

Student Code

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. Trident Technical College students are members of both the community at large and the academic community. As members of the academic community, students are subject to the obligations which accrue to them by virtue of this membership. As members of the larger community of which the College is a part, students are entitled to all rights and protection accorded them by the laws of that community. By the same token, students also are subject to all laws, the enforcement of which is the responsibility of duly constituted authorities. When students violate laws, they may incur penalties prescribed by legal authorities. In such instances, College discipline will be initiated only when the presence of the student on campus will disrupt the educational process of the College. However, when a student's violation of the law also adversely affects the College's pursuit of its recognized educational objectives, the College may enforce its own regulations. When students violate College regulations, they are subject to disciplinary action by the College whether or not their conduct violates the law. If a student's behavior simultaneously violated both College regulation and the law, the College may take disciplinary action independent of that taken by legal authorities.

B. Internal Solutions of Problems

The College will seek to solve problems by internal procedures of due process. When necessary, off-campus law enforcement and judicial authorities may be involved.

C. Definitions

When used in this code, unless the content requires other meaning:

1. College means Trident Technical College.
2. President means the chief executive officer of the College.
3. Vice President refers to either the vice president for Student Services or vice president for Academic Affairs.
4. Student means a person taking any course(s) offered by the College, either full time or part time.
5. Instructor means any person employed by the College to conduct classes.
6. Violation of Law means a violation of a law of the United States or any law or ordinance of a state or political subdivision which has jurisdiction over the place in which the violation occurs.
7. Administrative Officer means anyone designated at the College as being on the administrative staff such as president, vice president, academic dean or public safety officer.
8. Disciplinary Probation means a confidential record of the student's action is maintained in the appropriate vice president's office. While no record is kept in permanent files, in the event of future violations of the student code, the student will be subject to suspension or expulsion.
9. Suspension means a temporary separation of the College and student under specified conditions.
10. Expulsion means permanent separation of the College and student insofar as pursuance of degree, diploma or certificate programs are concerned. Depending upon the circumstances, the expulsion may also apply to Continuing Education courses.
11. Student Cabinet refers to the student group comprised of the president and vice president of all officially chartered student organizations of TTC.

D. Additional Requirements

There may be additional and/or more stringent requirements for students in Allied Health Sciences Division programs and Nursing Division programs. If there is a conflict between this handbook and the Allied Health Sciences Division or Nursing Division handbooks, the Allied Health Sciences Division or Nursing Division handbooks will prevail.

II. GENERAL RIGHTS OF STUDENTS

A. Nondiscrimination

There shall be no discrimination in any respect by the College against a student or applicant for admission as a student, based on race, color, age, religion, national origin, gender, disability or sexual orientation. Student organizations of the College shall employ membership policies which do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, religion, national origin, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

B. Freedom of Speech and Assembly

Students shall have the right to freedom of speech and assembly without prior restraints or censorship subject to clearly stated, reasonable and nondiscriminatory rules and regulations regarding time, place and manner. In the absence of a College policy to the contrary, the president must approve in advance all special-purpose student gatherings such as assemblies, protests, parades, processions or similar gatherings.

C. Freedom of Press

In their publications, students are entitled to the constitutional right of freedom of the press, including constitutional limitations on prior restraint and censorship. To ensure this protection, the College shall have an editorial board with membership representing Student Cabinet, faculty and administration. The College has the responsibility of defining the selection process for its editorial board. The primary responsibility of the board shall be to establish and safeguard editorial policies and to appoint an editor in chief for the student newspaper.

D. Protection Against Unreasonable Searches and Seizures

Students are entitled to the constitutional right to be secure in their persons, dwellings, papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures. College public safety officers or administrative officers may conduct searches and seizures only as authorized by law.

E. Student Representation in College Governance

Students may be asked to serve on campus committees that have the following duties:

1. To propose policies that affect student activities and conduct.
2. To make policy decisions on such matters.
3. To implement policy.

F. Classroom Behavior

Discussion and expression of all views relevant to the subject matter are recognized as necessary to the educational process, but students have no right to interfere with the freedom of instructors to teach or the rights of other students to learn. The instructor sets the standards of behavior acceptable in the classroom by announcing these standards early in the semester. If a student behaves disruptively in class after the instructor has explained the unacceptability of such conduct, the instructor may dismiss the student for the remainder of that class period. The instructor should initiate a discussion with the student to resolve the issue prior to the next class meeting. A further disruption by the student may result in a second dismissal and referral in writing by the faculty member to the vice president for Student Services.

