



AP 5530 Student Concern & Complaint Procedure

References

AP 3430 – Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment
AP 3435 – Discrimination and Harassment Reports and Investigations
AP 3310 – Records Retention and Destruction
AP 4231– Student Grade Appeals
NWCCU 2020 Standard 2. C. 2

Student Concern & Complaint Procedure

If students need disability accommodations to successfully complete this process, contact Access and Disability Resources by calling (541) 956-7337 or visiting the website: roguecc.edu/accessresources/.

When Not to Use this Procedure

This procedure is **not** the appropriate process for addressing allegations of harassment or discrimination based on a protected class such as race, color, religion, ethnicity, use of native language, national origin, marital status, veteran status, disability, age, pregnancy, or any other status protected under applicable federal, state, or local laws. For resolutions of complaints of this nature please use AP 3430 – Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment and AP 3435 – Discrimination and Harassment Reports and Investigations.

Grade appeals shall be filed according to the applicable procedure outlined in Rogue Community College's Student Grade Appeals administrative procedure (AP 4231).

Definitions

Concern: A report of conduct which a student feels violates their rights and/or RCC policies or procedures where resolution is being attempted under the **informal** process of this procedure.

Complaint: A report of conduct which a student feels violates their rights and/or RCC policies or procedures where resolution is being attempted under the **formal** process of this procedure.

Retaliation: Any behavior which negatively impacts the student because they reported a concern or filed a complaint.

Preamble

This procedure is designed to ensure that students have full access to their education in accordance with Rogue Community College's commitment to the rights and dignity of our students and the College's philosophy on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide an appropriate mechanism to address concerns and complaints brought forth by students while also 1) ensuring due process for students and staff; 2) resolving conflict at the lowest level possible; and 3) identifying areas for continuous improvement.

This procedure provides a way for students to seek resolution to decisions, conditions, and practices of Rogue Community College (RCC or the College) and its employees, which they allege are violations of their rights as students, as identified in RCC's Student Responsibilities, Rights, and Freedoms procedure (AP 5990), or other published college policies and procedures. As students pursue their educational goals, they will be treated with professionalism and respect by college employees or staff.

Students shall not be retaliated against for reporting a concern or filing a complaint in good faith or for participating in this process. Retaliation is any behavior that negatively impacts the student because they reported a concern or filed a complaint.

This procedure outlines the steps to resolve alleged violations of student rights or other published college policies and procedures. Students will attempt to resolve alleged violations with the staff member(s) directly involved.

Students may utilize an advocate at any point in the process. However, students are expected to act on their own behalf and represent themselves, with or without an advocate, throughout the entirety of the process of reporting a concern or filing a complaint. Advocates may be an RCC Counselor or any other person of the student's choosing who may provide support.

The role of an advocate in this process is to serve as a resource for the student. Advocates are a point of contact to assist the student in advocating for themselves, and may help the student identify a reasonable proposed resolution. Advocates may be present for conversations, but may not speak on behalf of the student. In the role of advocate, RCC Counselors are recommended, but not required to keep working files as part of this process.

Each College employee attempting to reach a resolution of a complaint will keep a working file containing all documents, communications, and evidence related to the complaint. If a resolution is not reached, it is the responsibility of the College employee working to achieve a resolution to provide this working file to the next person in the process. Upon resolution of a formal complaint, this working file will be provided to the office of the Vice President of Student Learning & Success for retention. All documentation submitted or created during the resolution process shall follow this established filing procedure.

Students with a concern or complaint shall follow the procedures and timelines outlined below.

Informal Resolution

Step 1: Attempt Direct Resolution

The student discusses the issue with the College employee who is directly involved. The goal is to find a resolution in a timely manner, at the lowest level. The student may choose to be accompanied by an advocate such as an RCC Counselor, or other person of their choosing, during this discussion. The student is required to communicate directly with the College employee involved, but this communication does not have to be “in-person”; it can also be electronic. It is the responsibility of the College employee who is directly involved in the concern to respond to communication or requests for communication as soon as is reasonable, and generally within seven (7) working days.

If no resolution is reached, the student may move to step 2.

Step 2: Resolution with Department Chair or Immediate Supervisor

If the issue is not resolved directly with the College employee, the student may seek resolution with the employee’s Department Chair or immediate supervisor. The student may choose to be accompanied by an advocate during these discussions; however, the student is expected to be present and to speak on their own behalf. The student must clearly state the problem and a proposed resolution. It is the responsibility of the Department Chair or Immediate Supervisor to respond to communication or requests for communication as soon as is reasonable, and generally within seven (7) working days.

Appropriate written documentation will be maintained by the Department Chair or immediate supervisor.

