



STUDENT GRIEVANCE

POLICY

Brunswick Community College is committed to resolving complaints in a timely, fair, and amicable manner. The purpose of the Student Grievance Policy is to provide a system to channel student complaints against faculty and staff, except for the following:

- A. Grades, which shall be subject to the decision of the instructor unless related to some type of suspected discrimination;
- B. Attendance policies and matters of a purely academic nature, which shall be adjudicated through the Director, Department Chair, or Dean of the area of instruction; and
- C. Financial Aid eligibility, which shall be subject to review by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee with a final ruling by the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs.

Specific grievances may include (but are not limited to):

- A. Alleged discrimination on the basis of age, sex, race, handicap or other conditions, preferences, or behavior, and
- B. Sexual harassment complaints, which should be directed to the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and/or the Director of Human Resources. Because of the sensitive nature of this kind of complaint, a conference with the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs will replace the first step of the grievance procedure. The Associate Vice President of Student Affairs will counsel the student to determine the appropriate action that is required. If the grievance is not resolved after this meeting, then the remainder of the grievance procedure will be followed.

PROCEDURE

First Step

The student must go to the instructor or staff member where the alleged problem originated (except when the College employee is directly involved in an alleged case involving sensitive issues identified above). In extreme cases, such as alleged sexual harassment, the student may go directly to the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs or any other Administrative official within whom the students feels comfortable. An attempt must be made to resolve the matter equitably and *informally* at this level. The conference must take place within 10 working days of the incident which generated the complaint. The student may elect to put his/her concern in writing at this point, but a formal grievance form is not necessary.

Second Step

If the student complaint is not resolved to the student's satisfaction at the informal conference, the student may file a written grievance no later than 14 working days from the incident which



generated the complaint. A **Student Grievance Form** is available on the College Student Services webpage or will be made available to the student by the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and/or his/her designee.

- The Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and/or his/her designee will explain the grievance process to the student or direct them to review the policy and procedure in the College Catalog and Student Handbook.
- The Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and/or his/her designee will give written acknowledgment of receipt of the completed grievance form. This acknowledgment may be given immediately or no later than two working days after receipt of the grievance form from the student.
- The Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and/or his/her designee will then refer the grievance to the immediate supervisor involved no later than two working days after receipt of the grievance from the student.
- The supervisor must respond in writing to the student within 10 working days of receipt of the grievance form from the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and/or his/her designee. As a part of the effort to resolve the issue, the supervisor will consult with the chief administrative office of the division or department concerned.

Third Step

If the written statement of the supervisor does not satisfy the student to resolve the matter, a request to appear before the *Student Grievance Committee* may be made.

- The student must submit the request within five working days after receiving the written response of the supervisor. The request must include a copy of the original grievance form and the reason why the supervisor's response is unsatisfactory. A copy of the supervisor's response must be attached to the complaint filed by the student.
- The Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and/or his/her designee must immediately notify the President who shall appoint a *Student Grievance Committee* composed of:
 - Three students recommended by the governing body of the Student Government Association.
 - Two faculty members recommended by the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs.
 - One Student Services & Enrollment Management staff member recommended by the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs.
- The Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and/or his/her designee will send copies of the grievance to the members of the committee, the employee, and the employee's supervisor.
- The employee against whom the grievance was filed must be given an opportunity to respond in writing to the chairperson of the committee prior to the date of the Student Grievance Committee meeting.



- Meeting(s) must be conducted between five and 15 working days following the date of the request. A postponement may be granted by the chairperson upon written request of either party if the reason stated justifies such action. Postponement requests must be submitted to the office of the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs.
- The Committee must hold interviews with the student, the employee, and the supervisor, singularly, in the absence of other witnesses. In cases of conflict of interest, the supervisor may not be interviewed. The Committee may interview additional witnesses that it considers necessary to render a fair decision.
- The Committee must decide by a majority vote the resolution of the grievance. In case of a tie, the chairperson will vote and break the tie. Within two working days of the last Grievance Committee interview meeting, the chairperson will forward a copy of the Committee's decision to all parties involved and to the Office of the President of the College.

Fourth Step

The Committee's decision may be appealed by either party to the President of the College within 10 working days of the Committee's decision.

- Either party may submit a written appeal to the President of the College.
- The President will review the Committee's findings, conduct additional inquiries deemed necessary, and render a decision within 10 working days of receipt of the student's appeal. The decision of the President is final.

Approved by Brunswick Community College Board of Trustees

January 15, 1997; Amended May 26, 2011; June 28, 2013; June 26, 2015; April 20, 2017;
Procedures Revised by President's Cabinet November 20, 2017