## **ARTICLE II**

# ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## 2.1 Academic Honesty Policy:

The KCTCS faculty and students are bound by principles of truth and honesty that are recognized as fundamental for a community of teachers and scholars. The college expects students and faculty to honor, and faculty to enforce, these academic principles. The college affirms that it will not tolerate academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, violation of academic rights of students (section 2.2) and student offenses (section 2.3).

A reference to where a student can find information about academic rights and academic offenses and the student's right to appeal shall be included in the course syllabus.

## 2.2 Academic Rights of Students:

When a student believes any of the following six academic rights have been violated, he/she should refer to section 2.4.1.1 for information on the Student Appeals process.

- **2.2.1 Information about course content:** A student has the right to be informed in reasonable detail in writing by the first or second class session, or in the introductory materials for a distance learning course, about the nature of the course and to expect the course to correspond generally to its official description.
- **2.2.2 Information about course grading criteria:** A student has the right to be informed in writing by the first or second class session, or in the introductory materials for a distance learning course, about the criteria to be used in evaluating the student's performance, a course grading system that includes specific expectations with relative weights, and to expect that the grades described in the *KCTCS Catalog* will be used.
- **2.2.3 Contrary opinion:** A student has the right to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in the classroom and laboratory without being penalized. A student may appeal the fact of guilt for all three faculty sanctions listed in 2.3.2.1. Also, a student may appeal the severity of the sanction of a failing grade for the course.
- **2.2.4 Academic evaluation.** A student has the right to receive a grade based only upon a fair and just evaluation of performance in the course as measured by the standards presented at the first or second class session or in the introductory materials for a distance learning course. Grades determined by anything other than the instructor's good-faith judgment based on such standards are improper. Among irrelevant considerations are race, color, religion, gender, disability, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or activities outside the classroom that are unrelated to the course work.
- **2.2.5 Academic records.** A student has the right to have academic records kept confidential unless the student consents in writing to have them released. The chief executive officer or designee may disclose the academic record of a student without the student's consent to authorized college personnel if the information is required for official use, such as advising students, writing recommendations, or selecting candidates for honorary organizations.
- **2.2.6 Evaluation of student character and ability.** A student has the right to have character and ability evaluated only by individuals with a personal knowledge of the student. Records containing information about a student's character and ability shall indicate when the information was provided, by whom, and the position of the individual providing the information.

## 2.3 Student Academic Offenses And Academic Sanctions:

When a student is believed to be guilty of any of the following four academic offenses, information concerning disposition of the case by the college and responsibilities of college personnel can be found in sections 2.5.2.1 through 2.5.2.3.

## 2.3.1 KCTCS Academic Offenses:

# 2.3.1.1 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of presenting ideas, words, or organization of a source, published or not, as if they were ones own. All quoted material must be in quotation marks, and all paraphrases, quotations, significant ideas, and organization must be acknowledged by some form of documentation acceptable to the instructor for the course.

Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work that a student submits as the student's own. Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but when the actual material is completed, it must be done by the student and the student alone. The use of the term "material" refers to work in any form including written, oral, and electronic.

All academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by a student to an instructor or other academic supervisor, is expected to be the result of the student's own thought, research, or self-expression. In any case in which a student feels unsure about a question of plagiarism involving the student's work, the student must consult the instructor before submitting the work.

## 2.3.1.2 Cheating

Cheating includes buying, stealing, or otherwise obtaining unauthorized copies of examinations or assignments for the purpose of improving one's academic standing. During examinations or in-class work, cheating includes having unauthorized information, and/or referring to unauthorized notes or other written or electronic information. In addition, copying from others, either during examinations or in the preparation of homework assignments, is a form of cheating.

## 2.3.1.3 Student Co-Responsibility

Anyone who knowingly assists in any form of academic dishonesty shall be considered as guilty as the student who accepts such assistance. Students should not allow their work to be copied or otherwise used by fellow students, nor should they sell or give unauthorized copies of examinations to other students.

