



COLLEGE of CENTRAL FLORIDA
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

Title: Student Complaints	
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Date Approved: 03/28/02 Revised: 07/25/09, 08/28/09, 11/06/09, 05/06/10, 06/28/12, 05/07/19	Division: Student Affairs

College of Central Florida is committed to the fair resolution of student concerns. The purpose of this procedure is to outline the process for resolving issues of a general nature where a student has a concern about the College and its operations.

This procedure does not apply to complaints related to grades, complaints related to student conduct, or complaints related to discrimination, harassment, and/or sexual harassment on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, gender, pregnancy, age, marital status, national origin, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status or disability status.

Procedures for complaints related to discrimination, harassment, and/or sexual harassment are addressed under the administrative procedure “Discrimination, Harassment and /or Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedure for Employees and Students.”

Procedures for complaints related to grades are addressed under the administrative procedure for “Grade Appeals.”

Procedures for complaints related to student conduct are addressed under the administrative procedure “Disciplinary Action and Rights of Appeal – Code of Student Conduct.”

Definitions:

Complaint: A student complaint may be any concern a student has about the College and its operations. A complaint is defined as dissatisfaction that occurs when a student believes that any decision, act or condition affecting the student is illegal, unjust or creates unnecessary hardship. Complaints may include, but are not limited to, academic problems, mistreatment by a college employee, wrongful assessment of fees, records and registration errors, student employment, any actual or perceived physical or verbal abuse or coercion.

Complainant: Any student or applicant for admissions who presents a complaint under this procedure.

Respondent: The person who is alleged to have caused the complaint by identifiable acts of omission or commission.

Procedure: A student having a complaint shall follow the steps set forth below.

Lead Administrators: Marion County: Dean of Student Services, or designee.
Citrus County: Vice President for Regional Campuses, or designee.
Levy County: Provost, Levy Campus, or designee.

Informal: A complainant should report, verbally or in writing, his or her concerns to the Lead Administrator at the campus or site where the complaint occurred within thirty (30) working days from the date the student becomes aware of the act or omission giving rise to the complaint. If the nature of the complaint involves the Lead Administrator, the complainant should report his or her complaint to the Vice President for Student Affairs at the Ocala Campus. If the complaint involves the Vice President for Student Affairs, then the complainant should meet with the Equity Officer. The Lead Administrator will attempt to resolve the complaint informally and may request the participation of the respondent (if the complaint is about an individual) and other college personnel as appropriate in that informal resolution. If the complaint is resolved to mutual agreement of the Lead Administrator, the complainant, and any other parties concerned, the matter will be considered settled. The informal process should be concluded within forty (40) working days or less of receipt of the complaint, whenever possible. The investigating Lead Administrator will file a written report outlining the result of the informal complaint to all parties, the Equity Officer, and the President within ten (10) working days of the resolution of the complaint.

Formal Appeal: If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the complainant may petition an appeal of the resolution by submitting a formal written complaint with the Vice President for Student Affairs at the Ocala Campus. The Vice President for Student Affairs will serve as the Lead Administrator to investigate the petition. In the event that the complaint is against the Vice President for Student Affairs, the complainant shall petition an appeal to the Equity Officer who will serve as the Lead Administrator to investigate the complaint. Written complaints must be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the informal resolution report. The Lead Administrator has sixty (60) working days to complete the investigation of the complaint.

Upon receipt of the formal appeal petition, the Lead Administrator shall:

1. Notify the President, the appropriate department administrator, and the respondent (if the complaint is about an individual) of the formal complaint.
2. Conduct a prompt and thorough investigation to determine the facts of the complaint. The Lead Administrator may request the participation of any College personnel determined to be necessary to resolve the complaint.
3. Maintain a record of the investigation and store in a secure area apart from student conduct files.
4. Meet individually with the parties involved to discuss the findings and provide a written summary of the overall findings.
5. File a written report with the President within ten (10) working days after the formal investigation is completed. The report shall (1) outline the investigative findings, and (2) indicate recommended resolution for the complaint.

The decision of the Lead Administrator shall be final.

Students are encouraged to resolve grievances locally with the College of Central Florida. However, students also have the option to contact the Florida Colleges System at <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system/about-us/complaints.stml> regarding any grievances.

Out of State Distance Education Students

Out of state distance education students, who have completed both the College of Central Florida’s grievance process and the Florida College System’s grievance process, may appeal non-instructional complaints to the Florida State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (FL-SARA) Postsecondary Reciprocal Distance Education Coordinating (PRDEC) Council. For additional information on the complaint process, please visit the FL-SARA Complaint Process page at <http://www.fldoe.org/sara/complaint-process.stml>.

Retaliation

It is a violation of college policy to retaliate or take reprisal against any person who has filed a complaint based on the fact that the person raised a complaint to any faculty, supervisor or manager of the college, to any Dean, Vice President, or administrator, to any other person, entity, or human rights agency.

Approved by the Vice President, Student Affairs

Date

Approved by the President

Date