

## College Operating Procedures (COP)



<b>Procedure Title:</b>	Student Administrative Grievance Procedure (Non-Academic Issues)
<b>Procedure Number:</b>	06-0804
<b>Originating Department:</b>	Student Services
<b><u>Specific Authority:</u></b>	
Board	6Hx6:6.01
Florida Statute	1001.65
Florida Administrative Code	n/a
<b>Procedure Actions:</b>	Adopted: 01/10/2010; 02/01/2011; 02/02/2021
<b>Purpose Statement:</b>	The administrative grievance procedure outlines a process through which students can resolve issues concerning a variety of administrative issues.

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### **Student Administrative Grievance Procedure (Non-Academic Issues)**

A grievance is a student complaint regarding a violation, interpretation, or application of a College policy or College operating procedure. The written grievance procedure is based on the assumption that grievances, disagreements, and complaints should be resolved by direct interaction among students and staff. To facilitate an efficient and timely resolution process, Florida SouthWestern State College has an Ombudsperson to assist students through informal and formal grievance procedures. The College also maintains a clear chain of escalation for grievances.

#### **Exclusions**

Grievances pertaining to the following matters shall not be processed under this rule:

1. Disciplinary actions taken under the Florida SouthWestern State College Student Code of Conduct.
2. The professional judgment exercised by an instructor in assigning a grade.
3. Complaints involving discrimination, harassment, or violations of Title IX.

#### **Time Limits**

A grievance must be filed in a timely fashion. Formal written grievances must involve a specific event or incident occurring within 30 days of filing. The student must participate in an informal grievance resolution before filing a formal written grievance. Grievances will generally be resolved within 30 days. If more time is required to reach a resolution, all parties involved must agree in writing to the extension. If agreement cannot be reached, the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management will make the final time determination.

#### **Informal Grievance Resolution**

The student must first attempt to resolve a grievance informally by meeting with the staff member who is alleged to have caused the grievance. If the grievance cannot be resolved at this level, the student is encouraged to continue informal resolution presenting the problem orally through appropriate administrative channels up to, but not including, the Office of the Vice President in

whose area the grievance has occurred. If an informal resolution still cannot be reached, then the student may initiate the formal grievance procedure. All formal written grievances should be submitted to the Chief Student Affairs Officer.

### **Formal Grievance Resolution**

A formal written grievance is distinguished from an informal grievance in the following manner:

1. The grievance must be in writing and must be dated and signed by the student making the grievance.
2. The grievance must clearly identify the department(s) and issue(s) involved.
3. The grievance must indicate that the student has attempted to resolve the issue with the involved staff member prior to the date of the grievance.

Once a formal grievance has been submitted to the Chief Student Affairs Officer, the following process is engaged:

1. The Chief Student Affairs Officer will route the grievance to the appropriate employee within the department where the issue resides. This employee will initiate an investigation of the issues identified in the grievance.
2. Within 10 business days of receiving the grievance, the employee will provide the student with a written response to the grievance; the written response will contain a description of any findings and decisions made regarding the grievance. The employee will send the Chief Student Affairs Officer a copy of the written response for documentation purposes.
3. If the student feels the response does not address the grievance properly, the student may request that it be referred to the next higher administrative level.
4. At each administrative level, the administrator will be given 10 business days to investigate the issue and provide the student with a written response. The administrator at each level will send the Chief Student Affairs Officer a copy of the written response for documentation purposes.
5. The determination of the Vice President in whose area the grievance has occurred will be the final decision. There are no further appeals within the College. The Vice President will send the Chief Student Affairs Officer a copy of the final determination for documentation purposes.

### **Note Concerning Discrimination, Harassment and Title IX Complaints:**

Florida SouthWestern State College maintains a separate set of procedures to address complaints that entail accusations dealing with violations of Title IX, discrimination, or harassment. These types of complaints are addressed through Florida SouthWestern State College Board Policy 6Hx6:2.03 and College Operating Procedures 01-0108, 05-0102 and 05-0107. Students should notify the Campus Chief Student Affairs Officer, Associate Dean of Students, or the Title IX Coordinator/Equity Officer for assistance in resolving any discrimination or harassment issue.