restful summer!

While school is still about 2 weeks away, I am writing this letter about dress code, in the hope that this will help with back to school shopping and decisions about what to purchase for your child. With that in mind, I hope you will take a few moments to read this message carefully and share this information with your child as well. After reading, should you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me this summer or, for that matter, at any point during the school year.

Dress code is one of the most challenging sections to enforce in our school system's code of conduct. Just a few the reasons for this challenge are...

- The personal and expressive nature clothes, especially at the middle and high school levels
- The subjective nature in determining what is "appropriate" and what it "disruptive" in light of changing styles and social norms
- The differences of physicality among children and young adults that creates differences in what is too long, too short, etc. for what often appears to be the same garment or style

With that said, and keeping with the HCBOE Handbook's code of conduct, please see the following rules of thumb that we use at UGM to make the call as to whether something is inappropriate:

- Undergarments should ***not be visible at all*** for both boys and girls
- Clothing should ***not be so tight*** as to be revealing of personal areas
- Clothing should ***not be so loose*** as to be revealing of personal areas
- Clothing should ***not be so short*** as to be revealing of personal areas
  - On this last point the guideline should be clothing that is noticeably shorter than mid-thigh length. An easy way to measure this is to hold a standard 3x5 index card at the knee. If the garment ***meets the index card or goes past it*** that is a good measure for length.

Additionally, consistent with the handbook and in order to reduce some of the "grey areas" with respect to the above, we specifically ***prohibit*** the following clothing items for students

- Bicycle shorts, spandex shorts, or similar pants that are designed so as to be extremely tight fitting to the body
  - ***Note: students wearing "leggings," "yoga pants," or similar garments may do so if and only if they wear a top that completely covers/goes past their waist/hip/buttocks area***
- Tank tops, string tops, or other similar shirts that excessively expose the underarm area for girls OR boys
- Pants, skirts, or legwear in general that has holes above the knee/mid-thigh area
- **Regarding hooded sweatshirts, "hoodies," or any hooded clothing** - ***Please note that students wearing hooded attire will be strictly prohibited from wearing the hood up/over the head during the school day. This is because we want students to be "present" in every***

*way for instruction, collaboration, and communication with teachers and peers. Also, lack of visibility can create safety issues for our students.*

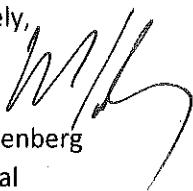
- *Students who violate this expectation will be subject to the HCS code of conduct.*
- *Additionally, students who persistently violate this expectation will be required to store hooded clothing item in their assigned locker, to be retrieved at the end of the school day.*

Also we ask students to be mindful of clothes that can likely be considered offensive to others and thus take attention from our main purpose of learning and instruction. Please see the handbook for a full description of such items. In terms of our rules of thumb, however, please note following guidelines we use for decisions in this area:

- Clothes should not have profanity on them or language that suggests profane language, i.e. a profane word with some letters covered or symbolized
- Clothes should not have sayings, messages, or content that is designed to or *more than likely* to offend or denigrate others
- Clothes should not represent drugs, drug use, or drug use culture
- Clothes should not represent alcohol, alcohol manufacturers or brands
- Clothes should not represent tobacco, tobacco products, vapes, or smoking culture in general
- Clothes should not contain off color jokes, sexual innuendo, or double entendres that are inappropriate for middle school aged children

Again, the above represents some of the more common areas of dress code that we deal with and that we hope to avoid. Please see the HCS handbook/dress code for more detailed information. I can tell you, personally, that no one on the UGM staff enjoys taking instructional time from students as well as adults to make these sorts of judgement calls. It is a necessary part of our job, however, in ensuring that UGM continues to be a safe, positive, and nurturing place in which to learn. It is my fervent hope in sharing this document that parents and students alike will partner with us to work toward that goal.

Sincerely,



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