

SOUTHWEST TENNESSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**SUBJECT: Academic Dishonesty****EFFECTIVE DATE: June 17, 2008; Revised November 1, 2011; Revised April 28, 2023****Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to bring to the attention of students, faculty, and others regulations regarding academic dishonesty by students of Southwest Tennessee Community College (“Southwest” or “the College”).

Definitions

Academic Dishonesty- any behavior on the part of a student that results in that student, or any other student, giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise or receiving credit for work that is not their own.

Cheating- Southwest recognizes at least five (5) forms of cheating:

1. Knowingly discovering or attempting to discover the content of an examination before the content is presented by the instructor.
2. Obtaining or attempting to obtain, use, or supply any person with unauthorized material or device when contemplating or taking an examination.
3. Using, attempting to use, or supply someone with material or a device dishonestly for an examination.
4. Willfully receiving or supplying aid not authorized by the instructor.
5. Intentionally sharing information or working together on an academic exercise when such collaboration was not approved by the instructor.

Plagiarism- may be either deliberate or unwitting. It is the responsibility of students to know what constitutes plagiarism because ignorance is not a legitimate defense to a charge of plagiarism. Southwest recognizes at least two (2) forms of plagiarism:

1. Representing to be the student’s own, any work that is not the product of the student’s personal effort or study, if the work would affect a grade, credit, or status at the College.
2. Using another individual’s or group’s words or ideas without clearly acknowledging the source of the information, resulting in a student’s false representation as the student’s own work.

Facilitation- the intentional or knowing act of helping or attempting to help a student violate a provision of this policy.

Policy

I. Introduction

Southwest policy [3:02:00:01/8](#), Student Conduct and Disciplinary Sanctions, states: 1) what behavior constitutes academic dishonesty; 2) the authority to issue sanctions; 3) what sanctions are deemed appropriate; 4) and other related information. Tennessee Board of Regent's (TBR) policy [3:02.00.01](#) is the basis for the Southwest policy.

Because academic dishonesty could result in substantial sanctions, including expulsion, this policy is presented to iterate the prohibition on academic dishonesty.

Southwest expects all 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 the grade of "F" or "zero (0)" for the exercise or examination with no opportunity for a make-up, or to assign the grade of "F" in the course. In addition, other disciplinary sanctions such as probation, suspension, or expulsion may be imposed through the regular College procedure related to academic dishonesty. A student has the right to appeal such sanctions.

II. Sanctions

1. An instructor who determines that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty shall inform the Chairperson and the Dean of the instructor's area in writing, which shall include the penalty. The writing must be submitted to the Chairperson and Dean within five (5) days of the incident.
2. 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. When the charge is resolved, and if the student is exonerated, the student may withdraw from the course.
3. The instructor shall meet with the student to provide a copy of the Academic Misconduct form and the Academic Appeals Process. If the student admits to the charge, the student will sign the form and accept the penalty. A copy of the signed form shall be submitted to the Chairperson and Dean.
4. If the student refuses to meet with the instructor, the Chairperson will send a letter to the student via email and registered mail. A copy of the Academic Misconduct form shall be included with the letter. The Academic Misconduct form outlines the Academic Appeals process.

5. Upon receipt and acknowledgement 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 Chairperson stating the basis on which the student contests the allegation(s). Failure to return the form within five (5) days either accepting the determination and grade sanction or requesting a hearing will operate as a waiver of hearing rights and the grade will become final.
6. 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 Development, 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.

III. Hearing

1. If the student wishes to contest the allegation, the Academic Misconduct form must be returned to the Chairperson 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 rights.
2. The Chairperson will notify the Dean regarding the student’s hearing request. The Dean will convene the Academic Misconduct Appeals Committee within ten (10) days to review the matter.
3. The Academic Misconduct Appeals Committee is a standing committee appointed by the President of the College. It shall consist of at least two (2) faculty members and include at least one (1) student. Ideally, one (1) of the two (2) faculty members should be a Chairperson. The Committee will be chaired by one (1) of the faculty members. The Dean will assemble the committee and coordinate the hearing but will not participate on the committee. Any individual who has an interest in the incident, a conflict of interest, or a bias is not permitted to serve on the committee.
4. The Academic Misconduct Appeals Committee will set a hearing date that is within fifteen (15) business days of receipt of date of the student’s appeal. The student must receive at least seven (7) calendar days’ notice of the date, time, and location of the hearing. A student shall be notified of the due process protections provided for in this policy, specifically, the right to:
 - a. Present a case;
 - b. Be accompanied by an advisor or counsel whose participation shall be limited to advising the student;
 - c. Call a reasonable number of supporting witnesses;
 - d. Confront opposing witnesses; and

- e. Know the method of appeal time limitations for appeal, if any is applicable.
5. The instructor and the student will elect whether to present testimony or other evidence in person or in writing.
6. The student will carry the burden of proof by “a preponderance of the evidence” that the academic misconduct did not occur.
7. The committee will conduct the appeal hearing, consider the evidence presented, and make a decision based on a simple majority vote using a preponderance of the evidence standard.
8. The committee can either uphold, overturn, or lessen the academic discipline.
9. The results of the committee’s decision will be conveyed to the student in writing, through the Committee Chairperson, within ten (10) business days of the hearing.
10. The Committee will also forward a copy of its written determination to the faculty member, Chairperson, and Dean.
11. If the Committee upholds the determination of academic misconduct, the penalty determined by the instructor will be imposed.

IV. Appeal of the Academic Misconduct Appeals Committee Decision

If the academic misconduct appeals committee upholds or lessens the academic discipline, the student may appeal in writing to the President within five (5) business days following receipt of the decision of the committee. The President will make a decision within ten (10) business days. The President’s decision is final.

Southwest’s President, Vice President of Student Affairs, or Vice President of Academic Affairs has the ability to extend a deadline in this section for good cause and upon written notice to the student.

In addition to academic discipline, a student who is found responsible for academic misconduct, one (1) or more times, may be subject to disciplinary sanctions in accordance with this policy.

The College will permanently maintain all submissions by the student and all decisions related to academic misconduct.