## 2.3.1.4 Misuse or Student Falsification of Academic Records

The misuse or actual or attempted falsification, theft, misrepresentation, or other alteration of any official academic record of the college is a serious academic offense. As used in this context, "academic record" includes all paper and electronic versions of the partial or complete academic record.

- **2.3.2 Academic Sanctions/Penalties of Students (Academic Offenses):** Academic penalty shall not be imposed upon the student for non-academic infractions of college regulations. This principle does not compromise the right of the college to suspend or dismiss a student for non-academic reasons.
  - **2.3.2.1** *Faculty Academic Sanctions* (pertaining to sections 2.3.1.1 to 2.3.1.3)

For instances of academic dishonesty related to earning grades (violations 2.3.1.1 - 2.3.1.3), the instructor may implement any of three sanctions:

- A. a failing grade for the specific assignment; and/or
- B. a reduced grade for the course; and/or
- C. a failing grade for the course.

The specific sanction depends upon the weight of the assignment in satisfying the requirements for the course.

If an instructor chooses the sanction which assigns a failing grade for the course, the instructor shall notify the division chair, the chief executive officer or designee, and the registrar. For more information about the role of college personnel in the process, refer to section 2.5.2.

## **2.3.2.2** *Other Academic Sanctions* (pertaining to sections 2.3.1.4 and 2.3.2.1)

The instructor may also recommend that the student be suspended for any academic offenses (as defined in sections 2.3.1.1, 2.3.1.2, or 2.3.1.3).

Any student found guilty of a second academic violation shall be expelled from the college and shall not be allowed to enroll at any of the other KCTCS colleges for one academic year.

The minimum sanction for misuse or falsification of an academic record (violation 2.3.1.4), including the omission of information or attempted falsification or other misuse of academic records as described in section 2.3.1.4, is suspension for one semester.

## 2.4 Student Appeals And Responsibilities:

## 2.4.1 Student Responsibilities:

## 2.4.1.1 Responsibility Involving Academic Rights of Students (section 2.0)

When a student believes his/her academic rights have been violated, the student shall report the matter in writing to the appropriate division chair\* as soon as possible and no later than ten calendar days after the first class day of the following semester. The student shall specify which right(s) enumerated in Section 2.2 have been violated. This letter is the formal notification that begins the appeals process. At this point, the division chair tries to resolve the case. If the case is not resolved within fifteen (15) calendar days, the division chair will refer the case to the chief executive officer.

If the student does not accept the decision of the chief executive officer or designee, the student has ten calendar days to request in writing a hearing before the College Appeals Board. (Refer to sections 2.6, 2.7, and 2.8 for Appeals Board responsibilities, authority, and composition.) No new matter may be appealed which was not identified by the student in the original appeal to the division chair.

Please refer to flowchart: Appeals in Cases of an Alleged Violation of Student Academic Rights Figure 1)

# 2.4.1.2 Responsibility Involving Academic Offenses (section 2.3)

When a student is believed to be guilty of any of the four academic offenses (2.3.1.1 - 2.3.1.4), a student will find information concerning responsibilities of college personnel in section 2.5.2.

In case of an alleged academic offense (section 2.3.1) by a student, the instructor shall notify the student in writing, explain the sanction to be implemented, and inform the student of her/his rights to appeal.

