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### Procedure 3.8.1 Student Complaints and Grievances

#### Part 1. Purpose

To provide a process to resolve student complaints and grievances when no other complaint, grievance, or appeal process applies to the situation.

#### Part 2. Definitions

For the purposes of Board Policy 3.8 and System Procedure 3.8.1 the following definitions apply:

##### **Appeal**

A request for reconsideration of a grievance decision under Policy 3.8 and Procedure 3.8.1.

##### **Complaint**

An oral or written claim concerning a college or university issue brought by a student alleging improper, unfair, or arbitrary treatment.

##### **Grievance**

A written claim submitted by a student alleging improper, unfair, or arbitrary action by an employee involving the application of a specific provision of a college or university rule regulation board policy or system procedure.

##### **Retaliation**

Retribution of any kind taken against a student for participating or not participating in a complaint or grievance process.

##### **Student**

An individual who is enrolled in a college or university, a group of such individuals, or the campus student government.

#### Part 3. College/University Notification and Publication to Students

Each college and university shall inform students of their established complaint and grievance policies and procedures. These policies and procedures must be publicized to students at least annually and include information for students about how and where to submit a complaint and/or grievance.



#### **Part 4. Complaints**

Colleges and universities shall establish procedures that provide informal and formal resolution of complaints.

Informal resolution of complaints require that a student discuss a complaint with the relevant employee(s), and/or administrator(s). For student complaints in which it would be inappropriate to ask the student to informally discuss the matter with the employee named in the complaint, an alternative process must be made available to the student.

Complaints not resolved through this informal discussion or alternative process proceed through the complaint resolution procedure established by the college or university.

A complaint may become a grievance if the complaint involves allegations of improper, unfair, or arbitrary action by an employee involving the application of a college/university rule or regulation, board policy, or system procedure. For complaints on discrimination and harassment, see System Procedure 1B.1.1. For complaints on sexual violence, see System Procedure 1B.3.1.

#### **Part 5. Grievances**

##### **Subpart A. Timeframe**

The college or university shall develop and publish a timeframe that establishes reasonable time requirements for each step of the grievance process

##### **Subpart B. Grievance process**

The college or university shall develop a grievance webpage or form which provides explanation of the grievance step procedures and timelines. A grievance must be submitted in writing. At the conclusion of the grievance process, the response of the college or university must be in writing and sent to the grievant. The response must include notification to the student of the opportunity for appeal and the appeal process.

##### **Subpart C. Appeals**

###### **College/University Appeals**

The grievance procedure must include an opportunity for a student to appeal a grievance decision. The individual to whom an appeal is directed should be identified by the college or university for the issue(s) in question.

If the grievance involves a college or university rule or regulation, a student may appeal an official grievance through procedural steps up to the president. The decision of the president is final and binding.

### **Appeal to the Office of the Chancellor**

After the student has completed the complaint and grievance processes at the college or university, they may appeal the final decision to the Office of the Chancellor if the grievance involves:

- A board policy or system procedure,
- the actions of a college or university president,
- an issue of institutional or program quality such as an institution's compliance with the standards of an accrediting or licensing agency, or
- a claim of consumer fraud or deceptive trade practice.

The decision of the chancellor or designee is final and binding.

### **Part 6. Retaliation Prohibited**

Retaliation of any kind must not be taken against a student for participating, or refusing to participate, in a complaint or grievance process. Retaliation may be subject to action under appropriate student or employee policies.

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Date of Adoption: 01/19/06  
Date of Implementation: 01/19/06  
Date of Last Review: 11/29/23

#### **Date and Subject of Revision:**

11/29/23 – Full review - Deleted the definition of “serious”, distinguished between informal and formal resolution of complaints and grievances in Part 4, added “webpage” to Part 5, Subp. B, and reorganized Part 5, Subp. C into “College/University appeals” and “Appeal to the Office of the Chancellor”.

04/03/19 – Amended to include a purpose section as Part 1 and renumbered the other sections, added language to Part 4 “For student complaints in which it would be inappropriate to ask the student to informally discuss the matter with the employee named in the complaint, an alternative process must be available to the student.”, and replaced shall with must.

Additional HISTORY.