

# COMPLAINT PROCESS FOR STUDENTS FOR NON-INSTRUCTIONAL ISSUES PROCEDURE

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Broward College Procedure 5.23 ([http://www.broward.edu/legal/policies-and-procedures/\\_docs/procedure/a6hx2-5.23.pdf](http://www.broward.edu/legal/policies-and-procedures/_docs/procedure/a6hx2-5.23.pdf))

Broward College ("College") expects and requires that front-line staff and/or administrators attempt to meaningfully resolve informal complaints prior to reaching the appropriate appellate authority administrator as outlined in this procedure. Additionally, students are expected to follow the chain of command within the informal complaint process prior to elevating a concern to the higher levels of the College and making a formal complaint to the appropriate appellate authority. If the particular issue is not indicated in the chart below, the student should consult with the College Ombudsperson to determine the appropriate path for filing a complaint.

This procedure should be used when a student or prospective student has a concern about their education at the College. The objective of the procedure is to provide a process for students to use to resolve concerns as quickly and efficiently as possible. This complaint process is for students and prospective students, and only students or prospective students can participate in the College's complaint process; however, nothing within this process precludes a student from seeking counsel from an advisor of their choice, who may be an attorney.

## Procedures Specific to Online Students

Students enrolled in a fully online program who desire to file a complaint not related to their final grade in a course should follow this Complaint Procedure for non-instructional Issues (Procedure A6Hx2-5.23). After exhausting all institutional complaint processes, Florida residents may file a complaint with the Florida Department of Education-Division of Colleges, and/or with Broward College's regional accrediting agency, The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Students residing in states other than Florida may file a complaint with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Please note that entities external to Broward College will review complaints in accordance with their own policies and are not formally part of the Broward College complaint resolution process.

Most complaint processes external to Broward College require that the student:

1. document the steps taken to exhaust the institution's grievance process;
2. describe the action taken by the institution to date in response to the student complaint; and
3. provide a copy of the institution's response to the student as a result of following the College's procedures.

The student or prospective student brings the concern to an appropriate staff or faculty member using the steps in the resolution process below. If the student is uncomfortable with approaching the college employee directly, they may select an advocate inclusive of a counselor or advisor, a student dean, College Ombudsperson, or another staff member that is not a member of the complaint resolution hierarchy. The staff member and administrators will attempt to work with the student and any other persons who are involved to respond to the problem within ten (10) business days. If the complaint is not answered satisfactorily, at any step in the process, the student should progressively elevate their concerns through the process and if not resolved can make a formal complaint with the appropriate appellate authority administrator as indicated below. The appellate authority level administrator shall maintain records of complaints filed with their respective office. Students may submit complaints directly to the department in question or may submit their complaints online (<http://www.broward.edu/students/ombudsperson.html>).

After exhausting all institutional complaint processes, students and/or prospective students who believe their issue(s) are unresolved, may file a complaint with the Florida Department of Education's Division of Florida Colleges and/or the Southern Association for Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, who will assist in accordance with their policies. For more information on how to contact the Florida Department of Education regarding a complaint, students may access information at this website (<http://www.fldoe.org/about-us/office-of-the-inspector-general/file-a-complaint.shtml>). Students may also file a complaint with the accrediting body responsible for the program, if one exists. Students may inquire of the pathway dean and/or the College Ombudsperson to learn about how they may complain to the program specific accrediting agency, if applicable.

Unless otherwise specified in a policy or procedure aligned to the specific matter in question, students should share their concerns as specified in this procedure within ten business days after the incident/issue in question becomes known. If the student is not satisfied with the response they may appeal to each higher level within ten business days. After exhausting each level of authority, they may appeal to the appellate authority administrator. The decision of each successive higher-level supervisor will be rendered within ten business days of receipt of the appeal. The Campus Dean of Students or College Ombudsperson may provide guidance and support to the student throughout the complaint process.

Complaints related to actions that violate Federal law such as discrimination, ADA, FERPA, Title IX or other laws prohibiting discrimination should be reported to the appropriate College official using the resolution process above. Additionally, students may file a complaint with the appropriate Federal agency that has jurisdiction over these areas. The United States Department of Education Office of Civil Rights handles complaints related to discrimination and ADA. Complaints related to the privacy of records in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), students may also contact the United States Department of Education Family Policy Compliance Office and file a complaint in accordance with the rules of that agency.

