



## **Informal Guidelines For Addressing Student Concerns**

The following steps are to be followed by the student when seeking review of an informal concern involving a faculty member of Community Colleges of Spokane. The student is asked to remember:

1. This is an informal process, requiring no paperwork or forms. The intent is to establish a dialogue between the student and the faculty member that results in resolution of the concern.
2. Concern(s) must be initiated within 10 instructional days of the start of the quarter following the quarter during which the alleged action(s) occurred. An informal concern may be initiated in summer quarter if the faculty member and student mutually agree.
3. The review of concern(s) must proceed from the lowest level of review to higher levels of review.
4. The student will make reasonable effort to complete the informal concern process within 20 instructional days. The student has a right, with advance notice, to a supporter\* during any meeting.
5. At any point during the informal process the department chair and/or dean may call an informal meeting between the student and faculty to attempt resolution.
6. Group concerns will not be considered.

**Step 1:** The student communicates with the faculty member with whom they have the concern and describes the concern. The faculty member has 5 instructional days to respond after hearing the student's informal concern. There is no need for further action if the concern is resolved at Step 1.

**Step 2:** If the informal concern is not resolved at Step 1, the student next speaks with the faculty member's department chair. The department chair will first ascertain if the student made attempts to contact the faculty member for step one resolution. If so, then the chair will attempt to facilitate an acceptable resolution between faculty member and student. The chair will have 5 instructional days to respond after hearing the student's informal concern. There is no need for further action if the concern is resolved at Step 2.

**Step 3:** If the informal concern is not resolved at Step 2 and or is determined by the faculty member's dean to be appropriately advanced to this step\*\* the student next speaks with the dean. Upon the dean determining that appropriate steps were followed, the dean will attempt to informally resolve the concern. The dean will respond to the student within 10 instructional days of receiving the concern; the dean will inform the faculty member and department chair of the response. If the concern cannot be resolved at this informal level and the issue warrants formal action, the student may proceed to the Formal Process for Addressing Student Complaints.

**Special Circumstances:** If at any point during the concern process it's determined the concern may involve violation of federal/state law or Board policy, the concern may be forwarded to the appropriate office.

\*Supporter is a non-employee who provides support to the complaining student but otherwise does not speak or provide legal counsel on the student's behalf.

\*\*The student may initiate the informal concern directly at Step 3 provided the cause for the student not proceeding through Step 1 and Step 2 is ascertained and found credible by the dean.

**Formal Student Complaint Process:** If a student concern has not been resolved to the student's satisfaction following the informal resolution process, the student may file a formal complaint utilizing this form. The form must be submitted to the dean's office within ten (10) instructional days of the dean's Step Three response. Failure to do so causes the complaint to be denied as untimely.



# FORMAL STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCESS FORM

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## Student Complaint

Date of Dean's Step Three Response to Informal Student Concern: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Student's Formal Complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Statement/Complaint:

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(attach additional pages as necessary)

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**Dean Intake and Assessment:** The dean assesses the formal complaint and makes a determination of whether the complaint is appropriate for further consideration.

Date the Dean Received the Student's Formal Complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

The student's complaint *is not* appropriate for further consideration.

- Notify the student in writing not later than ten (10) instructional days after receipt of the formal complaint. Attach response to this form. Complaint is terminated and may only be considered further by appeal to Vice President (see below).

Date of Dean's Determination Notification: \_\_\_\_\_

The student's complaint *is* appropriate for further consideration.

- Within ten (10) instructional days of receiving the formal complaint send a copy to the faculty member and AHE.

Date Dean Forwarded Copy of Complaint to Faculty Member: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Faculty Response:** The faculty submits to dean a written response to the formal complaint within ten (10) instructional days of being notified by the dean. Attach written response to form. The faculty can either:

- assert the informal process was not followed, or
- provide the dean a written response to the complaint.

Date Faculty Member Received Dean's Notification: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of AHE Notification: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Faculty Member's Response to Complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

**Division Response:** A meeting to discuss the complaint and draft the division's official response is scheduled by dean within ten (10) instructional days of receiving the faculty's written response. Meeting includes the dean, faculty and AHE representative. Others may participate at the mutual agreement of the dean and faculty.

Date Dean Received Faculty Member's Written Response: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of AHE Notification: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Division Response Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

The dean will provide the division's formal response to the student within five (5) instructional days after the above meeting. Attach the response to this form. This serves as the official division response to the complaint.

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**Vice President Appeal:** If the complaint is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, she or he may appeal to the Vice President within ten (10) instructional days after the division's response. The Vice President's response will be attached to this form and serves as the college's final official response to the complaint.

Date Student Filed Appeal to the VP: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Vice President Response: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of AHE Notification: \_\_\_\_\_

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