G. Evaluation and Grading

Instructors will follow the announced College standards in evaluating and grading students. Grades are awarded for student academic achievement. No grade will be reduced as a disciplinary action for student action or behavior unrelated to academic achievement.

H. Privacy Information

Information about individual student views, beliefs and political associations acquired by instructors, counselors or administrators in the course of their work is confidential. It can be disclosed to others only with prior written consent of the student involved, under legal compulsion or in case of emergency as determined by the director of Public Safety or the appropriate Vice President.

I. Records

1. General

The Registrar's Office will maintain and safeguard student records. All official student and former student records are private and confidential and shall be preserved by the College. Separate records may be maintained by other departments for the following categories: (1) academic, (2) medical, psychiatric and counseling, (3) placement, (4) financial aid, (5) disciplinary, (6) financial, and (7) veterans affairs.

2. Disciplinary Records

Records of disciplinary action shall be maintained in the office of the Vice President for Student Services. No record of disciplinary action for student action or behavior unrelated to academic achievement shall be entered or made on the student's academic records in the Registrar's Office.

3. Confidentiality of Records

Before information in any student file may be released to anyone, the student must give prior written consent except in these instances stated below:

- a. To instructors and administrators for legitimate educational purposes and for routine administrative and statistical purposes.
- b. To accrediting organizations to carry out their functions.
- c. To appropriate parties to protect the health and safety of students or other individuals in emergencies with the understanding that only information essential to the emergency situation will be released.
- d. The vice president may authorize release of directory information as defined by the College, in accordance with the law.
- e. If the inquirer has a court order, the vice president or someone designated by that official will release information from the student's file.
- f. To parents or guardians of dependent students who submit a request form and provide appropriate documentation to support student's dependent status requests.

4. Treatment of Records After Student Graduation or Withdrawal

When students withdraw or graduate from a technical college, their records shall continue to be subject to the provisions of this code.

5. Student Organizations

An essential prerequisite for a student organization to be approved is that it have educational importance and that its objectives be clearly explained in a proposed charter. The formation of organizations strictly as social clubs is discouraged.

III. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

A. General

Certain conduct is proscribed and upon violation of such proscriptions, a student shall be subject to one or more of the sanctions specified in section IV.B.2.b. However, it is expected that the more severe sanctions of suspension and expulsion will be imposed sparingly and only for more extreme or aggravated violations or for repeated violations.

B. Abuse of Privilege of Freedom of Speech or Assembly

No student, acting alone or with others, shall obstruct or disrupt any teaching, administrative, disciplinary, public service, research or other activity authorized or conducted on the campuses of the College. This disruption does not necessarily have to involve violence or force for the student to face disciplinary action. In addition to administrative action, any person who violated civil or criminal laws may be turned over to the appropriate authorities. In the event of illegal or disruptive activity on a College campus, the vice president or other administrative officer will request that those involved either leave the campus or abide by regulations governing uses of, or presence on, the campus. The vice president or other official will further announce that failure to disperse will result in enforcement of South Carolina law pertaining to illegal or disruptive activity on a College campus. According to South Carolina law, it shall be unlawful for any person willfully or unnecessarily (a) to interfere with or disturb in any way or in any place the students or teachers of any school or college in this state, (b) to enter upon any such school or school premises, (c) to loiter around the premises, except on business, without the permission of the principal or president in charge, or, (d) to act in an obnoxious manner thereon.

C. Falsification of Information

Falsification of information and other unlawful acts, with intent to deceive, is defined to include but is not limited to:

1. Forgery, alteration or misuse of College documents, records or identification cards.
2. Destruction of evidence with the intent to deny its presentation to the Student Grievance Committee when properly notified to appear.

D. Infringement of the Rights of Others

Infringing on the rights of others is defined to include, but not limited to, the following:

1. Physical or verbal abuse inflicted on another person.
2. Severe emotional distress inflicted upon another person.
3. Theft, destruction, damage or misuse of the private property of members of the College community or nonmembers of the College community occurring on campus or off campus during any College-approved activity.
4. Sexual harassment.

