

Policy No. 2-87**Subject: Student Conduct**

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Division	Policy Manager	Administrative Supervisor	Reference
Instruction and Student Services	Dean of Student Services and Enrollment Management	Vice President of Instruction and Student Services	VCCS Policy Section 6.5.0

I. POLICY

It is the policy of Virginia Highlands Community College (VHCC) to establish and enforce guidelines and regulations governing student conduct in order to provide a safe and effective educational environment.

II. PERTINENT INFORMATION

- A. Each individual is considered a responsible adult, and it is expected that students shall maintain standards of conduct appropriate to membership in the College community.
- B. Emphasis should be placed on standards of student conduct rather than on limits or restrictions of students.
- C. The College should refrain from imposing a rigid code of discipline but should reserve the right to take disciplinary action compatible with its own best interests when it is clearly necessary.
- D. VHCC and the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) guarantees students the privilege of exercising their rights of citizenship under the Constitution of the United States without fear of prejudice.
- E. VHCC will provide due process and articulate appropriate appeal processes to address matters of student conduct.

III. DEFINITIONS**IV. GENERAL GUIDELINES**

- A. Title IX allegations are reported to the Title IX Coordinator and do not fall under this policy.
- B. The following forms of misconduct are subject to disciplinary action:
 1. All forms of dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, knowingly furnishing

false information to the College, and the forgery, alteration, or use of College documents or instruments of identification with the intent to defraud.

Plagiarism and cheating are further defined below to include:

- a. Plagiarism is the appropriation of passages, either word for word or in substance, from the writings of another and the incorporation of those passages as one's own in written work offered for credit. VHCC assumes that the written work offered for credit is the student's own unless proper credit is given the original author by the use of quotation marks or other explanatory inserts.
 - b. Collaboration with another person in the preparation or editing of notes, themes, reports, or other written work offered for credit is prohibited unless such collaboration has been specifically approved in advance by the instructor. Examples of collaboration include extensive use of another's ideas for preparing a creative assignment and receiving undue assistance in the preparation or editing of written materials.
 - c. Giving, receiving, offering, or soliciting information on any quiz, test, or examination is prohibited including the following:
 - i. Copying another student's work.
 - ii. Using prepared materials during an examination.
 - iii. Collaborating with another student during an examination.
 - iv. Buying, selling, stealing, soliciting, or transmitting the contents of an examination.
 - v. Substituting for another person during an examination or allowing such a substitution for one's self.
 - vi. Bribery of any person to obtain examination information.
2. Disruption or obstruction of teaching, research, administration, disciplinary proceedings, or other College activities.
 3. Physical and/or psychological abuse, or the threat of such abuse, of any person on College premises or at College activities.
 4. Participating in or inciting a riot or an unauthorized disorderly assembly.
 5. Seizing, holding, commandeering, or damaging any property or facilities of the College, or threatening to do so, or refusing to depart from any property or facilities of the College upon direction by College officials or other person authorized by the President.
 6. Use of alcoholic beverages on campus including the purchase, consumption, possession, or sale of such items except where specifically authorized within the regulations of the College.
 7. Possessing, using, selling, or distributing any type of illegal drugs on campus.
 8. Gambling or holding an unauthorized raffle or lottery on campus or at any College function.
 9. Possessing on College property, or at any College activity, any rifle, shotgun, pistol, revolver, or other firearms or weapons or any dangerous chemical or explosive elements or component parts not used by the student for lawful College studies without the prior written authorization of the President.
 10. Physically detaining or restraining any other person or removing a person from any place where he/she is authorized to remain, or in any way

obstructing the free movement of persons or vehicles on College premises or at College activities.

11. Littering, defacing, destroying, or damaging property of the College or property under its jurisdiction or removing or using such property without proper authorization.
 12. Violating any local, state, or federal laws.
 13. Violating any rule or regulation not contained within the official College publications but announced as administrative policy by the President or his/her designee.
 14. Willfully encouraging others to commit any of the acts which have been herein prohibited.
- C. The following sanctions may be imposed due to student misconduct:
1. Admonition: An oral or written statement to a student that he/she is violating or has violated College rules and may be subject to more severe disciplinary action.
 2. Disciplinary Probation: Exclusion from participation in extracurricular activities of the College, including holding any student office, for a period of time not exceeding one academic year.
 3. Restitution: Required reimbursement for damage to or misappropriation of property. This may take the form of appropriate services or other compensation.
 4. Suspension: Exclusion from attending the College as a student for a definite period of time not to exceed one year.
 5. Dismissal: Termination of student status for an indefinite period. The conditions of readmission, if any, will be stated in the letter of dismissal.
 6. Interim Suspension: If, in the opinion of the Dean of Student Services and Enrollment Management, the continued presence of any student on the campus may reasonably pose a threat to, or interfere with, the College's mission and/or the rights of others, a student may be suspended from the College pending the right to a hearing. The Dean will first make a reasonable effort to advise the student orally of the reasons for the suspension, and give the student opportunity for explanation or rebuttal. This informal opportunity does not give the student the right to present witnesses, to cross examine adverse witnesses, or to require the presence of counsel. As soon as possible after the suspension, the student will have the right to call for a hearing. At the hearing, the affected student shall have all the rights described under Section 2-73 (Student Grievances).

V. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

- A. The College President has the authority and delegates to the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services the responsibility to establish procedures to meet the requirements of this policy.

APPENDIX

VI. RELATED STANDARDS, LEGAL CITATIONS, OR SUPPORTING

DOCUMENTS

- A. VHCC Grievance Policy
- B. VHCC Title IX Policy
- C. 20 U.S.C. § 1687(2)(A); 45 C.F.R. § 86.2(h)

VII. OPERATING REQUIREMENTS

- A. The Dean of Student Services and Enrollment Management, or designee, is responsible for the execution of disciplinary procedures within the College. Any academic or administrative official, faculty member, or student may file a complaint with the Dean of Student Services and Enrollment Management against any student for alleged violations of any college rule or regulation. The Dean, or designee, may make a preliminary investigation to determine if the charges can be disposed of informally by mutual consent without the initiation of disciplinary proceedings.

- B. Conduct Resolution and Appeal Procedures

Level I: Meeting for Alleged Violations of Student Conduct Policies

Instances in which students are accused of violating conduct policies, students are referred to the Dean of Student Services and Enrollment Management or designee for formal resolution. The Dean of Student Services and Enrollment Management or designee shall then conduct a careful and thorough investigation of the alleged violation. In the event the investigation shows that there is no substantial information to support the allegations of wrongdoing, the Dean of Student Services and Enrollment Management or designee shall drop the charges.

If the investigation indicates sufficient information of a policy violation, the Dean of Student Services and Enrollment Management or designee shall set a date to meet with the student to discuss the charges. Within five (5) business days of the conference with the student, the Dean of Student Services and Enrollment Management or designee shall render a written decision to dismiss the charges or to impose one of the sanctions outlined above. The student may, within five (5) working days of receipt of the notice from the Dean of Student Services and Enrollment Management or designee, submit a written request for an appeal to the Student Affairs Committee (SAC) (Level II). An appeal to SAC may only be requested if the sanction results in suspension or dismissal from the College.

Level II: Student Affairs Committee Hearing

A student found responsible for a violation of College policy may request an appeal for one of the following reasons:

- Insufficient information that a policy was violated;
- A serious procedural error in resolving the case;
- Sanction inappropriate for the circumstances for the violation;

A written appeal to the Student Affairs Committee must be made within five (5) business days of receipt of the original written decision, or by 9 a.m. on the next College business day if the deadline falls on a weekend or after 5 p.m. on a weekday.

The Student Affairs Committee chairperson will schedule an appeal hearing to be conducted no later than ten (10) business days following the student request for appeal. The Student Affairs Committee chairperson will be responsible for notifying the student and the Dean of Student Services and Enrollment Management or designee of the date, time, and place of the hearing. The Student Affairs Committee shall make its decision by simple majority vote and communicate its findings in writing to the Dean of Student Services and Enrollment Management or designee and the student within five (5) business days after the hearing is completed.

After review, the Student Affairs Committee may:

- Affirm the finding(s) of the original hearing authority;
- Reverse finding(s) of the original hearing authority;
- Reduce the sanction(s) of the original hearing authority;

Level III: Vice President of Instruction and Student Services Appeal

A subsequent appeal, which is permitted only in cases where suspension or dismissal remains in effect after the SAC appeal hearing, must be submitted to the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services within 48 hours of the student receiving the previous appeal decision in writing, or by 9 a.m. on the next College business day if the deadline falls on a weekend or after 5 p.m. on a weekday.

The Vice President of Instruction and Student Services may either:

- Affirm the finding(s) of the Student Affairs Committee;
- Reverse finding(s) of the Student Affairs Committee;
- Reduce the sanction(s) of the Student Affairs Committee;

The decision of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services on all hearing appeals resulting in suspension or dismissal is the final decision for the College. The decision of the Student Affairs Committee on all other appeals is the final decision for the College.

Time Limitation/Disciplinary Proceedings

Every effort will be made by all parties to expedite the disciplinary process. The time limitations specified for either party may be extended by written mutual agreement. If there is no written mutual agreement to extend the time limits set herein, the decision reached at the previous level shall be determined to be final.