

SOUTHWEST TENNESSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**SUBJECT: Academic Misconduct****EFFECTIVE DATE: June 17, 2008; Revised: November 1, 2011****I. Academic Misconduct (Academic Dishonesty)**

Southwest expects students to conduct themselves with a high level of academic honesty and integrity in all of their academic work. An instructor who determines that a student has engaged in academic misconduct either directly or indirectly, through participation or assistance has the authority to impose an academic sanction such as assign an “F” or a zero for the exercise or examination with no opportunity for a make-up , or to assign an “F” in the course. In addition, other disciplinary sanctions such as probation, suspension or expulsion may be imposed through the regular College procedures as a result of academic misconduct. A student has the right to appeal such sanctions.

A. Definition of Academic Dishonesty is any behavior on the part of a student that results in that student’s or any other students’ giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise or receiving credit for work which is not their own. Academic Dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

1. Cheating

- (a) Knowingly discovering or attempting to discover the content of an examination before the content is presented by the instructor.
- (b) Obtaining or attempting to obtain, use or supply any person with unauthorized material or device when contemplating or taking an examination.
- (c) Using or attempting to use or supply any person any material or device dishonestly for an examination.
- (d) Willfully receiving or supplying any aid not authorized by the instructor.
- (e) Intentionally sharing of information or working together in an academic exercise when such collaboration was not approved by the instructor.

2. Plagiarism

- (a) Representing to be his or her own, any work which is not the product of his or her own effort or study, if the work would affect his grade, credit, or status in the College.

- (b) Using another individual's or group's words or ideas without clearly acknowledging the source of that information, resulting in their false representation as one's own individual work.
- (c) Plagiarism may be either deliberate or unwitting; that is, it is the responsibility of a college student to know what constitutes plagiarism so that ignorance is not a legitimate defense against a charge of plagiarism.
- (d) Facilitating Academic Dishonesty is intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of this policy on academic dishonesty.

3. Procedures

- (a) An instructor who determines that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty shall inform the Chair and the Dean in writing of the finding of Academic Misconduct including the grade penalty within five (5) days of the incident. Once the instructor has charged a student with academic dishonesty, a hold will be placed on the student's record preventing the student from withdrawing. Once the charge is resolved, and if the student is exonerated, the student may withdraw from the course.
- (b) The instructor shall meet with the student to provide him/her with a copy of the Academic Misconduct form and the Academic Appeals Process. If the student admits to the charge, he/she will sign the form and accept the penalty. A copy of the signed form shall be submitted to the Chair and the Dean.
- (c) If the student refuses to meet with the instructor, the Department Chair will send a letter, with a copy of the Academic Misconduct form which outlines the Academic Appeals process to the student, via e-mail and registered mail.
- (d) Upon receipt of the Academic Misconduct form by signature, "read" e-mail, or registered mail receipt, the student will have five (5) days to return the Academic Misconduct form to the department chair stating the basis on which the student contests the allegation. Failure to return the form within five (5) days, either accepting the determination and grade sanction, or requesting a hearing shall operate as a waiver of hearing rights. The grade sanction will thereupon become final.

- (e) A copy of the Academic Misconduct form shall be maintained for five (5) years in the offices of the Chairperson and Dean. A copy shall be sent to the Office of Student Activities which shall maintain a record of each incident of Academic Misconduct and may take steps to initiate further disciplinary sanctions where it is determined appropriate to do so based on the nature of the event or number of other instances of academic misconduct by the same student.

4. Hearing

- (a) If the student wishes to contest the allegation, he/she must return the Academic Misconduct form to the department chair stating the basis on which the student contests the allegation within five (5) days after notification of the charges. Failure to submit the Academic Misconduct form within the five (5) day period will operate as a waiver of all hearing right.
- (b) The Chair will notify the Dean of the division in which the incident occurred, regarding the student's hearing request. The Dean will convene the Academic Appeals Committee within ten (10) days to review the matter.
- (c) The Academic Appeals Committee is a standing committee appointed by the President of the College. It will be comprised of three (3) faculty members and two (2) students. Ordinarily, one (1) of the faculty members should be a Department Chairperson. The Committee will be chaired by one (1) of the faculty members of the Committee.
- (d) The student shall be advised in writing of the time and place of the hearing within ten (10) days, but no less than one (1) day of the student's written request for a hearing and will be advised the following rights.
 - (i) The right to present his or her case
 - (ii) The right to be accompanied by an advisor or counsel whose participation shall be limited to advising the student
 - (iii) The right to call witnesses on his/her behalf
 - (iv) The right to confront witnesses against him/her
 - (v) The method of appeal time limitations for appeal, if any is applicable
- (e) The instructor and the student will elect whether to present testimony/or other evidence in person or in writing.
- (f) The student will carry the burden of proof by "a preponderance of the evidence" that the academic misconduct did not occur.

- (g) The committee will either uphold or reverse the previous determination of academic misconduct. The student will be informed, in writing, of the Committee's determination within five (5) days after the hearing is concluded.
- (h) The Committee will also forward a copy of its written determination to the faculty member, the chair, and the dean.
- (i) If the Committee upholds the previous determination of academic misconduct, the penalty determined by the instructor will be imposed.
- (j) A student may appeal the Committee's decision by submitting a written request to the Office of the Provost within seventy-two (72) hours after issuance of the Committee's decision. The Office of the Provost will review the matter on the basis of the existing record, including but not limited to the Committee's written decision, and the student's appeal submission. The Office of the Provost will issue a written determination, within 5 days after the submission of the appeal, either upholding or reversing the Committee's decision.