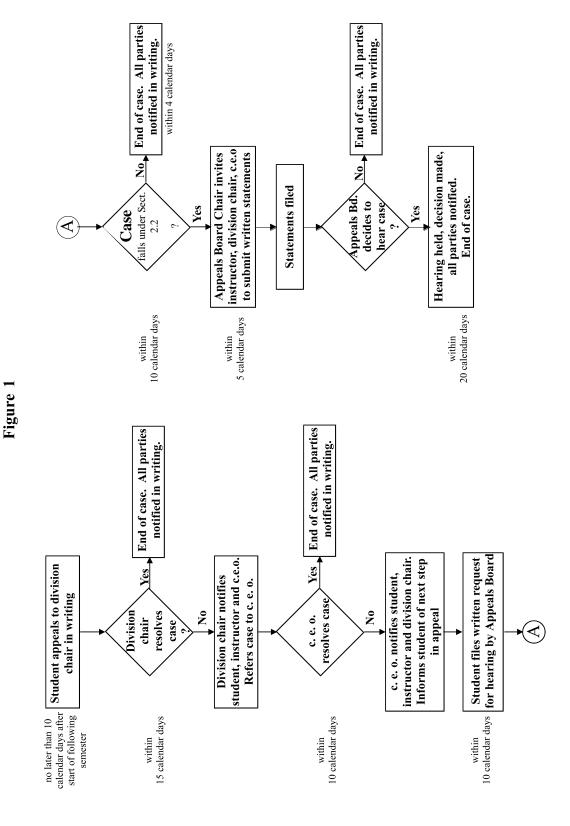
The student shall have ten (10) calendar days from the date of submission of the instructor's notification in which to appeal in writing to the instructor's division chair.\* The student may appeal the fact of guilt for all three faculty sanctions listed in section 2.3.2.1 and other academic sanctions in section 2.3.2.2. The student may appeal the severity of the academic sanction which assigns a failing grade for the course.

Refer to flowchart: Appeals In Cases of an Alleged Student Academic Offense (Figure 2)

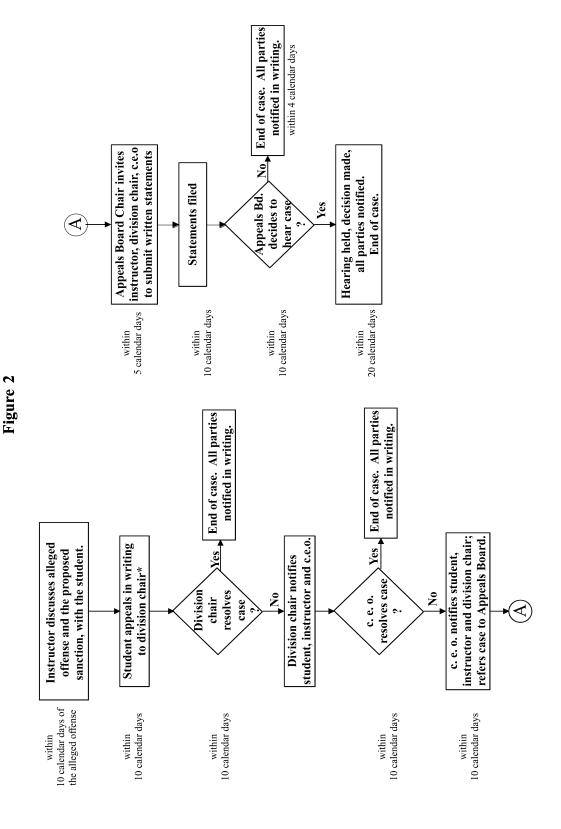
- **2.4.2 Student Rights During the Appeals Process (Academic Rights/Academic Offenses):** In cases of academic rights and academic offenses, the student shall have the right of class attendance and participation during the consideration of any appeal except that such attendance and participation may be limited when:
  - a. outside agencies are used as a part of the student's educational experience, in which case precedence will be given to the terms of any agreement(s), which have been negotiated between the college and the agency; or
  - b. patient/client contact is involved in the student's educational experience, in which case only patient/client contact may be limited or excluded at the discretion of program faculty.

If the appeal is decided in the student's favor, the college must provide an opportunity for the student to complete any essential experiences missed due to the appeals process.

