



Century College Policy

3.8.1 Student Complaints and Grievances Procedure

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Purpose:

A student has the right to seek a remedy for a dispute or disagreement, including issues of institutional or program quality such as Century College's compliance with the standards of the Higher Learning Commission, or a claim of consumer fraud or deceptive trade practices, through a designated complaint or grievance procedure.

Procedure:

Part 1. Definitions

- A. **Appeal.** A request for reconsideration of a grievance decision under Policy 3.8 and Procedure 3.81.
- B. **Complaint.** An oral or written claim concerning a college issue brought by a student alleging improper, unfair, or arbitrary treatment.
- C. **Grievance.** A written claim raised by a student alleging improper, unfair, or arbitrary action by an employee involving the application of a specific provision of a college rule/regulation or a board policy or procedure. This policy does not apply to those college rules or regulations or to board policies or procedures that include an appeal or grievance process.
- D. **Retaliation.** Retribution of any kind taken against a student for participating or not participating in a complaint or grievance.
- E. **Student.** An individual who is enrolled at Century College, a group of such individuals or the campus student government.
- F. **Working Days.** Working days exclude Saturdays, Sundays, holidays and breaks in the academic calendar.

Part 2. Student Complaint and Grievance Process

A. Informal Resolution

- A student is encouraged to bring a concern directly to the employee of concern or employee responsible for the area of the concern for discussion and informal resolution -- this is not required.

B. Complaint

- If the concern was not resolved informally with the employee responsible, the student may make an oral or written complaint to the supervisor. Or, if a student does not want to bring the concern to the employee, a student may make a complaint directly to the supervisor. It is recommended that the student use the **Online Complaint Form**.
- If the supervisor is not a dean or administrator, and the complaint was not resolved by the supervisor, the student may bring the complaint to the appropriate dean or administrator.

C. Formal Grievance

- If the student does not agree with the outcome of the Complaint Process and the complaint constitutes a grievance, the student may submit a formal grievance in writing to the appropriate Vice-President through the Online Grievance Form.
- The response of the Vice-President to the grievant will be in writing through the online process. The response will include notification to the student of the opportunity for appeal to the president.

D. Appeal

- A student may appeal the decision of a Vice-President to the College President. The decision of the President is final and binding. The response of the President will be in writing and sent to the grievant. This is the final step in the appeal process.
- If the grievance involves a 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, or a claim of consumer fraud or deceptive trade practice, a student may further appeal the college decision to the chancellor. The decision of the chancellor is final and binding.

Part 3. Timelines

- A. A student must start the Complaint and Grievance process within **180** working days of the occurrence.
- B. If the complaint or grievance is not resolved, a student has **20** working days to present the complaint or grievance at the next step. If not presented in **20** working days, the last response stands.
- C. The employee, supervisor, dean, vice-president and president should respond to the student within **20** working days.

Part 4. Exceptions

These procedures shall not substitute for other grievance and appeal procedures specified in Board or College policies or procedures, regulations or negotiated agreements. This policy does not apply to academic grade disputes. Grade appeals must be handled under Grade Appeal Policy 3.5.

Part 5: Retaliation Prohibited

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

Part 6: Documentation and Review

All complaints and grievances and their outcomes will be documented in the online process regardless of how the complaint was originally received. Division Vice Presidents will lead reviews of aggregated data and complaint themes at least annually for the purpose of systematic quality improvement.

References:

Minnesota State 3.8 Student Complaints and Grievances Policy
Minnesota State 3.8.1 and Student Complaints and Grievances Procedure
Century College 3.8 Student Complaints and Grievances Policy

Date Proposed: 6/11/1998
Date Approved: 6/11/1998
Date Implemented: 7/1/1998
Date Last Reviewed: Policy reviewed as of 2/14/2019
Date Revised: 5/19/2009, 2/14/2019
Draft: 01/17/2019

