

Student Complaints/Grievances

Grievance Procedure

Assessment & Counseling Office

**Student Services & Administration Building (2000), Rm. 2133 /
2134 / 2135 / 2136**

(671)735-5563 ext. 5583 / 5562 / 5582 / 5576 / 5593

If a student encounters a problem considered to be academic in nature and an alleged violation of Student Rights (see GCC Student Handbook) such as, but not limited to, grading issues, student learning outcomes, course syllabus, course content, and course grading criteria that occurs prior to the posting of a final grade they should utilize the following grievance steps:

Step One

The student will meet with the faculty member within five (5) working days to discuss the concern related to their academic work or progress in an attempt to understand how the grading and/or other evaluation of the assignment, test, project, etc., was determined and to address the student's specific concern on that matter. If the student does not feel comfortable speaking with the faculty member, the student may meet with a counselor within ten (10) working days of the incident (before proceeding to Step 2). The counselor will act as a mediator between the faculty member and the student. If, within four (4) working days, the concern remains unresolved to the student's satisfaction, or if the student does not feel comfortable speaking with the faculty member, the student may proceed to Step Two.

Step Two

The student will meet with and discuss the problem with a GCC counselor. The counselor will attempt a resolution of the matter with the student and the faculty member involved. If, within five (5) working days of receipt of the grievance, the counselor is unsuccessful in mediating a resolution of the grievance, the counselor will advise the student of subsequent steps in the Grievance Procedure, and within four (4) working days, arrange for proceeding to Step Three of the Grievance Procedure if requested by the student. The counselor will also notify the faculty member's Department Chairperson of the student's request to proceed to Step Three.

Step Three

The student and counselor shall meet with the Department Chairperson. The Department Chairperson will attempt a resolution of the grievance to pursue an informal resolution to the dispute if they believe that a resolution is possible or decline involvement in addressing the grievance within five (5) working days of receipt of the request to proceed to Step Three of the Student Grievance Procedure. If the grievance is not resolved within this period, then the student, through written request, may proceed within two (2) working days to Step Four of the Grievance Procedure.

Step Four

The student and counselor shall meet with the faculty member's Dean to resolve the grievance. The Dean shall render a decision, in writing, within five (5) working days of receipt of the request to proceed to Step Four of the Grievance Procedure. If unsatisfied with the resolution at this step, the student, through written request, may proceed within four (4) working days to Step Five of the Grievance Procedure.

Step Five

The faculty member's Dean shall notify the President within four (4) working days of the student's request for a Step Five Grievance. The Dean shall convene a Grievance Board within seven (7) working days. The Grievance Board shall present the President with an advisory opinion within ten (10) working days. The President shall issue a final decision on the grievance within four (4) working days of receipt of the Grievance Board opinion. The Grievance Board shall be composed of five (5) impartial members: two (2) faculty members, two (2) students, and one (1) GCC administrator who are appointed by the faculty member's Dean. The Grievance Board shall have the power to review any evidence presented to it and may cross-examine witnesses presented in order to render an advisory opinion to the President on the grievance. Additionally, the Grievance Board shall seek the views of the student and faculty member involved in the grievance. The President's decision is final.

Student Complaint Procedure

Student Support Services Office

Bldg. C, Rm. C-1

(671) 735-5555

A complaint covers any concern or issue regarding employees (faculty, support staff, and administrators) or visitors on campus about a matter related to a student's educational experience with GCC that is not academic in nature. Examples of non-academic concerns or issues could include perceptions and/or allegations of discrimination based on color, age, sex (to include sexual harassment and sexual/gender orientation), national origin, race, religion, political affiliation, or disability condition; other forms of harassment; disruptive, threatening, or violent behavior; conduct associated with drugs and/or alcohol; and violations of other College Board policies and/or administrative regulations/directives that do not have specified procedures in place.

The use of this procedure does not apply to student disciplinary actions outlined in the GCC Student Handbook and other issues, which are covered under separate Board policies and administrative regulations that have specific procedures in place. In the above instances, the Associate Dean responsible for overseeing Student Support Services (or designee) shall inform the student of the correct procedure to follow for the former and/or refer the student to the College official through whom the request should be addressed for the latter. Complaints against employees alleging forms of misconduct described in the GCC Code of Ethics (Policy 470) shall be referred to the Human Resources Administrator.

Whenever reasonably possible, a student who encounters a non-academic problem is encouraged to seek an informal resolution of the matter directly with the College employee or visitor. If the attempt to reach an informal resolution is not successful or if an informal resolution is not advisable, then the concern or issue can be filed at the Student Support Services Office during regular office hours in order to implement the following steps of the Formal Complaint Procedure.

