

STUDENT DISCIPLINE FOR ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT
SECTION V.F. – NOTICE AND COMMENT

The Board of Trustees approved Section V.F. Student Discipline for Academic Misconduct of the Lone Star College Policy Manual on **February 2, 2017**. The notice and comment period for the policy was open to the public from **October 18, 2016** through **November 17, 2016**. The procedures were last updated on **January 17, 2019**. The notice and comment period for the procedures was open to the public from **September 18, 2018** to **October 18, 2018**. The policy and procedures were posted for public comment at <http://www.lonestar.edu/proposed-policies.htm>. Commenters could anonymously submit comments to LSC-PolicyFeedback@lonestar.edu. We received four policy comments and four procedure comments.

Comment 1: A policy commenter noted that the policy does not explicitly provide instructors with the ability to automatically fail students for cheating or plagiarizing. The commenter asks whether deans are part of the process where a student's grade is changed. The commenter also states that it is unclear whether the Chief Academic Officer must approve of an instructor giving a student a failing grade on a paper or exam.

Response 1: The Office of the General Counsel notes that Board Policy section V.F.1. describes the College's policy regarding Student Discipline for Academic Misconduct. Instructors retain primary responsibility for matters relating to academic integrity within their courses. If an incident of academic misconduct cannot be informally resolved between the instructor and the student, then the instructor should clearly state in a written report how the student's actions violated the College's academic integrity policy, how a grade was affected (assuming it was), and any academic actions taken including providing a failing grade. The written report should be provided to the Chief Academic Officer. Changing grades (individual grades or overall course grades) requires written notice to the Chief Academic Officer.

Each individual college may decide what responsibility, if any, the deans have during an academic misconduct process to the extent that it does not conflict with policy or procedures.

Comment 2: A policy commenter suggested there be more information about the instructor handling an issue before proceeding with the Academic Integrity Review Committee hearing.

Response 2: The Office of the General Counsel notes that the Chief Academic Officer is the college official permitted to schedule an Academic Integrity Review Committee Hearing if, after investigation of the alleged academic misconduct, he or she determines that the academic misconduct warrants suspension or expulsion.

Comment 3: A policy commenter expressed concerns about the role of deans and faculty chairs in reporting academic misconduct.

Response 3: The Office of the General Counsel notes that Board Policy states that anyone may report academic misconduct in writing to the Chief Academic Officer. The policy places primary responsibility on instructors to manage academic misconduct either formally by submitting an academic misconduct report to the Chief Academic Officer or informally between the instructor and student. Each individual college may decide what responsibility, if any, the deans and faculty have during an academic misconduct process to the extent that it does not conflict with policy or procedures.

Comment 4: A policy commenter suggested making it clear that the Chief Academic Officer's decision is final and cannot be appealed.

Response 4: The Office of the General Counsel notes that the Chief Academic Officer may request an Academic Integrity Review Committee Hearing if he or she determines that the academic misconduct reported warrants suspension or expulsion. The Chief Academic Officer's determination to leave the instructor's remedy undisturbed or request for an Academic Integrity Review Committee Hearing for a suspension or expulsion is final. The Academic Integrity Review Committee recommends adopting or rejecting the suspension or expulsion proposed by the Chief Academic Officer. The Chancellor, ultimately, makes the final decision. The Chancellor's decision may not be appealed.

Comment 5: A policy commenter asserted that the Chief Academic Officer should automatically be the Vice President of Instruction.

Response 5: The Office of the General Counsel notes that each college president has discretion regarding which vice president shall serve as the Chief Academic Officer. This may or may not be the vice president of instruction, depending on the president's choice.

Comment 6: A procedure commenter read and agreed with these procedures.

Response 6: The Office of the General Counsel thanks the commenter for taking the time to read, review, and agree with the posted procedures.

Comment 7: A procedure commenter expressed concern that students will not be subject to the academic misconduct procedures for minor infractions and will take advantage.

Response 7: The Office of the General Counsel cannot comment on what constitutes a minor infraction; however, minor allegations of academic misconduct are encouraged to be resolved informally if possible. The Office of the General Counsel recommends regular and consistent discussion with the Chief Academic Officer regarding what constitutes a minor allegation of academic misconduct and appropriate resolution methods.

Comment 8: A procedure commenter acknowledged these procedures.

Response 8: The Office of the General Counsel thanks the commenter for taking the time to read, review, and comment on the posted procedures.