E. Failure to Comply

Failure to comply with the directions of College officials in the performance of their duties; failure to promptly identify oneself to College officials when requested; failure to comply with disciplinary sanctions. This includes direct disobedience of a lawful order of a College official, as well as failure to evacuate a building during a fire alarm or refusing to present an ID upon request.

F. Other Unlawful Acts

Unlawful acts which call for discipline include, but are not limited to:

1. Destruction, theft, damage or misuse of College property occurring on or off campus.
2. Unauthorized entry upon the property of the College after closing hours.
3. Unauthorized presence in any College facility after closing hours.
4. Unauthorized possession or use of a key to any College facility or other property.
5. Possession or use, on campus, of any firearm or other dangerous weapon or incendiary device or explosive unless such possession or use has been authorized by the College.
6. Possession, use or distribution on campus of any narcotics or dangerous or unlawful drugs as defined by the laws of the United States or the State of South Carolina.
7. Possession, use or distribution on campus of any beverage containing alcohol or presence on campus under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
8. Violation of institutional policies while on campus or off campus when participating in a College-approved activity.
9. Violation of South Carolina and/or federal laws while on campus or off campus when participating in a College-approved activity.
10. Engaging in any activity which disrupts the educational process of the College, or adversely interferes with other normal functions and services.

G. Also see Academic Misconduct

IV. RULES FOR STUDENT DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE AND SANCTIONS

The procedures which follow are designed to deal with complaints against students by faculty, staff or other students, excluding complaints of academic dishonesty. Due process is essential in dealing with infractions of College regulations and state and federal statutes. Consequently, any disciplinary sanction imposed on a student or organization will follow the provisions of this code.

A. Administrative Suspension

1. If an act of misconduct by one or more students threatens the health or well-being of any member of the academic community or seriously disrupts the function and good order of the College, an administrative officer may direct students involved to cease and desist such conduct and advise them that failing to cease and desist will result in immediate temporary suspension. If the students fail to cease and desist, the administrative officer may then suspend them from the College until a resolution of the matter can be made.
2. The administrative officer invoking such administrative suspension shall notify the Vice President in writing of the individuals involved and the nature of the infraction before 5 p.m. of the first class day following its imposition. If immediate identification of the student or students is impossible, such notice shall be given within two working days after identification has been determined.
3. After notification of the students involved, a hearing will be held in three working days or as soon thereafter as practicable, if requested by the suspended student(s).

B. Complaints

1. A charge involving a student infraction must be filed in writing with the office of the Vice President for Student Services.
2. The Vice President shall make a preliminary investigation of the charge. After investigating the charge the Vice President may act as follows:
 - a. Drop the charges.
 - b. Impose a sanction from the following:
 1. A written reprimand.
 2. An obligation to make restitution or reimbursement.
 3. A suspension or termination of particular student privileges.
 4. Disciplinary probation.
 5. Suspension from the College.
 6. Expulsion from the College.
 7. Refer the student to a College office or community agency to perform or obtain services.
 8. Other sanctions as determined to be appropriate by the Vice President.
 9. Any combination of the above.
3. A student (except for the students for whom tuition has been waived) who has been suspended from the College or expelled from the College may request a hearing before the Student Grievance Committee. This request must be submitted within two working days after receipt of the letter. At the hearing, the vice president shall report the nature of the alleged misconduct, the name of the complainant, the name of the student against whom the charge has been filed, the preliminary investigation and the reason for his or her decision.

V. THE STUDENT GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

The College shall have a Student Grievance Committee (hereafter referred to as the Committee) to consider the case of a student who declines to accept the decisions of the Vice President. A committee shall be appointed each time a hearing is requested.

A. Membership of the committee shall be composed of the following:

1. Three faculty members appointed by the president.
2. Three student volunteers from the Student Cabinet and approved by the president.
3. One member of the Student Services staff appointed by the Vice President for Student Services and approved by the President.
4. The Vice President serves as a nonvoting member of the committee.
5. The Chair shall be appointed by the President from among the membership of the committee.