Formal Complaint Procedure

Step One – Initiating a Complaint

A. Complaint Initiation:

The student has ten (10) working days from the date of the incident to file the complaint, utilizing the Student Complaint Form, to the Student Support Services Office. All supporting documentation must be submitted with the Student Complaint Form.

B. Notification of Charge:

Within five (5) working days, the School of Technology & Student Services (TSS) Associate Dean who oversees the Student Support Services Office (or designee) will begin the investigation and will meet with the person to whom the complaint is addressed (respondent) to inform the respondent(s) that a student has filed a formal

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complaint.

Step Two – Informal Resolution

The TSS Associate Dean (or designee) will verify if the student and the respondent met earlier in an attempt to informally resolve the matter. If not, and if the student complainant agrees, within five (5) working days, the TSS Associate Dean (or designee) will attempt to schedule the meeting to allow for an opportunity for an informal resolution between the student and the respondent.

If a satisfactory resolution is reached through the informal meeting between the student and the respondent, both the student and the respondent shall sign or acknowledge receipt via GCC email of the written summary that verifies the resolution of the complaint.

If the student finds the response/resolution through the informal meeting unsatisfactory, the student may submit a written notice of their dissatisfaction to the TSS Associate Dean (or designee) within three (3) working days and request to proceed to Step Three.

If the student expresses concern about scheduling an informal meeting with the respondent that is determined by the TSS Associate Dean (or designee) to be a valid concern, the student may submit a written notice to the TSS Associate Dean (or designee) to proceed to Step Three.

For contract employees or campus visitors:

1) If the student finds the response/resolution through the informal meeting is satisfactory, the TSS Associate Dean (or designee) will prepare a written response of the resolution of the complaint to the student within three (3) working days. A copy will be forwarded to the affected GCC contract employee or campus visitor via email. A copy will also be filed with the original Student Complaint Form.

2) If the student finds the response/resolution through the informal meeting unsatisfactory, the student may submit a written notice of their dissatisfaction to the TSS Associate Dean (or designee) within three (3) working days. The TSS Associate Dean (or designee) will then schedule a meeting with the student and the respondent in an attempt to resolve the complaint.

3) If the student is still dissatisfied with the attempted resolution, the student may submit a written notice to the TSS Associate Dean (or designee) to proceed to Step Four.

Step Three – Formal Resolution

A. Additional Attempt to Resolve:

If a resolution is not reached at Step Two or the nature of the complaint is determined to require more than a resolution between the student and the respondent, the TSS Associate Dean (or designee) will:

1. Implement one (1) of the following:

a. For faculty members: refer the student and the faculty member to the faculty member's Dean. Within three (3) working days, the Dean will meet with the faculty member and the student in an attempt to resolve the complaint; OR

b. For other College employees: refer the student and the employee to the appropriate supervisor. Within three (3) working days, the supervisor will meet with the College employee and the student in an attempt to resolve the complaint;

2. Prepare a written statement summarizing the actions taken prior to the referral and submit this written summary along with a copy of the Student Complaint Form to the appropriate Dean/supervisor.

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B. Resolution Reached during Step Three with the appropriate Dean/Supervisor/TSS Associate Dean (or designee):

The appropriate Dean/Supervisor will prepare a written response of the resolution of the complaint to the student within four (4) working days. A copy will be forwarded to the affected GCC employee within five (5) working days. A copy will also be provided to the TSS Associate Dean (or designee) to file with the original Student Complaint Form.

C. Resolution Not Reached during Step Three with the appropriate Dean/Supervisor/TSS Associate Dean (or designee):

The appropriate Dean/Supervisor will refer the student and the affected GCC employee to the President (Step 4). The referral will include a copy of the Student Complaint Form and the Dean's/Supervisor's written summary of the unresolved complaint. The student referral must be made within five (5) working days.

Step Four – Resolution by the President

The TSS Associate Dean (or designee) will include a copy of the Student Complaint Form and a written summary of the unresolved complaint to the President's Office. The student referral must be made within five (5) working days. The President will meet with the student(s) and affected GCC employee/contract employee/campus visitor in an attempt to resolve the complaint. The President's decision is final. The President's Office will provide a memorandum of the final decision to the student and the respondent.

Time for complaints and grievances: If GCC is not in session during part of these proceedings or in instances where additional time may be required because of the complexity of the case or unavailability of the parties or witnesses, any of the time periods specified herein may be extended by the Dean of Technology and Student Services. If a time period is extended, the complainant and the person against whom the complaint has been filed will be so informed.

Note: Communication with the student for conference(s) can be done through class, phone, or email. Class and phone communications will be first attempted. If it is difficult to contact the student through these methods, a notice will be sent via their GCC email address or mailed to the student's address on record.