# 1400.120 STUDENT ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The student academic grievance procedure protects student freedom of expression in the classroom and protects each student from improper, arbitrary, or capricious academic evaluation as evidenced by the student’s final course grade.

## A. CONDITIONS

A student filing an academic grievance:

### 1. Cannot grieve federal and state laws, rules, and regulations, in addition to policies, regulations, and procedures adopted by the state board for community and technical colleges.

### 2. Shall use the college process for grievances pertaining to any discrimination, including sexual discrimination or discrimination based upon disability.

## B. ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE DEFINITION

An academic grievance shall refer to a claim by a student that an instructor has done one or more of the following:

### 1. Assigned a specific grade that is the result of an arbitrary application of otherwise valid standards of academic evaluation.

### 2. Employed arbitrary standards in evaluating the academic progress of the student.

### 3. Took an improper action or made a decision that adversely affects the student’s academic standing in an arbitrary or capricious manner.

### 4. Reached a clearly erroneous decision or took a clearly erroneous action that adversely affects the student’s academic standing.

A student with an academic complaint shall follow the informal academic grievance resolution procedures and timelines listed below and document the informal academic resolution steps taken on the student academic grievance petition form which is available in the office of the vice president of student services (VPSS) or online.

## C. INFORMAL STUDENT ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

**Step One:** Meet with faculty member.

### 1. Use the informal academic resolution procedure as a first step in all academic complaints.

### 2. Meet with the instructor of the class to attempt resolving the dispute promptly and fairly during the quarter in which a class is being taken and/or upon receipt of the grade for the course.

### 3. Meet with the instructor who assigned the grade and use the meeting to clarify the perceived problem and request specific action designed to resolve it.

### 4. Take no further action if the result of the meeting is acceptable.

**Step Two:** Meet with the dean or program director.

### 1. If there is no resolution at step one above, the student meets with the appropriate division dean or program director.

### 2. At that meeting, the dean or program director will attempt to find a resolution to the academic complaint.

### 3. Take no further action if the result of the meeting is acceptable.

**Step Three:** Meet with the vice president of instruction (VPI).

### 1. If there is no resolution at step two above, the student meets with the VPI.

### 2. At that meeting, the VPI will attempt to find a resolution to the academic complaint.

### 3. The VPI verifies all informal academic resolution steps have been taken.

### 4. Take no further action if the result of the meeting is acceptable.

### 5. If not acceptable, VPI notifies the VPSS to assist the student through the formal academic resolution process.

If the informal academic grievance resolution process is unsuccessful, the formal resolution process must be initiated no later than 15 calendar days from the start of the subsequent academic quarter, excluding summer quarter.

## D. FORMAL STUDENT ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

**Step One:** Meeting with the Academic Regulations Committee.

### 1. The VPSS or executive assistant helps the student through the entire academic grievance process.

### 2. The VPSS or executive assistant meets with the student to assist the student in understanding the academic grievance procedure and timelines.

### 3. The VPSS or executive assistant helps the student prepare a written academic grievance to begin the formal academic grievance procedure.

#### a. The student academic grievance petition should provide a summary of actions taken by the student to resolve the academic grievance up to that point.

#### b. The student academic grievance petition should indicate the grade received and the reason for the academic grievance; specifying all necessary performance scores and attendance data as appropriate.

#### c. The student academic grievance petition should provide a possible solution as proposed by the student.

### 4. The student must contact the VPSS to begin the formal resolution process within the first 15 calendar days of the subsequent academic quarter the grieved grade was assigned, excluding summer quarter and provide the VPSS with a copy of the student’s written academic grievance.

### 5. Within three calendar days of receipt of the student’s written academic grievance, the VPSS informs the faculty member and the appropriate division dean or program director that an academic grievance has been filed.

## E. FORMAL STUDENT ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE MEETING PROCEDURES

**Step One:** Student academic grievance meeting.

### 1. The academic grievance meeting is held within five calendar days upon receipt of the student academic grievance petition at a time that considers the needs of the student, faculty member, dean and/or program director and the committee members.

