

	Title: Student Grievance Policy	Policy # POL-309 Revision # 0.0
Prepared By:	Victoria Retasket	Date Prepared: 08/21/2014
Approved By:	College President's Signature	Date Approved:
Effective Date:	Board of Trustees President's Signature	Date Approved:

POLICY STATEMENT

NWIC will ensure that student grievances are processed and responded to in a timely way and properly tracked through a uniform procedure outlined in this policy. This uniform procedure will be used by NWIC administration, faculty and staff to accept and process student-initiated grievances.

PURPOSE

Students at NWIC are guaranteed rights that are outlined under Student Rights and Responsibilities code contained in the Student Handbook. If a student feels that his or her student rights have been compromised or violated, the student has the right to file a formal complaint, known as a grievance, in an effort to resolve the issue.

SCOPE

This policy applies to students enrolled at Northwest Indian College. It covers issues arising from a student's current or past involvement with the college. The student grievance procedure may not be used to address allegations of discrimination, including sexual harassment, When a student believes that he/she has been discriminated against due to his/her race, creed, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, veteran status, or national origin, the College's Discrimination and Harassment Policy is a mechanism for resolution, which can be found in the student handbook.

BACKGROUND

Policy History

Student Grievance Policy, submitted to Admin Team 4/2/14, 1st read 4/16/14 2nd read June 11, submitted to BOT 1st read 7/15/14

RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Offices

Center for Student Success, Deans

DEFINITIONS

Note: In general, academic-related grievances, such as issues that occur in the classroom go to the Dean of Academics in the Admin Building. Non-faculty or non-classroom related issues go to the Dean of Students in the CSS.

Grievance

A grievance is a formal written complaint signed by a student and received by the appropriate office. The following procedure provides the steps for a student to file a grievance about the conduct of a faculty member, other NWIC employee, student, or matter unrelated to academic decisions.

Not Allowable for Grievance

A student may not use this grievance process to respond to the outcome of disciplinary proceedings described in the Student Rights and Responsibilities code. Federal, local and tribal laws, rules and regulations, in addition to policies, regulations, and procedures adopted by the Lummi Nation shall not be grievable matters.

Informal Complaints

Other issues not contained in the Student Rights and Responsibilities code may be addressed through an informal complaint to be submitted by a student on the Informal Complaint Form. Examples may include, but not be limited to, a complaint about food in the residence cafeteria or a procedure followed by the Center for Student Success. Informal Complaint forms are available in the Center for Student Success.

PROCEDURE

Informal Resolution When a student has a grievance, the student shall first discuss the matter with the individual toward whom the grievance is directed, unless there are good reasons for not doing so, such as a desire to maintain anonymity with the involved party. If the student feels the matter has not been resolved in this step, he or she may proceed to official grievance procedures.

Step 1: The student shall submit a written grievance statement within five (5) working days of the alleged grievance to the individual's immediate supervisor. See Student Grievance Form and NWIC Organizational Chart. The review of the written statement must take place and a written response delivered to the student within five (5) working days of receipt of the written grievance statement. If the student is not satisfied with the written response, the student may proceed to Step 2.

Step 2: The student shall submit a written grievance statement within five (5) working days to the Dean of Students or the Dean Academics and Distance Learning. The student shall meet with the Dean and present evidence related to the grievance. This meeting is to take place and a written decision delivered to the student within five (5) working days of receipt of the written grievance statement. If the student is not satisfied with the written response, the student may proceed to Step 3.

Step 3: The student shall submit an appeal to the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services within five (5) working days of receipt of the Step 4 written response.

1. All applicable records, documents, and letters must be submitted to the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services' Office for review.
2. At his/her discretion, the Vice President may review the appeal documentation and make a final decision.
3. The grievant and respondent will be notified in writing within five (5) days of receiving the appeal. The decision of the Vice President shall be final.

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It is a student’s obligation to adhere to the timeframe stated above. Failure to adhere to these time frames will result in a delay in resolving the grievance. A student may withdraw his/her grievance or appeal at any step. This process shall be adjusted according to unique circumstances as determined by a Dean.

Record Keeping

If a student complaint is not resolved in the first two steps of the Student Grievance Procedure and reaches either the Dean of Student Life or the Dean of Academics and Distance Learning, that office will keep a single record of the student complaint and all relating documentation. Records related to student grievances are maintained in the student’s file in accordance with FERPA guidelines. The Dean of Students shall maintain a log to track and aggregate student complaint information and the disposition of complaints so that NWIC can study patterns of complaints to determine whether improvements may be appropriate. An annual report will be compiled and disseminated at the end of the academic year to the NWIC Leadership Team and Student Executive Board that outlines trends and the analysis of student complaints and grievances.

RELATED INFORMATION
REVIEW DATE

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