SCOPE

This general complaint policy applies to College District-related problems, conditions, or decisions that adversely affect a student’s educational opportunities and are not otherwise redressable under other College District policies. Complaints under this policy include instructional and non-instructional complaints.

The purpose of this policy is to secure at the first possible level prompt and equitable resolution of student general complaints, such as complaints about a final grade, alleged violations of College District policy, or complaints about alleged mistreatment by an employee of the College District not based upon an allegation of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. A student lodging a complaint must establish that they experienced an adverse consequence as a result of the alleged decision, action, or violation and must establish the existence of an available remedy.

This general complaint policy may not be used to assert complaints based on discrimination or harassment on the basis of a legally protected status such as race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic background, veteran status, or age; retaliation for asserting a complaint based on a legally protected status; or sexual misconduct. [See FFDA and FFDB].

In this policy, the terms “complaint,” “appeal,” and “grievance” shall have the same meaning. This policy shall apply to all student complaints, except as provided below.

This policy shall not apply to:

1. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on race, color, sex, gender, national origin, disability, or religion. [See FFDA and FFDB]

2. Complaints concerning retaliation relating to discrimination and harassment. [See FFDA and FFDB]

3. Complaints concerning a security officer who is an employee of the College District. [See CHA]

4. Complaints concerning the withdrawal of consent to remain on campus. [See GDA]

5. Rules and procedures based on Board policy or state and federal laws or accreditation requirements, such as residency, financial aid, transfer credit or course waivers or substitutions that are resolved by respective departments [see the College District catalog].
The terms “complaint”, “appeal”, and “grievance” shall have the same meaning. A “complaint” is a statement that describes a problem, condition or decision that adversely affects a student’s educational opportunities.

A “written statement” is defined as a physical or electronic document submitted physically or electronically to the appropriate administrator or through the online report portal. All issues related to an event or series of related events should be included in one appeal. The written statement should include student’s name, ID number, contact information (email, phone, mailing address), date(s) of the incident(s), individuals involved, and a description of the incident(s), and the desired remedy. Students should also include dates of meetings with College District personnel that were held during the informal resolution process. Evidence and copies of supporting documentation should be submitted with the written statement. These may include, but are not limited to emails, letters, syllabi, or grade sheets. In cases where absences are part of the consideration, written verification by medical personnel, peace officers, or others in authority should be included. Statements by witnesses may be submitted either in writing or on video. Students may suggest a resolution or remedy. Students should keep copies of all materials submitted for consideration.

“Working days” refer to times the College District is open for business. In calculating timelines under this policy, the working day a document is submitted is “day zero.” The next working day is “day one.”

The right of an instructor to determine and award grades shall not be affected by this policy except for compelling reasons.

The student may be represented at any level of the complaint.

An instructor or College District employee who is the subject of a student complaint may be present and/or represented at any level of the complaint process.

If the complaint involves a problem with an instructor, the student shall discuss the matter with the instructor before requesting a conference with the division chair at Level One.

Complaints arising out of an event of a series of related events shall be addressed in one complaint. Students shall not bring separate or serial complaints arising from any event or series of events that have been or could have been addressed in a previous complaint.
Decisions may not be reversed when doing so would violate Board policy, or local, state, or federal laws and regulations.

The informal resolution attempts to resolve issues regarding problems, conditions or decisions as they occur. Within ten working days of an incident, students should meet with instructors or staff with whom they have a concern or complaint to seek resolution. If the concern is with another student, the student should meet with the Associate Dean of Student Affairs. Throughout the informal process, students should record dates and times of meetings, keep a brief account of the meetings, and collect any written documents they may receive.

For issues not resolved with an informal resolution, the student shall submit a written statement to initiate the formal complaint resolution process below.

The informal resolution attempts to resolve issues regarding College District policies, procedures, or personnel as they occur. Within ten working days of an incident, students should meet with instructors or staff with whom they have a concern or complaint to seek resolution. Throughout the informal process, students should record dates and times of meetings with individuals, keep a brief account of the meetings, and collect any written documents that they may receive. If the situation is unresolved, students should speak with relevant supervisors and/or administrators, who may investigate the incident further to seek information to resolve the concern.