B. Functions of the committee are described as follows:

1. To hear a grievance from a student charged with an infraction that may result in disciplinary action.
2. To hand down a decision based only on evidence introduced at the hearing.
3. To provide the student with a statement of the committee's decision, including findings of fact, and if applicable, to impose one or more of the following sanctions or disciplinary actions:
 - a. A written reprimand.
 - b. An obligation to make restitution or reimbursement.
 - c. A suspension or termination of particular student privileges.
 - d. Disciplinary probation.
 - e. Suspension from the College.
 - f. Expulsion from the College.
 - g. Any combination of the above, including sanctions more or less severe than those imposed by the Vice President.

VI. PROCEDURES FOR HEARING BEFORE THE STUDENT GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

A. Procedure Duties of the Vice President

At least seven calendar days prior to the date set for a hearing before the committee, the vice president shall have hand delivered or sent a certified letter to the student's last known address providing the student with the following information:

1. A restatement of the charge or charges.
2. The time and place of the hearing.
3. A restatement of the student's procedural rights.
4. A list of potential witnesses.
5. The names of committee members.

On written request of the student, the hearing may be held prior to the expiration of the seven days advance notification period, if the Vice President concurs with this request and if it is possible to convene the committee more quickly.

B. Procedural Rights of the Student include the following:

1. The right to counsel. However, the role of the person acting as counsel is solely to advise the student. Legal counsel will not be allowed to question or cross examine witnesses or to address the committee or witnesses for any purpose, directly or indirectly.
2. The right to produce witnesses on one's behalf.
3. The right to request, in writing, that the president disqualify any voting member of the committee for prejudice or bias. (The request must contain reasons.) A request for disqualification, if made, must be submitted at least two working days prior to the hearing. If such disqualification occurs, the appropriate nominating body shall appoint a replacement to be approved by the president.
4. The right to present evidence.
5. The right to know the identity of the person(s) bringing the charge(s).
6. The right to hear witnesses on behalf of the person bringing the charges.
7. The right to testify or to refuse to testify without such refusal being detrimental to the student.
8. The right to appeal to the president who will review the official findings of the hearing. The appeal to the president must be in writing and it must be made within seven working days of the receipt of the committee's decision.

C. The Conduct of the Committee Hearings

1. Hearings before the committee shall be confidential and shall be closed to all persons except the following:
 - a. The student
 - b. Counsels
 - c. A recorder chosen by the committee chair
 - d. Witnesses shall
 1. Give testimony before the committee.
 2. Be subject to questions from the student and committee.
 3. Upon the decision of the committee chair, be asked to leave the hearing.
2. The committee shall have the authority to adopt supplementary rules of procedure consistent with this code.
3. The committee shall have the authority to render written advisory opinions concerning the meaning and application of this code.
4. The committee shall not convene on a complaint if a student accused of misconduct under this code has been charged with a crime for the same act or closely related acts by federal, state or local authorities. However, the committee may proceed to hear and decide the case prior to the disposition of pending or threatened criminal charges in one of the following instances:
 - a. If the student so requests in writing, within seven working days of the criminal charge being brought, or
 - b. If the nature of the alleged misconduct and the circumstances surrounding it pose a serious risk to

the health and well-being of the student or other members of the College community.

- c. If the vice president determines it is in the best interest of the College.
5. A student who refuses to comply with the procedures and rules established by the committee may be subject to removal from the hearing. The committee will complete the hearing and make a decision in the student's absence.
 6. Upon completion of a hearing, the committee shall meet in executive session to determine concurrence or nonconcurrence with the Vice President's decision. The committee may make sanctions more or less severe than those imposed by the vice president.
 7. Decisions of the committee shall be made by majority vote.
 8. Within five working days after the decision of the committee, the Vice President shall have hand delivered or shall send a certified letter to the student's last known address providing the student with the committee's decision.

D. Appeal to the President

The appeal to the president must be in writing and must be made within seven working days of the receipt of the committee's decision.

The president, whose decision is final, shall have the authority to:

1. Receive from the student an appeal of the committee's decision.
2. Review the findings and decisions of the committee.
3. Hear from the student, the Vice President and/or the members of the committee before ruling on an appeal.
4. Approve or modify the decision of the committee.
5. Inform the student in writing of the final decision within 10 working days of the receipt of the appeal.

Academic Misconduct

1. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate use of a College computer, cheating, plagiarism and/or collusion, and falsification of information.

