

SOUTHWESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE	STUDENT SERVICES STUDENT GRIEVANCE	Policy 6.03.05
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I. GRIEVANCE PROCESS OVERVIEW

In order to maintain a harmonious and cooperative environment between and among the College and its students, the College provides for the settlement of problems and differences through an orderly grievance procedure. Every student shall have the right to present his/her problems or grievances free from coercion, restraint, discrimination or reprisal. This Policy provides for prompt and orderly consideration and determination of student problems and grievances by College administrators and ultimately the President.

A grievance is any matter of student concern or dissatisfaction with the College's control except: (a) student discipline matters regarding academic and non-academic violations (Policy 6.03.02 – Standards of Student Conduct); (b) discrimination and unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment (Policy 6.03.03 – Sex Discrimination and Harassment – Title IX); or (c) any other matter that has a specific grievance process outlined in College policy.

II. GRIEVANCE PROCESS

1. Informal Grievance – Step One

In the event the alleged grievance lies with an instructor/staff member, the student must first go to that instructor/staff member and attempt to informally resolve the matter. This must occur within ten (10) business days of the incident upon which the complaint is based. Both the student and instructor/staff member must have an informal conference to discuss the situation and document the attempts taken to resolve the grievance at this level. In the event that the student is unsatisfied with the resolution reached at the informal conference, he/she may proceed to Step Two within five (5) business days after the informal conference. Not initiating the informal conference with the instructor/staff member or proceeding to Step Two within the time periods will result in the grievance not being heard and the matter being closed.

If the grievance concerns issues unrelated to a particular instructor/staff member (for example, an issue with College policy), the student can skip the informal process and proceed to Step Three.

2. Formal Grievance – Step Two

If the grievance is not resolved at Step One the student may file a written grievance with the supervising dean ~~or director~~ of the instructor/staff member. The written grievance must contain with specificity the facts supporting the grievance and the attempt to resolve the grievance at the informal level.

In order to be considered, a formal complaint must be submitted in writing using the *SCC Complaint Information Sheet and Form*, signed and two copies sent to: Southwestern Community College, 447 Drive, Sylva, NC 28779 in c/o the Dean of the area in which the complaint is against or submission can be made from the SCC student email to the appropriate Dean. The complaint must be postmarked

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or timestamped within five (5) business days of the conclusion of informal grievance conference with the faculty/staff member described in Step One.

The *SCC Complaint Information Sheet and Form* is located in all Dean office's as well as online.

SCC will not entertain neither complaints that are not in writing or which are anonymous. In addition, the College will not act on complaints submitted on behalf of another individual or complaints forwarded to the College.

The Dean shall review the written grievance and conduct whatever further investigation, if any, is necessary to determine any additional facts that are needed to resolve the grievance. The Dean shall provide his/her written decision to the student's college email address within ten (10) business days after receipt of the grievance.

In the event that the student is unsatisfied with the resolution reached by the Dean, he/she may proceed to Step Three within five (5) business days after receipt of the Dean's written determination. Not proceeding to Step Three within the time period will result in the grievance not being heard and the matter being closed.

3. Formal Grievance – Step Three

If the grievance is not resolved at Step Two (or, given the nature of the grievance, Step Three begins the process) the student may file a written grievance with the Executive Vice President for Instruction and Student Services.

In order to be considered, a formal complaint must be submitted in writing using the SCC Complaint Information Sheet and Form, signed and two copies sent to: Southwestern Community College, 447 Drive, Sylva, NC 28779 in c/o Dr. Barbara Putnam or submission can be made from the SCC student email to Dr. Barbara Putnam. The complaint must be postmarked or timestamped within five (5) business days of the Dean's decision as described in Step Two.

*the Executive
Vice President for
Instruction &
Student Services*
*the Executive
Vice President*

The SCC Complaint Information Sheet and Form is located in all Dean office's as well as online.

SCC will not entertain neither complaints that are not in writing or which are anonymous. In addition, the College will not act on complaints submitted on behalf of another individual or complaints forwarded to the College.

The written grievance must contain with specificity the facts supporting the grievance and the attempt, if applicable, to resolve the grievance at the informal level.

The Executive Vice President (or, depending on the nature of the grievance,

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another appropriate Vice President) shall review the written grievance and conduct whatever further investigation, if any, is necessary to determine any additional facts that are needed to resolve the grievance. The Executive Vice President or appropriate Vice President shall provide his/her written decision to the student's college email address within ten (10) business days after receipt of the grievance.

In the event that the student is unsatisfied with the resolution reached by the Executive Vice President or appropriate Vice President, he/she may proceed to Step Four within five (5) business days after receipt of the Executive Vice President's or appropriate Vice President's written determination. Not proceeding to Step Four within the time period will result in the grievance not being heard and the matter being closed.

4. Appeal – Step Four

If the student is not satisfied with the Executive Vice President's determination, the student may appeal to the President. The appeal must be in writing and must provide a written summary of the specific facts and must contain any other documentation pertinent to the matter. The complaint must be postmarked or timestamped within five (5) business days of the Vice President's decision as described in Step Three.

The President will conduct an "on the record" review and, if necessary, conduct any further investigation that is necessary to ascertain the facts needed to make a determination. The President may, at his/her discretion, establish a committee to further investigate the matter and make a recommendation to the President.

The President shall provide his/her written decision to the student's college email address within fifteen (15) business days after receipt of the grievance

The President's decision is final.

NOTE: A "business day" as referenced in this policy is defined as a weekday when classes are in session.

Cross Reference: 6.03.02 – Standards of Student Conduct;
6.03.03 – Sex Discrimination and Harassment – Title IX
6.04.04 – Services for Persons with Disabilities;
6.04.07 – Student Records

Adopted: October 28, 2014

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January 26, 2021

May 20, 2025