

## **INSTITUTIONAL DIRECTIVE 8-29**

**July 27, 2009**

### **Title: Student Instructional Complaint Process**

#### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this directive is to provide a system to channel complaints concerning (a) instruction during a course; (b) instructors; and (c) terminal grades in a course.

#### **II. Policy**

Students, instructors, and administrative personnel must be provided with a clear, effective means for lodging and resolving complaints concerning instruction, instructors, and grades, and for lodging appeals of initial decisions concerning such matters.

#### **III. Responsibilities**

- A. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will be responsible for implementing and assuring the effective operation of the complaint process.
- B. The deans and directors of all operating units will have responsibility for assuring that all faculty and staff are aware of and adhere to this process.
- C. The department chairpersons will have responsibility for assuring that these procedures are known by full-time and part-time faculty and by their curricular students.

#### **IV. Complaint Procedures**

- A. The students are responsible for initiating complaints concerning instruction, instructors, or grades.
- B. The routing process of complaints for each involved party are as follows:
  - 1. The student: first, goes to the instructor; only if this is unfruitful or impossible does the student, second, go to the instructor's supervisor (dean/department head).
  - 2. The instructor: first, tries to resolve the problem; if this does not work, second, go to the instructor's supervisor.
  - 3. The instructor's supervisor: first, meets with student and instructor; at this stage the student's curriculum department head can become involved in an advisory capacity.
  - 4. Any other Piedmont employee to whom an instructional complaint is brought refers the student to the proper process (above); these people do not get personally involved.
- C. By the time these routing procedures are completed, all parties needed for a decision will be involved: the instructor's supervisor will make a firm decision at this point.

**Office of Responsibility: Vice President Academic Affairs**

## **V. Appeal Process**

- A. Either the student or the instructor may use the appeal process to object to the decision reached during the complaint process.
- B. The appeal process must begin within one week following the decision; implementation of the prior decision will if possible be postponed pending the results of such an appeal.
- C. The appealing party should follow the following steps, in sequence:
  - 1. First, make known the objection and intent to appeal to those initially involved.
  - 2. Second, appeal (with or without the instructor and supervisor) to the dean of the instructor's division (if not already involved) and the student's curricular dean (if not already involved).
  - 3. Third, appeal to the Vice President for Academic Affairs; and
  - 4. Fourth, appeal to the President of Piedmont Tech.
- D. At each level the administrator(s) newly involved should consult with those already involved in the process, and should make a decision. Further appeal steps can be made (as above) to object to that decision.
- E. At any point in the appeals process others may become involved if necessary in an advisory role (e.g. counselor, curriculum department head, veterans' affairs).

## **VI. Limitations**

- A. Students may process complaints concerning instruction or instructors only during the semester in which the complaints are concerned.
- B. Terminal grades may be appealed only within the two consecutive terms following the term in which the grade was received. For example: Spring grade – summer/fall appeal; summer grade – fall/spring appeal; fall grade – spring/summer appeal.
- C. Student complaints against faculty and staff concerning alleged discrimination on the basis of age, sex, race, handicap or other conditions, preferences or behavior, sexual harassment and academic matters involving alleged discrimination should be made using the College's Student Grievance Procedure.

## **VII. Implementation**

- A. The process will take effect at the beginning of fall semester, 1992.
- B. All full-time and part-time instructors, and all staff and administrators, will be given copies of these procedures.

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Approved for Publication      Date

## INSTRUCTIONAL COMPLAINT/APPEAL FORM

COURSE:

SEMESTER

DATE:

INSTRUCTOR:

COMPLAINT/APPEAL BROUGHT BY:

NATURE OF COMPLAINT/APPEAL:

SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

(Use other sheets as needed)

ACTION REQUESTED:

REVIEWED BY:

DATE:

REVIEWED BY:

DATE:

REVIEWED BY:

DATE:

DECISION (AND REASONS):

FINAL DISPOSITION:

Any student wishing to initiate a complaint about instruction, instructor, or grades should complete this form, and bring it either to the instructor or to the instructor's supervisor (department chairperson or dean).

Upon Final disposition, copies of the completed form will be distributed to the student initiating the complaint, the instructor, the instructor's supervisor, and curricular dean. An official copy should be on permanent file in the Vice President for Academic Affairs office.