Complaints

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.

Exceptions

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 state and federal laws or accreditation requirements, such as residency, financial aid, transfer credit or course substitutions that are resolved by respective departments [see the College District catalog].

Consolidating Complaints

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.

Days

“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.”

Grades

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

Representation

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.

Limitations Involving Complaints

Decisions may not be reversed when doing so would violate Board policy, or local, state, or federal laws and regulations.
Informal Resolution  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.

Written Statement  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). 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.

Level One  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.

Level Two  If the outcome of the conference at Level One is not to the student’s satisfaction, the student may, within ten working days, request a 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.

Level Three  If the student 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 appointed by the dean of academic studies, the other appointed by the dean of vocational/technical studies) and two students appointed by the student congress. Prior to the conference, the student shall submit the written statements required at Level Two and the date of the conference with the dean. The associate dean of student affairs or designee shall preside over all committee hearings but shall have no vote except in the case of a tie vote.

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.

Level Four

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.