

NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE  
**APPENDIX E**

(Reference Policy: 6Hx17-7.220)

**STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

*"Northwest Florida State College is dedicated to the concepts of equity and equal opportunity. It is the specific intention of the College not to discriminate on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, marital status, national origin, race, religion, or sex in its employment practices or in the admission and treatment of students."*

Northwest Florida State College Student Grievance Procedures are designed to provide effective means for resolving legitimate issues that are subject to the grievance process. State Board Rules and College Policies are not grievable; only the application or interpretation of rules or policies may be grieved.

**Resolution of Grievances**

Any student who believes that he/she has been done an injustice through the action of another student, a College employee, or other person acting for the College may initiate a grievance under these procedures.

NWFSC's student grievance procedures apply to all complaints on the part of students which may arise in matters of instruction and general student services when they involve rights provided for under the College's Equal Access/Equal Opportunity Plan the Florida Educational Equity Act and when they directly affect the personal interests and well-being of individual students.

Complaints which do not directly affect the personal interests and well-being of individual students and which are not otherwise covered by these procedures shall ordinarily be referred to the Dean of Students for resolution.

The President of the College shall be the final arbiter where a dispute exists as to whether a particular matter is subject to coverage by these procedures. In making his decision, the President will interpret the coverage of these procedures liberally, denying their application only when the matter in question clearly concerns issues of rule or policy in which the complaining party has no direct interest, where there is good reason to believe that a grievance has been brought in bad faith for political or similarly inappropriate reasons, or for circumstances in which use of these procedures would clearly endanger their effectiveness as an instrument for the redress of grievances.

**The Informal Grievance Procedure**

The College's informal grievance procedure shall be implemented in the following sequence:

1. The aggrieved student shall first discuss his/her complaint with the instructor or faculty advisor concerned, for resolution.
2. If the grievance remains unresolved, the student should refer it to the appropriate department or organizational unit head for resolution.

3. If the circumstances of the grievance preclude the use of steps 1 and 2, or if the department or organizational unit head does not resolve the grievance within ten (10) working days, the student should discuss the grievance with the Dean of Students, who will bring the matter to the attention of the President of the College.

If the grievance resulted from violation of College policies, the College Equity Plan, or SBE Rules, the President shall take or cause to be taken appropriate measures to ensure compliance with the policies, statutes or Rules, and resolve the grievance.

If the grievance involves a question of judgment or opinion not covered by College policies, by the College Equity Plan, or by SBE Rules, the President or his designee shall counsel with the student, the faculty advisor, or the department or organizational unit head, and the appropriate Dean, in an endeavor to resolve the grievance.

### **The Formal Grievance Procedure**

If a grievance is not resolved by the informal procedure, the aggrieved student should submit a request, in writing, to the President of the College via the Dean of Students for a formal student grievance hearing. It shall set forth the nature of the grievance, the person(s) involved, and the resolution desired. It shall also include the nomination of one disinterested SGA Senator who is willing and available to serve as a member of the student grievance hearing committee.

If the request for a hearing is disapproved, the President shall state the reasons therefore in writing. If approved, he shall appoint a student grievance hearing committee composed of the following members:

1. The SGA Senator named in the original request for the hearing or a substitute satisfactory to the grievant.
2. A College employee nominated by the Dean of Students.
3. An additional College employee who shall be nominated by mutual agreement of the other two members, who is a regular, full-time employee, and who, with the approval of the President, shall be designated chairperson. If the two members cannot agree on a nominee for chairperson, the chairperson will be appointed by the President.
4. The Dean of Students or his/her designee will serve as recording secretary to the committee but shall have no vote. If the grievance involves an equity issue, the College Equity Coordinator shall appoint a representative to serve as an advisor to the committee.

The committee shall, within seven (7) days of being constituted, meet to hear the grievance and interview such witnesses as it deems pertinent to the matter.

The committee shall report its findings and recommendations for resolution of the matter, in writing, to the President within four (4) working days of the close of the hearing.

The President shall advise all pertinent parties of his action on the grievance within three (3) working days after receipt of the committee's report.

The action by the President is final, except for cases of student expulsion, which may be appealed by the aggrieved student, in writing, to the Board of Trustees within three (3) working days of receipt of the decision. The decision of the Board in such matters is final.

### **Time Limits**

A grievance must be filed in a timely fashion. If a student is filing a grievance, it must involve a specific event or incident occurring within thirty (30) days of filing the grievance.

### **Summary**

Nothing in this procedure is intended to create any due process rights nor does it entitle the individual to seek redress in any court or administrative proceeding.

---

**Approved by the District Board of Trustees in Regular Session on May 31, 1989**