

<b>HAYWOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE</b>	<b>HUMAN RESOURCES APPEALS</b>	<b>Policy 3.3.6</b>
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## **I. Right of Appeal**

- A. In case of dismissal pursuant to Policy 3.3.4, contract non-renewal pursuant to Policy 3.3.5, or reduction in force pursuant to Policy 3.3.9, an eligible employee (as outlined in each policy) may have the right to appeal the President's decision and must do so within five (5) business days of the action taken<sup>1</sup>. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the President who shall forward the appeal to the chair of the Board of Trustees. The employee must articulate the grounds for the appeal in the notice. Further, the employee shall state in the notice whether the employee has or is seeking legal counsel for the appeal.
- B. No later than thirty (30) business days from the President's receipt of the employee's written appeal, unless mutually agreed by the parties, the Board of Trustees ("Committee") shall conduct a hearing pursuant to Section II. The employee's failure to inform the President that they have retained legal counsel for the appeal at least three (3) business days prior to the hearing shall be automatic grounds for a continuance of the hearing if so desired by the College.
- C. No later than ten (10) business days from the date of the hearing, the Committee shall provide the employee with its written determination to uphold, reject or modify the President's decision. The determination shall be included in the employee's personnel file. If the employee is reinstated, they shall receive all lost wages from the date of the suspension without pay and/or dismissal unless otherwise decided by the Committee.
- D. At the next regularly scheduled Board of Trustee's meeting, the Chair of the Board of Trustees shall report its determination to the full Board of Trustees.

## **II. Hearing Procedure**

- A. The hearing shall be conducted with only the members of the Committee, the employee, the President, and other appropriate College administrators and relevant witnesses. The employee, the Committee, and the President may also be represented by legal counsel. If an employee chooses to have counsel present, the employee is responsible for retaining and paying for those services. The Board's legal counsel shall act as a procedural officer during the hearing and give advice to the Committee regarding necessary rulings and matters of due process. A Committee member who has a significant conflict of interest or bias should disqualify themselves or be excused by the Committee's adoption of a motion to

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<sup>1</sup> Note – appeals for contract non-renewals and reduction in force will only be allowed if the employee is alleging that the action is based on Impermissible Grounds (as defined in Policy 3.3.5 and Policy 3.3.9)

disqualify them. For purposes of the appeal, a majority of the Committee members must be present. The Committee will make an audio recording of the hearing and a copy of the audio will be made available to the employee upon request. If the employee wants a transcription of the proceeding, the employee is responsible for the cost of and to arrange for the transcription.

- B. Strict rules of evidence or procedure do not apply to appeal hearings before the Committee. The Committee may consider any and all evidence that it determines to be fair and reliable. All witnesses may be questioned and cross-examined by the Committee members, the employee and the President. The Committee will be the sole judge of the weight given to specific evidence and the credibility of all witnesses. The conduct of the hearing shall be under the Committee chair's control.
- C. The burden is on the employee to demonstrate that they did not violate the Employee Code of Conduct or engage in the reason(s) underlying the disciplinary action or employment termination or, in appropriate cases, that the President's determination was based on illegal discrimination.
- D. At least five (5) business days prior to the hearing, the parties shall exchange all documentary evidence that the parties plan on using at the hearing. The President shall be responsible to assemble all the documents and make each Committee member and the parties a packet for the hearing. The packet must contain the following in this order: a) a copy of these Procedures; b) a copy of the President's written determination that is being appealed; c) a copy of the employee's request for appeal to the Committee; d) the President's documents for the hearing, if any; and e) the employee's documents for the hearing if any. The President shall provide the employee a copy of the packet prior to the hearing.
- E. The hearing shall begin with the President's presentation of evidence. The President's presentation of evidence is limited to one (1) hour unless extended by the Committee Chair. The President, or their legal counsel, shall present and examine their witnesses and present evidence. The Committee will have an opportunity to question the witnesses and review the submitted evidence. The employee may cross-examine the President's witnesses, and the time used by the employee to cross-examine witnesses shall not count against the President's one (1) hour of time.

At the conclusion of the President's presentation of evidence, the employee will present their evidence. The employee's presentation of evidence is limited to one (1) hour unless extended by the Committee Chair. The employee, or their legal counsel, shall present and examine their witnesses and present evidence. The Committee will have an opportunity to question the witnesses and review the submitted evidence. The President may cross-examine the employee's witnesses, and the time used by the President to cross-examine witnesses shall not count against the employee's one (1) hour of time.

- F. At the conclusion of the employee's presentation of evidence, the President will be given five (5) minutes to present a closing statement. Following the President's closing statement, the employee shall be given five (5) minutes to present a closing statement.
- G. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Committee will deliberate in closed session and will inform the parties, in writing, of its determination to uphold, reverse or modify the President's decision no later than ten (10) business days from the hearing.
- H. The Chair of the Personnel Committee shall notify the full Board of Trustees of the Committee's decision. The Committee's decision is final.

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