# Appeals in Cases of an Alleged Violation of Student Academic Rights



# Appeals in Cases of an Alleged Student Academic Offense



### 2.5 Disposition of Alleged Violations of Student Rights/Academic Offenses of Students:

# 2.5.1 <u>In Cases Involving Alleged Violations of the Academic Rights of a Student (2.2):</u>

## 2.5.1.1 Responsibility of the Division Chair\*

The division chair shall attempt to resolve all cases of student appeal to the satisfaction of the student and the instructor. If the division chair cannot resolve the matter within fifteen (15) calendar days after the appeal is filed, the division chair shall refer the matter to the chief executive officer or designee, and shall notify in writing the student, instructor, and chief executive officer.

## 2.5.1.2 Responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer

If the chief executive officer or designee is unable to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the instructor and student, the chief executive officer or designee shall notify the student, instructor, and division chair in writing within ten calendar days of the date on which the case was forwarded by the division chair. The chief executive officer or designee shall also notify the student of the next step to appeal the decision to the College Appeals Board.

## 2.5.2 In Cases Involving Alleged Student Academic Offenses (section 2.3):

## 2.5.2.1 Responsibility of the Instructor

Within ten (10) calendar days of the occurrence of an alleged student academic offense, the instructor shall submit in writing to the division chair\* a description of the activity that resulted in the accusation of academic dishonesty and the sanction implemented when a failing grade is assigned. (Copies of letters shall be forwarded to the chief academic and student affairs officers.)

An instructor shall notify the student in writing of the academic offense, explain the sanction, and inform the student of her/his right to appeal the fact of guilt and/or severity of the sanction when a failing grade is assigned.

If the student appeals the severity of the sanction and/or the fact of guilt, the instructor may confer with the appropriate division chair\* to determine appropriate sanctions for the student. All academic misconduct actions must be reported to the chief academic officer for record keeping purposes.

# 2.5.2.2 Responsibility of the Division Chair\*

The division chair shall attempt to resolve all cases referred by student appeal to the satisfaction of the instructor and the student. If the division chair upholds the decision of the instructor, the student may appeal, in writing, within ten (10) calendar days of notification of the division chair's decision, to the chief executive officer or designee.

# 2.5.2.3 Responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer

Upon reviewing the basis of the student appeal, the chief executive officer or designee should attempt to resolve the case. If not resolved, the chief executive officer must refer the case to the College Appeals Board within 10 calendar days.

## 2.6 College Appeals Board Responsibilities:

2.6.1 Responsibility in Cases Involving Academic Rights of a Student (section 2.2): Within ten calendar days of receipt of a student request for a hearing, the Chair of the Appeals Board will convene the Board to determine if the alleged offense falls within section 2.2, and if the student's appeal falls under the authority of the Appeals Board. If the offense does not fall within this section, the Chair of the Appeals Board shall notify the student and appropriate college officials within four calendar days after the Board's determination. The notice shall contain the reasons for the Board's denial of the student's request for a hearing.

If the Appeals Board determines that the alleged offense falls within Section 2.2, and that the student's appeal falls under the authority of the Appeals Board, then within five calendar days the Chair of the Appeals Board shall invite the instructor, division chair, and chief executive officer to file statements with the Appeals Board. Such statements shall be filed within ten calendar days after

the receipt of the invitation. Within ten calendar days of receipt of these statements, the Appeals Board shall review the appeal and associated statements and decide by majority vote whether to grant a hearing in the case.

The decision of whether a hearing will be granted shall be communicated in writing within five calendar days of the decision to the student, instructor, division chair, and chief executive officer with reasons for the decision.

If the Appeals Board decides not to hear the case, the student has no further right to appeal within the system.

If the Appeals Board decides to hear the case, it will establish procedures (including a schedule) and notify the student, instructor, division chair, and the chief executive officer or designee. All parties shall have the opportunity to appear at the hearing and to present oral and written evidence in support of their positions. The Appeals Board may call for further evidence as it deems appropriate. The hearing shall be held, and a final decision made by the Board within twenty calendar days after the decision to hear the case. The decision of the Appeals Board is final, and the student has no further right to appeal within the system (see section 2.6.2.1.).