### 2. The VPSS co-chair:

#### a. Establishes the time and place of the meeting.

#### b. Directs the executive assistant to ensure that the student and the faculty member receive copies of the student’s written academic grievance and if available, the faculty member’s written response and the report from the dean/program director.

### 3. The meeting is a closed meeting and is not considered a formal hearing. The proceedings of the student-initiated academic grievance remain closed unless all parties agree to an open proceeding. No recording of the proceeding is allowed.

### 4. Attending the meeting are: members of the Academic Regulations Committee (ARC), student, the faculty member concerned (if the faculty member chooses to attend), dean or program director, any supporting witnesses to the event being grieved as requested by the student, and any additional people called to assist the committee in reaching a prompt, fair resolution of the student’s academic grievance, will also attend during their testimony.

### 5. The executive assistant provides each ARC member with a copy of the complete academic grievance file.

### 6. The ARC will review background information and ensure they understand the student’s written academic grievance and the procedures that will be followed during the meeting.

### 7. The student is invited in to explain their academic grievance. The ARC may ask questions for clarification. Upon completion of the question and answer period, the student is excused.

### 8. The faculty member and/or dean/program director [if present] is invited to respond to the student’s academic grievance. The ARC may ask questions for clarification. Upon completion of the question and answer period the faculty member and/or dean/program director is excused.

**Step Two:** Academic grievance decision.

### 1. After the committee has heard the academic grievance it arrives at a decision prior to adjournment.

### 2. A decision passes by a simple majority vote of members present.

### 3. The VPSS writes the letter informing the student and the faculty member of the committee’s decision within five calendar days of the decision.

**Step Three:** Academic grievance solution.

When the committee finds in favor of the student:

### 1. The faculty co-chair of the ARC consults with the instructor of record to determine a grade or the dean/program director to reinstate student in the program.

### 2. Subsequently, the VPSS acting as the representative of the ARC directs the registration office to change the grade on the student’s transcript, if applicable.

### 3. Registrar sends student updated transcript if applicable.

**Step Four:** Student appeal of ARC decision.

### 1. Students may not appeal a decision of the committee by resubmitting a student academic grievance petition form without additional new information that may affect the previous decision.

**Step Five:** Student appeal of due process.

### 1. A student with an appeal of due process:

#### a. Informs the VPSS of the decision to appeal.

#### b. Appeals the due process of the committee to the VPSS within five calendar days of receiving the letter.

#### c. Prepares a written appeal to the president stating why the decision of the ARC did not provide due process during the academic grievance meeting.

### 2. The VPSS:

#### a. Informs the VPI of the appeal and provides the president with a copy of the student’s academic grievance file.

#### b. Acts as the liaison between the president and the ARC.

#### c. Reviews the academic grievance meeting proceedings to ensure that the student receives due process through the academic grievance proceedings.

### 3. The president determines whether due process has been met and informs the VPSS. If the president determines due process has not been met, the president informs the VPSS, who informs the faculty co-chair of the ARC.

### 4. The chair reconvenes the committee within 10 calendar days of being informed that due process has not been met.

### 5. The committee reviews the student’s academic grievance and takes the appropriate steps to correct the due process deficiencies.

### 6. The president reviews the actions of the committee.

### 7. The VPSS informs the student and the faculty member of the decision within five calendar days.

### 8. Upon resolution of student’s right to due process no further student appeal within the college is provided.

Approved by the president’s cabinet: 9/28/21

Last reviewed: 9/28/21

Policy contact: Student Services

Related policies and procedures

400.100 [Student Rights and Responsibilities/Code of Student Conduct Policy](https://www.wvc.edu/humanresources/policies-procedures/400-student-services/400.100-student-rights-and-responsibilities.html)

1400.100 [Student Rights and Freedoms Procedure](https://www.wvc.edu/humanresources/policies-procedures/400-student-services/1400.100-student-rights-freedoms.html)

1400.110 [Code of Student Conduct Procedure](https://www.wvc.edu/humanresources/policies-procedures/400-student-services/1400.110-code-of-student-conduct.html)

1400.125 [Academic Dishonesty Procedure](https://www.wvc.edu/humanresources/policies-procedures/400-student-services/1400.125-academic-dishonesty.html)