A. A computer violation of the honor code is defined to include the following:

1. Representing another's work or answers as one's own.
2. Using another's access (password) for either obtaining privileged information or causing unauthorized changes.
3. Bypassing, by any means, security measures installed on the computer.
4. Using College Internet access for sending, receiving or printing information which is personal or unrelated to current course work at TTC.

NOTE: Students must comply with all College lab rules and TTC Procedure 3-1-1 "Use of Information Technology Resources," available at www.tridenttech.edu/ttcpolicies/section3/UseofITResources.htm

B. Cheating is defined to include the following:

1. Copying from another student's work.
2. Using unauthorized material during a test.
3. Unauthorized collaborating with any other person during a testing situation.
4. Substituting material written ahead of time for material required to be produced during a testing situation.
5. Soliciting, obtaining, using, buying, selling, or transporting unauthorized tests or information about tests or other course projects.
6. Substituting for another student or permitting another person to substitute for oneself during a testing situation.

C. Plagiarism is defined as the appropriation of any other person's work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own work offered for credit. In most cases, plagiarism consists of submitting written or electronic work as your own that was copied from another source and not cited. Plagiarism is not limited to words. In fact, any time you use someone else's ideas, images, or words and fail to cite your source, you have committed plagiarism.

D. Collusion is defined as the unauthorized collaboration with any other person in preparing work offered for credit.

E. Falsification of information with intent to deceive.

F. Other behavior constituting academic misconduct as determined by the vice president of Academic Affairs or her designee.

2. Procedure for Disciplinary Action for Academic Misconduct

A. First Offense

1. When a faculty member has reliable evidence of academic misconduct, the faculty member will review the facts and the proposed penalty with the appropriate department head.
2. With the approval of the department head, the faculty member may choose one of the four levels of action:

Level 1: Give no credit for the work in question and require the work to be done again for credit.

Level 2: Give a zero for the work in question and not allow the work to be redone for credit.

Level 3: Assign a grade of F for the course.

Level 4: Assign a grade of F for the course and request in writing to the dean that the assistant vice president for Instruction place the student on disciplinary probation.

Note: In cases of computer violations of the honor code, sanctions also may include denial of computer access upon the recommendation

of the instructor and approval by the department head, dean and assistant vice president for Instruction.

3. If the dean approves of the disciplinary probation request, it will be forwarded to the assistant vice president for instruction. After receiving the request and documentation and discussing the charge of academic misconduct with the student, the assistant vice president for Instruction may:

- a. Uphold the decision to assign a grade of F for the course and place the student on disciplinary probation.
- b. Direct the faculty member to take another level of action or no action.

B. Second Offense

1. If the assistant vice president for Instruction determines that a student has been involved in a second incident of academic misconduct, the student will be subject to suspension or expulsion from the College.

C. Grievance Process

1. A student placed on suspension or expulsion for academic misconduct may grieve the decision of the assistant vice president for instruction by requesting a hearing before the vice president for Academic Affairs. This request must be submitted to the vice president for Academic Affairs within two working days after the student receives the assistant vice president's decision.
2. If a student wishes to grieve the decision of the vice president for Academic Affairs, the student may request a hearing before the Student Grievance Committee. This request must be submitted to the vice president for Academic Affairs within two days after the student receives the decision. At the hearing the vice president shall report the nature of the alleged misconduct, the name of the student against whom the charge has been filed, results of the investigation and the decision of the vice president.
3. In cases of academic misconduct, the vice president for Academic Affairs will be responsible for the procedural duties of the vice president as outlined in "Procedures for Hearing Before the Student Grievance Committee."

Academic Complaints By Students

Most academic matters generally will be left to the discretion of the faculty member; however, students may follow the procedure below concerning academic complaints. No retaliation or adverse action will be taken against the student for filing the complaint.

1. The student must first notify the faculty member of the complaint within 10 working days of the incident which generates the complaint.
2. The faculty member will discuss the matter with the student within 10 working days of this notice.
3. If the matter is not resolved in this informal conference, the student may file a written complaint with the faculty member's supervisor. Complaint forms are available in all academic division offices.
4. The supervisor must respond to the complaint within five working days of receipt of the complaint.
5. If the matter is still not resolved, the student will have five working days to present the written complaint to the next level supervisor (the dean or assistant vice president for instruction).
6. If the matter is still not resolved, the student will have five working days to present the written complaint to the vice president for Academic Affairs. In all cases, the decision of the vice president will be final.