If the Appeals Board hears the case because of some question about the fact of the student's guilt, it shall have the authority to impose a final decision as to guilt. If the Board decides not to hear the case, the student has no further right of appeal within the system (see section 2.6.2.1.).

If the Appeals Board hears the case because of an appeal of the severity of the sanction, it shall recommend an appropriate sanction to the instructor or to the chief executive officer of the college. If the Appeals Board does not agree that the sanction of dropping the student from a course or program be imposed, the Board shall return its decision and its recommendation of appropriate sanction to the chief executive officer who shall consult with the division chair and the instructor involved as to the appropriate sanction.

The instructor may refuse to accept a recommendation of the Appeals Board with respect to an appropriate sanction, but if the instructor does so, the Board shall have the authority to give the student a W in the course. If the Board decides not to hear the case, the student has no further right of appeal within the system.

## 2.6.2.1 KCTCS Chancellors' Approval of the Suspension/Expulsion Sanction

When hearing a disciplinary case in which the instructor and the chief executive officer have recommended actual suspension or expulsion, the Appeals Board may concur with the instructor and chief executive officer or designee (chief academic officer) and shall recommend to the KCTCS Chancellors' Office for approval and implementation of the sanction of actual suspension or expulsion. Suspension or expulsion decisions may be appealed to the KCTCS Board of Regents pursuant to KRS 164.370. The Chancellor(s) shall notify the student of the decision in writing. Within thirty (30) days of the delivery date of the Chancellors' decision, an appeal may be taken to the KCTCS Board of Regents pursuant to KRS 164.370.

# 2.7 Authority of the Appeals Board in Cases of Academic Rights of a Student:

If the Chair of the Appeals Board deems it necessary, the Chair may call upon legal counsel to assure the proper administration of a case.

After hearing a case involving a violation of student academic rights, the Board may either:

- a. direct that the student's grade in the course in question be changed, but only to a W (Withdrew) or a P (Passing);
- b. uphold the assigned sanction; or
- c. may take any other reasonable action calculated to guarantee the rights.

If the appeal is decided in the student's favor, the college must provide an opportunity for the student to complete any essential experiences missed due to the appeals process. Under no circumstances shall a student's grade be lowered as a result of the appeal.

## 2.8 Composition of the College Appeals Board:

(The composition of this Board can only be changed by the Kentucky Community and Technical College System Board of Regents.)

The College Appeals Board shall consist of six members: two full-time students and four full-time faculty members. In addition, two student alternates and two faculty alternates shall be selected on the same basis and with the same requirements as the regular members. All members of the Appeals Board and/or their alternates shall be expected to meet within 48 hours after notice from the Chair.

Appeals Board members shall meet the following criteria:

- a. Each student member must have earned at least 24 semester credit hours at the college, must have had one full year residence in the college, and must be in good academic standing. Each student member will be appointed by the chief executive officer or designee upon recommendation of the chief student affairs officer. Appointments shall be for one-year terms. A student may not serve concurrently on both the Appeals Board and the Judicial Board.
- b. The faculty members shall be elected to staggered three-year terms by the faculty. The Chair of the Appeals Board shall be elected by the Appeals Board members.

A quorum for the conduct of business will be five members, no fewer than three of whom are faculty members.

## 2.9 Authority of the KCTCS Board of Regents in Cases Involving Suspension or Expulsion of a Student:

Suspension or expulsion decisions may be appealed to the KCTCS Board of Regents pursuant to KRS 164.370 (see section 2.6.2.1.).

\*Chief academic officer responsibility if the student's instructor is also the division chair (in case of a distance learning course, the instructor, division chair, chief executive officer, and all other roles shall be those of the college offering the course, the KCTCS Delivering Institution).