Areas of Concern	First Response (Informal)	Next Level (Informal)	Next Level (Informal)	Final/Appellate Level (Formal)
<b>Academic Advising</b>	Student Services Supervisor/ Advising	Associate Dean for Student Services/Advising	Campus Dean of Student Services	Vice President for Student Services
<b>Admissions Application</b>	Student Services Supervisor/ Admissions	Associate Dean for Student Services/Admissions	Campus Dean of Student Services or Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs/College Registrar	Vice President for Student Services
<b>Bookstore</b>	Bookstore Manager	General Manager	District Director of Auxiliary Services	Senior Vice President for Finance and Operations
<b>Disruptive Behavior of Students</b>			Campus Dean of Student Services (Refer to Student Code of Conduct 6Hx2-5.02)	College Ombudsperson
<b>Faculty Concerns</b>	Associate Dean or Program Manager		Academic Pathway Dean	Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
<b>Discrimination and Retaliation</b>	See Policy 6H2-3.34 (Discrimination and Retaliation)	See Policy 6H2-3.34 (Discrimination and Retaliation)	See Policy 6H2-3.34 (Discrimination and Retaliation)	See Policy 6H2-3.34 (Discrimination and Retaliation)
<b>Enrollment/Registration</b>	Student Services Supervisor/ Admissions	Associate Dean for Student Services/Admissions	Campus Dean of Student Services or Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs/College Registrar	Vice President for Student Services
<b>Financial Aid</b>	Assistant Director of Financial Aid	District Director of Financial Aid Advising	Associate Vice President for Student Financial Services	Vice President for Finance
<b>Florida Residency</b>	Student Services Supervisor/ Admissions	Associate Dean for Student Services/ Admissions	Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs/College Registrar	Vice Provost for Academic Operations
<b>Grade Appeal See Policy &amp; Procedure 4.19</b>	Faculty member	Associate Academic/ Pathway Dean		Grade Appeal Policy 6Hx2-4.19 Grade Appeal Procedure A6Hx2-4.19
<b>Graduation Eligibility</b>		Associate Dean for Student Services/Advising	Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs/College Registrar	Vice Provost for Academic Operations
<b>Immigration Status I-20</b>		District Director for International Student Enrollment		Executive Director for International Education
<b>International Center Students</b>			International Center Director	BC Broward Executive Director of International Education
<b>Library/Academic Success Center (ASC)</b>	Library: Associate Dean for Library Services (Collegewide)  Academic Success Center: Associate Dean for Academic Success Center (by campus)		Dean of Libraries and Academic Success Centers	Vice Provost for Academic Services and Learning Resources
<b>Parking</b>	Campus Safety Lieutenant	Campus Safety Captain of Operations	Associate Vice President for Campus Safety, Security and Emergency Preparedness	Senior Vice President for Finance and Operations
<b>Petition for Refund Requests</b>	Petition for Refund Committee			Vice President for Financial Services
<b>Security</b>	Campus Safety Lieutenant	Campus Safety Captain of Operations	Associate Vice President for Campus Safety, Security and Emergency Preparedness	Senior Vice President for Finance and Operations
<b>Sexual Harassment/ Misconduct</b>	See Policy 6Hx2-5.39 (Sexual Harassment/Misconduct)	See Policy 6Hx2-5.39 (Sexual Harassment/Misconduct)	See Policy 6Hx2-5.39 (Sexual Harassment/Misconduct)	See Policy 6Hx2-5.39 (Sexual Harassment/Misconduct)

<b>Student Activities</b>	Coordinator of Student Life	District Director for Student Engagement	Campus Dean of Student Services	Vice President for Student Services
<b>ADA (Americans With Disabilities Act)</b>	Coordinator for Accessibility Resources	Director for Accessibility Resources	Associate Vice President for Institutional Accessibility	College Ombudsperson
<b>Testing</b>	Testing Center Supervisor		District Director of Testing	Vice Provost for Academic Services and Learning Resources
<b>Transcripts</b>	Records Administrator		Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs/College Registrar	Vice Provost for Academic Operations

**Contact information for filing complaints with external agencies:**

Florida Department of Education, Division of Florida Colleges (<http://www.fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system/about-us/colleges.shtml>)  
 850-245-0407  
 325 West Gaines Street, Room 1544  
 Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (<http://sacscoc.org/>)  
 404-679-4500  
 1866 Southern Lane  
 Decatur, GA 30033-4097

**Out of State Distance Education Students**

Out-of-State distance education students, who have completed the internal institutional grievance process, and the applicable state grievance process, may appeal non-instructional complaints to the Florida State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) Postsecondary Reciprocal Distance Education Coordinating Council at [FLSARAinfo@fldoe.org](mailto:FLSARAinfo@fldoe.org).

For additional information on the complaint process, please visit the FL- SARA Complaint Process page.