If no resolution is reached, the student may move to Step 3. If the College employee who is the subject of the complaint is a Department Chair or Director, the student should skip this step and move directly to Step 3.

Formal Complaint Procedure

Step 3: Resolution with Dean or Next Level Supervisor

If the issue is not resolved at Step 2, the student may seek resolution with the supervising Dean, next level supervisor, or if necessary, a designee appointed by the corresponding supervisor's Vice President. To do this, a student has seven (7) working days from receiving notice their concern could not be satisfactorily resolved at Step 2 to complete a Student Complaint Form and provide it to the supervising Dean or next level supervisor/designee.

The student must provide a written description of the issue, the steps the student has taken to attempt to resolve that issue, and clearly state a proposed resolution.

Within a reasonable timeframe, and generally by ten (10) working days of receiving the Student Complaint Form, the supervising Dean or next level supervisor/designee will 1) contact relevant witnesses and participants involved in the specific complaint and gather appropriate information and/or documentation; and 2) contact the student to schedule a meeting to discuss a mutually satisfactory solution.

If no mutually agreeable resolution is possible, the Dean (or next level supervisor/designee) will conduct an inquiry or investigation proportionate to the nature of the complaint. In this case, the Dean (or next level supervisor/designee) shall contact the student within a reasonable timeframe, generally within five (5) working days of the prior meeting, to 1) provide an appropriate timeline to conduct the investigation, and 2) schedule the follow-up meeting with the student, to occur within a reasonable timeframe and generally within five (5) working days after scheduled completion of the investigation.

Based on the information available as a result of the investigation, the Dean or next level supervisor will determine an appropriate resolution, and will communicate that resolution to the participants, including the student complainant, as well as the individual named in the complaint

Appropriate written documentation will be maintained by the supervising Dean or next level supervisor and filing procedures will be followed with the Vice President of Student Learning & Success, who will be provided with copies of all written documentation related to the informal and formal process thus far.

If no resolution is reached, the student has seven (7) working days to proceed to Step 4.

Complaints submitted without a clearly identified resolution will be considered as information provided to support continuous improvement for instructional and/or operational practices and the complaint will be considered resolved with regard to further student contact.

Step 4: Appeal Process

If the student is not satisfied with the dean's or immediate supervisor's resolution, the student has the right of final appeal of the complaint to the Vice President of Student

Learning & Success. The final appeal process requires the student to prepare and deliver a written appeal request to the Vice President within seven (7) working days after they have been notified of the determined resolution in Step 3. The written appeal request must include an explanation of why the issue remains unresolved and must provide a proposed remedy to the complaint.

Within ten (10) working days of receiving the student appeal, the Vice President of Student Learning & Success will review the complaint, the investigation process, and the proposed resolution(s). They may consult with the administrative team and/or the College President in the review process to assure consistency within RCC.

The review may include, but not be limited to, an interview of the student complainant, College employee and/or other involved parties. The Vice President of Student Learning & Success will report the findings and conclusions to the student complainant, the College employee(s) involved, and the Dean or immediate supervisor with a written and signed document. Established filing procedures will be followed within the Vice President of Student Learning & Success' office, and the entire working file will be kept by the Office of the Vice President of Student Learning & Success at the conclusion of the formal process

The determination of the Vice President of Student Learning & Success will be final.

Conflict of Interest and Complaints against Senior Leadership

If a supervisor or dean is named as the respondent in a complaint, or if a conflict of interest exists at Step 2 or beyond, the next-level supervisor of the individual named in the complaint or with a conflict will designate an alternate to step in and fill the role. Individuals are expected to recuse themselves if they believe that a perceived or actual conflict exists and contact their supervisor to request an appointed designee. . .

Complaints against a Vice President of Rogue Community College should first be attempted to be resolved directly. If no resolution is reached directly, the student shall forward their complaint to the Vice President of People, Culture, & Safety/CHRO who will act in accordance with Step 2. The student will contact the Vice President of People, Culture, & Safety within 7 working days if no resolution is reached directly. After meeting with the Vice President of People, Culture, & Safety, a decision regarding resolution will be made and communicated within a reasonable timeframe, and generally within 7 working days. If no resolution is reached with the Vice President of People, Culture, & Safety/CHRO, or the complaint is against the Vice President of People, Culture, & Safety/CHRO, the student shall provide the Student Complaint form to the President of Rogue Community College, who will investigate and resolve the issue as appropriate.

Complaints against the College President should first be attempted to be resolved directly. If no resolution is reached directly, the student shall forward their complaint to the Vice President of People, Culture, & Safety/CHRO, who will work with the

Chairperson of the RCC Board of Education to investigate and resolve the issue as appropriate.

Rescinds Procedure Number: AP-003, Section X

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