

DES MOINES AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES PROCEDURES

Subject: STUDENT RIGHTS, APPEALS AND FERPA
 Procedure: Student Complaints Concerning College Employee Actions
 Effective Date: April 1, 2014
 Revised Date: October 1, 2021
 Procedure Number: ES 4640

I. Institutional Regulations

The Board of Directors of DMACC confers upon the staff the power to invoke sanctions and promulgate rules to protect the educational processes and the rights of individual students and staff.

- A. Des Moines Area Community College strives to achieve the highest standards in its provision of services but recognizes that concerns or complaints may arise on occasion. Students may file a General Complaint if they feel they have been mistreated by a college employee, if departmental policies and procedures are unclearly written or inconsistently applied, or if a student has extenuating circumstances that may directly affect the educational process. A General Complaint cannot be filed regarding final grades, academic misconduct, discrimination, or sexual harassment (see Appeal of Final Grades Procedure ES 4660, Academic Misconduct ES 4670,).
- B. If the complaint about the college employee is one of discrimination, including harassment, based on race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sex (including pregnancy and marital status), sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, and genetic information, the student should contact the campus Provost's Office, or the Judicial Officer, regarding the Discrimination Complaint Procedures for Students ES 4645. Veteran status in educational program, activities, employment practices, or admission procedures is also included to the extent covered by law.

II. Procedure

A. Informal Process

Student complaints concerning actions of college employees are pursued first through informal mechanisms.

1. The student should first attempt to resolve the issue informally with the employee in question. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow for early resolution.
2. If this contact does not result in a satisfactory outcome, the student should follow the established chain of command (e.g., director, dean, or provost) within the appropriate department of the college to attempt to resolve the issue.
3. If attempts to resolve the complaint through the informal process are unsuccessful, the student may submit the issue via the online Incident Reporting Form found at URL: <https://dmaccit.sharepoint.com/sites/Nitro/SS/GC/SitePages/Home.aspx>.

B. Formal Process

A formal student complaint should include any and all evidence that a substantial error has occurred. The student's complaint will be submitted on the online Incident Reporting Form within ten (10) business days after the attempt at informal resolution was deemed unsuccessful by the student.

Substantial evidence of error is defined as:

1. The action performed by a College employee toward a student represented a substantial or unreasonable departure from approved College Policy or Procedure; or
2. The action set unreasonable standards different from those which were applied by the College to other students in similar situations.

The online Incident Reporting Form will be referred to the appropriate designated supervisor and Senior Leader of the employee or office which is the subject of the complaint. Within ten (10) business days, the appropriate designated supervisor will investigate the complaint and will respond in writing to the student, providing copies to the Senior Leader and the office of the appropriate Vice President, as well as the supervisor of record. It will be the responsibility of the supervisor of record to communicate findings with the subject of the complaint.

A student may appeal the action or response of the supervisor. The appeal must be requested by using the online Incident Reporting Form again, this time by checking the box on the form requesting an appeal of the supervisor's response from an original complaint. The form requesting an appeal should be submitted within ten (10) business days of the supervisor's response. The appropriate Vice President will refer the appeal request to the appropriate Senior Leader. The Senior Leader will respond to the student's request for an appeal within ten (10) business days of the date of the request for an appeal and will notify the appropriate Vice President of the decision. The decision of the Senior Leader will be final.

Time Limits.

If any time limits are not met by the college personnel, the complaint automatically goes to the next higher level. If time limits are not met by the student, the complaint is cancelled.

Records of Complaints.

All records connected with a student General Complaint, including resolutions and any recommended process changes that come as result of the complaint will be maintained by college personnel in the Incident Reporting System. This will not become part of the student's academic record.

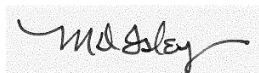
Approved:



Vice President, Enrollment Services & Student Success

10-1-21

Date: _____



Vice President, Academic Affairs

10-1-21

Date: _____