

**BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE  
BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
POLICY 18**

**TITLE: SOCIAL JUSTICE**

*SECTION 1. GENERAL*

- 1.1 Scope - This policy defines social justice, what and how it is to be accomplished, and provides guidelines for filing complaints.
- 1.2 Authority - West Virginia Code § 18B-1-6; West Virginia Human Rights Act of 1967; Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1972; Equal Employment Opportunity Commission interpretative guidelines issued in March, 1980; Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Act; Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; Executive Order 11246; Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986; Equal Pay Act; Age Discrimination Act; Americans with Disabilities Act; and Disabled Veterans Act.
- 1.3 Effective Date – , Amending the January 10, 2002 Version of the Policy.

*SECTION 2. SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY*

- 2.1 The Board is committed to bringing about mutual understanding and respect among all individuals and groups at the institution, and to eliminating all forms of discrimination as provided by West Virginia and federal law.
- 2.2 Consistent with its comprehensive mission, and recognizing that the development of human potential is a fundamental goal in a democratic society, the Board of Governors promotes an educational system that values cultural and ethnic diversity and understanding; that provides for the preparation of students for full and meaningful participation in a changing world; and that promotes equitable and fair treatment in every aspect of campus life and employment for all persons, regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual preference/ orientation, age, religion, veteran status, or disability.

*SECTION 3. IMPLEMENTATION*

- 3.1 The institution's program for social justice consists of the following elements:

- 3.1.1 Activities, including education, which have a goal of eliminating prejudice or discrimination based upon race, color, national origin, gender, sexual preference/ orientation, age, religion, veteran status, or disability from student life and working conditions in the institution.
  - 3.1.2 An appraisal of the institution's educational environment, job structure, and employment practices as they relate to social justice.
  - 3.1.3 Provision for counseling and responding to employees, applicants, and students who charge that they have been discriminated against, and for the informal resolution of such matters before the filing of a formal complaint.
- 3.2 Responsibility for carrying out the social justice program is assigned as follows:
- 3.2.1 The President shall assign to such persons as appropriate the responsibility of overseeing the campus commitment to social justice.
  - 3.2.2 Each dean, director, unit head and supervisor has the immediate day- to-day responsibility for implementing the social justice policy within their respective units.
  - 3.2.3 All employees are expected to set the tone and help create an environment for positive change and results within the social justice area.

#### ***SECTION 4. FILING OF COMPLAINTS***

##### **4.1 Official Process: Informal Resolution of Harassment Complaints**

Informal resolution of complaints, when possible, can be an effective way of correcting misconduct. The process is as follows:

- (1) A victim or third party submits a complaint to the campus Ombudsperson. An initial meeting between the Ombudsperson and complainant takes place. All options are explained by the Ombudsperson.
- (2) If the Informal Resolution option is chosen, the complainant may engage in the following actions:
  - a. Opt for a meeting with the alleged harasser and the Ombudsperson. All parties are permitted to bring support persons (friend, family member, colleague, etc.). The Ombudsperson can limit the number of support persons present to a reasonable number. The Ombudsperson will serve as mediator, listening to all views and establishing a resolution document or mediation agreement as appropriate.
  - b. Opt for the Ombudsperson to meet with all parties separately. The Ombudsperson listens to all views, presents views of opposing parties to each other, and establishes a resolution document or mediation agreement as appropriate.

- (3) The resolution document or mediation agreement may include a "no-contact arrangement" and/or other provisions. The outcome of the informal resolution should meet the satisfaction of all parties to the fullest extent possible. If the complainant is not satisfied, the Ombudsperson will review other options available.
- (4) Records, including the resolution document, are submitted to the office of Ombudsperson for filing.
- (5) The Ombudsperson will follow-up with parties within two weeks of the resolution if one was reached. Additional follow-up contacts will be made as needed.
- (6) Proceedings and records will be confidential to the fullest extent possible. If additional complaints arise subsequently as to the same employee, the earlier records may be evidence of a continuing practice of misconduct.
- (7) Complainants should act in a timely fashion. The Ombudsperson will, in all cases, attempt to resolve informal complaints within two weeks of notification of the complaint.

#### **4.2 Official Process: Formal Resolution of Harassment Complaints**

Any person who feels that informal resolution of a complaint will not be or has not been satisfactory should file a formal written complaint with the Ombudsperson.

- (1) Since the passage of time makes the resolution of complaints more difficult, it is recommended that the written complaint be filed as soon as possible from the date of the incident(s).
- (2) A complaint filed against a professor by a student currently enrolled in the professor's class should be made as soon as possible. The student may choose to have the complaint held confidentially until the end of the semester, at which time the complaint will be resolved. But some situations may require immediate action on the part of the CTC.
- (3) A complaint against another student will be referred to the Director of Enrollment Management or designee for management as a student disciplinary matter.
- (4) The President shall annually designate an six-member body made up of three faculty and three staff. The Ombudsperson will randomly select two panelists from the same group as the person accused and one panelist from the other group to investigate each formal complaint. Immediate supervisors of the accused or the accuser, or any person with a specific, known bias, will be excluded from serving on the three member panel. The formation of the panel will be completed within two weeks of the submission of the written complaint, except where extenuating circumstances require additional time.
- (5) When a formal written complaint against an employee is received by the Ombudsperson, a three-member panel will be selected (as noted in number 4) and copies of the complaint will be given to panel members. Panel members will conduct such investigation into the facts and circumstances of the complaints as may be deemed appropriate by any of the panel members.
- (6) The panel may meet with the accuser, accused, and any witnesses relevant to its investigation, but shall at all times act collectively as a group and not individually. The

investigation will be completed within four weeks of the formation of the panel, except where extenuating circumstances require additional time.

(7) The panel shall prepare a written report of its factual findings and conclusions regarding the merits of the complaint. This report may, if applicable, include dissenting conclusions. If the report finds any part of the complaint to be meritorious, then the report will designate appropriate action with respect to the perpetrator. The panel will complete the written report within one week of the close of the investigation, except where extenuating circumstances require additional time.

(8) The panel shall direct its written report to the Ombudsperson and to the executive officer who supervises the accused. The Ombudsperson shall then provide a copy of the report to the accused and the accuser and notice of whether the executive officer implemented some form of adverse action as to the employee-perpetrator.

(9) Appeals on the part of the accuser may be directed to the President. The accused may appeal any adverse action by following the established grievance procedures of the CTC.