

Procedure
STUDENT COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

Complaint resolution procedures include both informal and formal processes. Clatsop Community College provides procedures for students to use to address concerns or initiate formal complaints including, but not limited to: alleged violations of college policies or procedures, the denial of a refund petition, grade disputes, disqualification from financial aid, another student(s) conduct which violates the College's Student Code of Conduct, or charges of faculty or staff misconduct.

Step 1: Initiate the informal process

The goal of the informal process is to establish communication between the student and the appropriate staff member for the purpose of providing a forum in which the student's questions or concerns can be addressed.

The student must meet with the appropriate staff member and discuss his/her concerns. If resolution cannot be reached by meeting with the appropriate staff member or when contact with that individual would be unduly distressful or embarrassing, the student may discuss alternatives with the staff member's immediate supervisor. Students can receive assistance in locating the appropriate supervisor by contacting the office of the Dean of Student Services or the office of the Vice-President of Instruction.

Step 2: File a Formal Complaint Form with the Dean of Student Service's Office:

If the attempt to resolve the situation informally is not successful, the student may file a formal written complaint. Clatsop Community College's *Formal Complaint Form* is available in Student Services, the Registrar's Office, the Human Resources Office, Learning Resource Center (Library), South County Center and MERTS. Forms should be returned to the office of the Dean of Student Services. The Dean will be responsible for ensuring that the complaint is forwarded to the Student Issues Committee or the appropriate supervisor. If the complaint is regarding the Dean of Student Services, the student's *Formal Complaint Form* should be submitted to the President's Office. Students shall not be retaliated against for filing a complaint. Correspondingly, irresponsible use of the complaint procedure may result in disciplinary action.

In order to facilitate resolution of a complaint, it is important that the complaint be filed in a timely manner. Students must file formal complaints alleging violation of a college policy or procedure or allegations of staff or student misconduct within twenty (20) days of the date that the incident or event occurred. Complaints received after this time period has expired will be processed only if there are extenuating circumstances and the supervisor agrees to extend the timeline. An explanation of the reason for the delay must be attached to the complaint form along with a request for an extension of the time.

A . Outcome of Formal Complaint Procedure:

The Student Issues Committee or appropriate supervisor will conduct an investigation of the student's complaint. A written response to the student's formal complaint will be mailed directly to the address that the student listed on the complaint form no later than twenty (20)

days from the date the complaint form was received in the office of the Dean of Student Services.

B. Appeals:

All decisions of the Student Issues Committee may be appealed to the Vice-President of Instruction except in the case of an appeal for sanctions invoked as a result of a violation(s) of the Student Code of Conduct. Appeals of sanctions are subject to the guidelines established under the Student Discipline Procedure (6.215P). The request for an appeal to the Vice-President of Instruction must be received, in writing, within ten (10) days of the student receiving the decision of the Committee. The following will be considered grounds for appeal: (A) A procedural error or irregularity which materially affected the decision. (B) New evidence of a substantive nature not previously available at the time of the hearing that would have materially affected the decision. (C) Demonstrated bias on the part of the Committee or supervisor that materially affected the decision. Evidence of bias must be included with the appeal.

Appeals of decisions made by a supervisor should be submitted to the office of the Dean of Student Services. The request for an appeal of the decision of a College supervisor must be received, in writing, within (10) ten days of the student receiving the decision. Appeals of management decisions are subject to the same criteria as those outlined for appeals of decisions made by the Student Issues Committee. The Dean of Student Services will forward the appeal to the appropriate administrator who will determine whether or not the criteria for an appeal has been met.

If the criteria for an appeal is met, a written response from the Vice-President of Instruction or the appointed administrator will be mailed to the student no later than fifteen (15) days from the date the petition was received. The decisions of the Vice-President of Instruction or the appointed administrator will be final.

GRADE DISPUTES:

Students with extenuating circumstances affecting grades posted to their transcripts as a result of the college enforcing its policies or procedures should report their concerns to the Registrar's Office. If the Registrar's office is unable to make the requested change, the student may submit a *Formal Complaint Form* to the office of the Dean of Student Services. Complaints regarding grades must be filed no later than the term following the one in which the grade was received, with an exception made for spring term. Spring term grade disputes must be submitted no later than the end of fall term. Complaints filed after these specified time periods have passed will not be processed.

DENIAL OF A REFUND PETITION:

Appeals of the decision of the Director of Accounting Services may be made by submitting a *College Formal Complaint Form* to the Office of the Dean of Student Services no later than ten (10) days after receiving the decision.

FINANCIAL AID DISQUALIFICATION:

Students who have been disqualified from financial aid should first discuss their situation with the Financial Aid Office. If not satisfied with the outcome of the informal process, a student may complete a Financial Aid Petition for consideration by the Student Issues Committee. Forms can be picked up in the Financial Aid Office and must be completed and submitted to the Financial Aid Office by 5:00 p.m. the first day of classes. Any petitions received after that day

would be considered for reinstatement of aid the following term. An appeal of the decision of the Student Issues Committee may be made to the Vice-President of Instruction. **Students may only petition once to request reinstatement of financial aid after being disqualified.**

COMPLAINTS REGARDING ANOTHER STUDENT (S) CONDUCT (6.215/6.215P)

The procedures for complaints regarding the conduct of another student(s) are outlined in the College's Student Discipline procedures (6.215P) published in the Student Handbook.

CHARGES OF FACULTY OR STAFF MISCONDUCT (4.505/4.505P)

Faculty and staff members are subject to collective bargaining agreements and formal disciplinary rules that cannot be superseded by these procedures. By law, certain procedures must be followed before discipline can be imposed. If the outcome of the informal process is not successful, students may file a formal complaint. Formal complaints may be made by completing the College's *Formal Complaint Form* and must be submitted no later than twenty (20) days after the date that the incident or event occurred. Complaints received after this time period has expired will be processed only if there are extenuating circumstances and the supervisor agrees to extend the timeline. An explanation of the reason for the delay must be attached to the complaint form along with a request for an extension of the time

Formal complaints regarding the misconduct of a faculty or staff member will be forwarded to the appropriate supervisor and shall be subject to resolution procedures as detailed in the College's *Discipline and Dismissal* policy and procedures (4.505/4.505P).

Note: Any time limit noted in this procedure may be extended by the College for five (5) working days with notice to the complainant. Timelines may be further modified, if necessary, by mutual agreement.

END OF PROCEDURE

See Also:

Non-Discrimination Policy 1.001
Sexual Harassment Policy 1.003
Harassment Complaint Procedure 1.003P