



North Hennepin Community College

Procedure Information

Number: 3.8.1

Name: Student Complaints and Grievances Procedure

Effective Date: May 13, 2022

Next Review Date: AY 2026–2027

Regulatory Authority

- [MinnState System Procedure 3.8.1](#)

Part 1. Policy Background.

Students have the right to file complaints when they believe they have been treated unfairly or inappropriately by a college employee. Students may complain verbally or in writing.

Part 2. Complaints

Students have the right to bring their complaint directly to the employee they believe is acting inappropriately or to the employee's supervisor.

Written complaints are filed through the NHCC Website > Student Resources > CARE Center > Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.

Complaints that do not involve alleged violation of a college or system policy or procedure may only be resolved by the employee or the employee's supervisor.

Part 3. Grievances.

Subpart A. Grievance Procedure.

If a complaint is not resolved and involves the alleged violation of a college or MinnState Board policy or procedure, the student may initiate a grievance by submitting an NHCC Student Grievance Form. The NHCC Student Grievance Form must include:

- Summary of the incident/violation/grievance,
- Facts of the incident upon which the grievance is based,
- Steps taken toward resolution and the nature of the resolution that is requested, and
- What the student would like to see as a result of this process

The administrator who oversees the employee(s) and/or office giving rise to the grievance shall:

- Seek information from all parties involved in the grievance.
- At the conclusion of the grievance, provide a written response to the student(s) who initiated the grievance and to the employee(s) who were grieved. The written response shall include information on the student's right to appeal and an explanation of how to do so.

Subpart B. Grievance Appeals.

A student has the right to appeal a grievance decision at the following levels:

Level 1: For matters pertaining to academics the student may appeal to the Provost; for matters pertaining to student affairs the student may appeal to the Vice President of Student Affairs; for matters pertaining to finance or facilities the student may appeal to the Vice President Finance and Facilities Officer.

Level 2: If the appeal is not resolved at Level 1 and the grievance involves a college rule or regulation, the student may appeal to the College President. The decision of the College President is final and binding.

Level 3: If the appeal is not resolved at Level 2 and the grievance involves:

- a MinnState Board policy,
- the actions of the College President,
- an issue of institutional or program quality such as an institution's compliance with the standards of an accrediting or licensing agency,
- a consumer fraud or deceptive trade practice,

the student may further appeal the college decision to the Chancellor of Minnesota State. The decision of the Chancellor is final and binding.

Subpart C. Grievance Time Frames.

The initial grievance, and each subsequent appeal, must be conducted within the time frames established below. In unusual circumstances, the time frame may be extended.

- The initial grievance must be submitted within 20 business days after the initial event giving rise to the grievance.
- Lack of awareness on part of the student of posted policies, procedures or deadlines shall not be considered a reason for a complaint or grievance.
- Each subsequent step thereafter (college response and/or appeal) must be conducted within ten business days. If the College is unable to respond within ten

business days, the grievant shall be provided a notice of extension, which shall include a reasonable future response date.

- If the college fails to provide a response or a notice of extension within ten business days, the grievant may proceed to the next level. If the grievant fails to appeal within ten business days of the failure of the college to provide a response, the grievance shall be considered resolved.

Part 4. Assistance with Complaints and Grievances Procedure.

Students have the right to receive assistance with the complaints and grievances process. The principal aim of such assistance is to clarify the complaint and grievance procedure, provide referral assistance in filing a complaint or grievance, and provide resolution tips and strategies to all parties. Such assistance may be obtained from an advisor in the Advising Center in the Educational Services (ES) building or from Student Life or from Student Support Services Trio.

Part 5. Retaliation Prohibited.

No retaliation of any kind shall be taken against a student for participating in or refusing to participate, in a grievance. Retaliation may be subject to action under appropriate student or employee policies.

Part 6. Recordkeeping.

During and upon the completion of the complaint or grievance process, the NHCC Grievance Form shall be maintained in a secure digital location with limited access to the designated officer for the College in accordance with the applicable records retention schedule. Access to the data shall be in accordance with the respective collective bargaining agreement or personnel plan, the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act or other applicable law. Each academic year, the Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students will evaluate user experience, assess response time, and case closure resolutions. Yearly reports will be generated to enhance the grievance process.

Part 7. Distribution.

Information regarding North Hennepin Community College Policy 3.8 – Student Complaints and grievances and this procedure shall, at a minimum, be distributed to students during New Student Orientation and to employees at the beginning of employment. Distribution may be accomplished by posting on an internet Web site, provided all students and employees are directly notified of how to access the policy and procedure by an exact address, and that they may request a paper copy. Digital communications such as email and the NHCC Mobile App will be utilized to notify students as well as employees about the policy and procedure. Designated officers also must be identified by name, location and phone number in informational publications such as campus Web sites and other appropriate public announcements.

Part 8. Campus Review.

Review Action	Date(s)
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Review:	4/25/2022—4/29/2022
Campus Community Review Period:	3/7/2022—3/23/2022
AFSCME Review:	4/1/2022—4/29/2022
MAPE Review:	4/1/2022—4/29/2022
MMA Review:	4/1/2022—4/29/2022
Shared Governance Council Review:	4/15/2022
Student Senate Review:	4/21/2022
President Rolando Garcia Approval:	5/13/2022
Campus Community Dissemination:	5/23/2022

History

- Reviewed and updated Fall 2011, Signed by President 12/5/2011
- Reviewed Fall 2020 with minor language changes to embrace an equity focus; removed obsolete form from Procedure; tabled 11/10/2020 to revisit Spring 2021 to better address racial inequities.
- Reviewed Spring 2022 with language changes to enhance clarity.