Students desiring to address the Board at a regular Board meeting during the public comment section shall complete the form located on the public comment registration table at the meeting and provide it to the recording secretary prior to the start of the meeting. The Board shall listen to concerns and hear petitions during public comments but shall not negotiate or respond to complaints.

Instructional Complaints may include grade disputes on exams or concerns regarding class materials or assignments or issues with instructor behaviors that impact the student within the class. Students shall attempt an informal resolution by discussing the matter with their instructor before pursuing a formal resolution.

If the student is not satisfied with the informal resolution, they shall submit a written statement to the division chair. The division chair...
will review the complaint and provide a resolution to the issue within ten days.

A student who has a complaint shall request a conference with the division chair in the case of an instruction-related complaint, or with the director of academic advising/counseling or designee in the case of a noninstructional complaint.

If the outcome of the conference review at Level One is not to the student’s satisfaction, the student may, within ten working days, request a review of the complaint with the AVP of Academic Affairs providing information presented at the previous level including but not limited to the written complaint and any evidence in its support, the solution sought, the date of the meeting with the Division Chair and any response to the Division Chair’s resolution. The AVP will provide a resolution to the issue within 10 days. conference with the appropriate dean in the case of an instruction-related complaint, or with the associate dean of student affairs in the case of a noninstructional complaint, or their designees, who shall schedule and hold a conference. Prior to the conference, the student shall submit a written complaint that includes a statement of the complaint and any evidence in its support, the solution sought, the student’s signature, and the date of the conference with the division chair or director of academic advising/counseling or designee.

If the student is not satisfied with the resolution at Level Two, complaint relates to a problem with an instructor or the conduct of the instructional program, the student may, within ten working days, appeal an adverse decision made at Level Two to the academic appeals committee. The committee shall consist of two full-time faculty members (one from the applied science faculty and one from the academic faculty, one appointed by the dean of academic studies, the other appointed by the dean of vocational/technical studies) and two students appointed by the Student Activities Coordinator/Student Congress. Prior to the committee meeting/conference, the student shall submit the written statements required at Level Two and the date of the conference with the dean/AVP of Academic Affairs. The associate dean of testing and student life/student affairs or designee shall preside over all committee hearings but shall have no vote except in the case of a tie vote. The decision of the academic appeals committee will be made within ten days.

If the student complaint relates to a matter other than an instructor or the instructional program, the student may, within ten working days, appeal an adverse decision made at Level Two to the College President or designee, who shall schedule and hold a conference. Prior to the conference, the student shall submit the written statements gathered at previous levels.
If the resolution at Level Three is not to the student’s satisfaction, the student may, within ten days appeal an adverse decision made at Level Three to the College President or designee, who shall schedule and hold a conference with the student. Prior to the conference, the student shall submit the written statements gathered at previous levels. The College President or designee will provide a resolution within ten days. The decision of the College President or designee is final and cannot be appealed within the College District.

Non-instructional Complaints are those complaints outside the instructional setting. This includes but is not limited to problems, conditions or decisions related to advising, financial aid, the business office, or admissions. This also includes but is not limited to problems or conditions related to the behaviors of other students, such as bullying or threatening behaviors, providing the alleged behavior of other students does not violate another policy of the College District (e.g., FFDA and FFDB).

For issues not resolved with an informal resolution, the student shall submit a written statement to initiate the formal complaint resolution process.

A student who has a complaint shall submit a written statement to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs. The Associate Dean will assign the review to the appropriate supervisor over the department for which the complaint is made. The supervisor will provide a resolution within ten days.

If the outcome of the review at Level One is not to the student’s satisfaction, the student may, within ten days, request a review of the complaint from the AVP of Student Affairs or their designee providing information presented at the previous level. The AVP of Student Affairs or their designee will provide a resolution within ten days.

If the outcome of the review from the AVP of Student Affairs is not to the student’s satisfaction, the student may, within ten days appeal an adverse decision made at Level Two to the College President or designee, who shall schedule and hold a conference with the student. Prior to the conference, the student shall submit the written statements gathered at previous levels. The College President or designee will provide a resolution within ten days. The decision of the College President or designee is final and cannot be appealed within the College District.