

## **IHCC Policy 3.8 Student Complaint and Grievance**

### **Part 1. Policy Statement.**

In accordance with Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board Policy 3.8, a student has the right to seek remedy for a dispute or disagreement through the Inver Hills Community College (IHCC) complaint and grievance procedures. These procedures shall not:

- Substitute for other complaint/grievance procedures specified in Minnesota State Colleges and Universities board or Inver Hills Community College policies or procedures, regulations or negotiated agreements.
- Apply to academic grade disputes. Grade appeals must be handled under college policy 3.85 (Grade Appeal policy).
- Apply to student code of conduct violations. Code of conduct violations will be handled under college policy 3.6 (Code of Conduct for Student Behavior).

### **Part 2. Definitions**

#### **Subpart A. Appeal.**

A written request for reconsideration of a grievance decision under policy 3.8.

#### **Subpart B. Complaint.**

A written claim made by a student using the Inver Hills *Student Complaint Form*, alleging improper, unfair, or arbitrary treatment or action taken by an Inver Hills employee or student.

**Subpart C. Day.** Business day, excluding Saturday, Sunday, holidays, and breaks between semesters and summer session(s).

#### **Subpart D. Grievance**

A written claim made by a student using the Inver Hills *Student Grievance Form*, alleging improper, unfair, or arbitrary action by an Inver Hills employee involving the application of a specific provision of an Inver Hills or MnSCU policy or procedure.

#### **Subpart E. Student.**

An individual enrolled at Inver Hills Community College.

### **Part 3. Procedures**

#### **Subpart A. Complaints.**

Complaints shall be brought within 15 days of the first occurrence of the event giving rise to the complaint, or within 15 days after the student, through the use of reasonable diligence, should have had knowledge of the first occurrence giving rise to the complaint.

1. Students are encouraged to use available informal means to resolve concerns before filing a complaint.
2. A student shall document the complaint on Inver Hills *Student Complaint Form*, and include the reason for the complaint, factual summary of the complaint, and the remedy

sought. The form from the Enrollment Center, Information Desk, Counseling Center, or college website. The student shall present the complaint to the employee who took the complained of action, and/or the employee's immediate supervisor.

3. The college employee or supervisor who receives the complaint shall contact the student to discuss the complaint within ten working days (working days exclude Saturdays, Sundays, and holiday breaks in the academic calendar). The college employee or supervisor shall inform the complainant of, and document on the complaint form, a reasonable date by which the employee/supervisor shall make a written response. The student may have an appropriate campus representative (e.g., counselor or instructor), in attendance for any such discussion.
4. Information submitted and gathered in a student complaint is subject to the Minnesota Data Practices Act.

### **Subpart B. Grievances.**

If the student determines that the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved, and the complaint alleges improper, unfair, or arbitrary action by an employee involving the application of a specific provision of a college or MnSCU policy or procedure, the student may file a grievance.

1. The grievance must be filed on IHCC's *Student Grievance Form* within 10 days of receipt of the written response to the complaint under Part 3, Subpart A. The grievance shall state the reason for the grievance, a factual summary of the grievance, the specific policy or procedure application that is the concern, and the requested remedy. The form from the Enrollment Center, Information Desk, Counseling Center, or college website. The student may submit the grievance through the following steps:
  - a. The administrator to whom the employee reports. The grievant may elect to waive this step if the grievant previously submitted the matter to the same administrator under the Complaint Process in Part 3, Subpart A.
  - b. The vice president to whom the employee reports. The grievance must be submitted to the vice president within 5 days of receipt of the written response in step 1, or if step 1 is waived, within 10 days of receipt of the written response to the complaint under Part 3, Subpart A.
2. Each administrator who receives the grievance shall meet with the student to discuss the grievance within ten working days (working days exclude Saturdays, Sundays, and holiday breaks in the academic calendar). The administrator shall inform the grievant of, and document on the grievance form, a reasonable date by which the administrator shall make a written response.
3. Information submitted and gathered in a student grievance is subject to the Minnesota Data Practices Act.

### **Subpart C. Appeal.**

If the grievance is not resolved, the student may submit a written appeal of the grievance, within five days after receiving the written response in Part 3, Subpart B.2, through the following steps:

1. To the college president. The president's decision is final and binding, except as provided for in Part 3, Subpart C.2.
2. If the grievance involves a MnSCU Board policy, or the actions of the college President, to the Chancellor. The decision of the Chancellor is binding.

**Subpart D. Timeframe.**

If a complaint or grievance is not presented within the specified time limits, it will be considered waived by the student. If a complaint or grievance is not appealed to the next step within the established time limits, it will be considered settled on the basis of the last answer.

If, after presentation at any step, a college employee does not respond to the complaint or grievance within the specified time limits, the student may treat the complaint or grievance as denied at that step and may appeal the complaint or grievance to the next step.

The time limits for any step may be extended by mutual written agreement of the student and the appropriate college or MnSCU personnel.

**Subpart E. Retaliation.**

Retaliation against a student for participating or not participating in a complaint or grievance is prohibited.

**Subpart F. Procedure for change.**

Procedures for instituting change at the college are available to students at both the local and state level. Individual students may submit items for consideration to the Student Senate or the appropriate college committee. Notice of Student Senate meetings and copies of minutes are posted, and all meetings are open to visitors. Contact the Student Senate Advisor or the Dean of Students for further information.

**Related Documents:**

- MnSCU Board Policy 3.8 and Procedure 3.8.1

**Responsible Administrator:** Dean of Students

**Policy History:**

Date of Adoption: NA

Last Revision date: 10/13/2016

Date most recent policy revisions go into effect: 01/09/2017

10/13/2016 – Policy Committee Review Fall 2015 through spring 2016. Academic Council review 10/15/2015, 2/4/2016, 2/18/2016, 4/28/2016. Faculty Shared Governance notification 3/22/2016. Comment period September 1-15, 2016. Strategic Leadership Council approval 10/17/2016. In Part 3, Subpart A, section 3, additional language was added to clarify response time. In Part 3, Subpart B, section 2, additional language was added to clarify response time. Changed to new policy template.

2009 – Review date, details not available