

<b>Policy Title : Appeal and Formal Complaint Process</b>		
<b>Department: Administration</b>	<b>Owner: Executive Council</b>	<b>Original Date May 2009</b>
<b>Area: Student Relations</b>	<b>Approved by: Executive Council</b>	<b>Revision Date August 2010, January 2011, May 2011, July 2011, October 2012, August 2013, July 2014, November 2015</b>
<b>Audience: Students, Faculty and Administration</b>		

### **Policy Statement**

This policy outlines the steps in the appeal process and the requirements at each step for students, faculty, committee members and administration. The informal conference is the only step in the appeal process for students enrolled in CP, CSST, and MS. The informal conference is the only step in the appeal process available to a student suspended or dismissed from the Program during or at the end of the initial probationary period. It is also the only step available to students on initial probation. If a student does not attend a scheduled meeting or hearing, the student forfeits their right to the appeal.

The appeal process is not available to:

- Challenge stated policies or procedures of the College or the clinical facility.
- Appeal issues related to employment. Students who are employed within Sentara Healthcare System (SHC) while enrolled in the College must use the SHC Employee Grievance Procedure for employment issues.
- Appeal clinical failure. Clinical evaluations and grades are NOT eligible for the appeal process.

### **Purpose**

The appeal process is available to students to assist them in resolving problems or complaints. It may be used by students to appeal a probation, suspension, or dismissal from the Program; or any perceived infraction of the Student Bill of Rights. This may include the appeal of a final course grade only if the student has reason to believe that the grade was unjustly awarded due to faculty prejudice or caprice. Students who are a “no show” for any conference or hearing at any step in the process lose their right to continue the appeal. Since this is a process between the student and the College, the student may not bring parents, spouses, relatives, friends, legal representation or any other individuals to any conference or hearing. The only exception to this requirement is the committee hearing (see section on Committee Hearing) where individuals with direct knowledge of the issues may be requested to attend.

### **Procedures**

#### **Steps in the Appeal Process**

##### **1. Informal Conference**

Students are encouraged to discuss problems as they arise with their faculty and/or Program Director. Students must try to resolve issues, including probation, suspension, and dismissal, in an informal conference before they may proceed with the additional steps in the appeal process.

Required Action steps	Performed by	Supplemental guidance
Students must make an appointment for an informal conference within five (5) working days of the incident to meet with the faculty member/Program Director involved. The student must submit a statement of appeal at least 2 days prior to the informal conference. The appeal statement must be no more than one page and should address the basis for the appeal, additional information to be considered and desired outcome.	Student	The informal conference is the only step in the appeal process available to a student suspended or dismissed from the program during or at the end of the initial probationary period. It is also the only step available to students on initial probation. <b>The informal conference is the only step in the appeal process for students enrolled in CP, CSST, NA and MS.</b>

## 2. Formal Conference

In the event the issues cannot be resolved in an informal conference, the student may ask for a formal conference

Required Action steps	Performed by	Supplemental guidance
The student must present a written request for a formal conference to the Dean, Academic Affairs, within five (5) working days from the date of the informal conference.	Student	
The Dean will make the decision on which member of the Executive Council will hear the formal conference. That individual will hold a formal conference with the student within five (5) working days of receiving the student's written request.	Dean and Executive Council member	During the formal conference the student and the faculty member or other individuals with knowledge of the issues will have an opportunity to state their views.
The student will be given or sent written notification of the decision on the issues raised within five (5) working days of the formal conference. The written notification will state the reasons for decision. The person hearing the formal conference may also give the	Executive Council member	

student oral notification at the same time or before written notice is given or sent.		
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### 3. Committee Hearing

In the event the issues cannot be resolved in the informal and formal conferences the student may ask for a Committee hearing.

Required Action steps	Performed by	Supplemental guidance
The student must present a written request for a Committee hearing to the Dean, Academic Affairs within five (5) working days from the notification of the outcome of the formal conference.	Student	
The Dean will designate the members of the committee (odd number), which at the Dean's discretion may include representatives from hospital Administration, the Program's Advisory Committee, a community representative, a Program Official from another College, students, and a representative from SHC Human Resources.	Dean	At the Dean's discretion the committee may include representatives from hospital Administration, the Program's Advisory Committee, a community representative, a Program Official from another College, students, and a representative from SHC Human Resources.
The Committee will hold the hearing within ten (10) working days of the Dean's receipt of the student's written request for a Committee hearing.	Committee	At the committee hearing the student and the faculty member or other individuals with direct knowledge of the issues will have an opportunity to state their views. The student does not have the right to have legal or other representation at the hearing, and does not have the right to have the hearing recorded.
After the hearing, the Committee will convene in private and discuss the issues. The decision of this Committee is one of recommendation to the Dean.	Committee	The decision of this Committee is one of recommendation to the Dean.
The student will be given or sent written notification of the Dean's decision within five (5)	Dean	

working days of the hearing. The decision of the Dean will be final, binding, and not subject to any further appeal.		
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The following outlines the Committee Hearing Procedures:

- a. The Chair of the Committee (appointed by the Dean) presents the issue to the Committee for discussion. No other persons are permitted to attend during this time.
- b. All persons (instructors, students, staff, etc.) who have direct knowledge of the issue will be invited to state his/her views before this Committee.
- c. The Committee will then convene in private and discuss the issues.
- d. A recommendation from this Committee is made by voting with every member having one vote.
- e. The recommendation will be shared with the Dean immediately.
- f. The Dean will review all information and make a final decision. The decision of the Dean is final, binding, and not subject to any further appeal.

The discussions of this Committee are confidential and will not be discussed with students, faculty, staff, or administration other than as outlined above.

As a final step to the Appeals Policy, students may contact the following agencies to file a complaint once the student has exhausted all of the steps in the College's appeals process. Students will not be subjected to any adverse actions by the college as a result of filing a complaint with any of the agencies.

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)  
101 North 14th St., James Monroe Building, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Richmond, VA 23219  
1-804-225-2600  
[www.schev.edu](http://www.schev.edu)

Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS)  
750 First Street NE, Suite 980  
Washington, DC 20002-4223  
1-202-336-6780  
[www.acics.org](http://www.acics.org)

In addition, students from the nursing program may file with:

CCNE Complaints Administrator  
CCNE  
One Dupont Circle, NW  
Suite 530  
Washington, DC 20036  
1-202-887-6791  
[www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation](http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation)

**Related Documents/Policies/Procedures**  
SCOHS Code of Conduct Policy