

**WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
INSTRUCTIONAL GRIEVANCE
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 6040**

I. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The student is urged to begin the process by first discussing the problem with the instructor and trying to resolve it through the Informal grievance process outlined below.

A. Informal Grievance Process

1. Any student wishing to appeal a faculty action or decision must communicate the grievance, and identify it as such, to the instructor within ten (10) instructional days after the end of a quarter in which the action or decision was made.
2. The instructor will communicate with the student and provide a verbal or written response to the grievance within five (5) instructional days after meeting with the student.
3. The instructor and the student must come to a clear mutual understanding as to whether the issue has or has not been resolved.
4. If the issue is not resolved informally to the student's satisfaction, the student may file a formal grievance.

B. Formal Grievance Process

Step 1:

1. The student may file a written grievance with the dean who oversees the area in which the instructor teaches within five (5) instructional days of the informal discussion.
 - a. Instructional Deans include:
 - i. Dean of Arts and Sciences
 - ii. Dean of Nursing and Allied Health
 - iii. Dean of Access and Opportunity
 - iv. Dean of Workforce
 - v. Dean of Corrections Education
2. The written grievance must contain the specific complaint(s) and the desired resolution.
3. The dean will notify the instructor upon receipt of the grievance and give the instructor the option to participate in a meeting with the student.
4. The dean will meet with the student within five (5) instructional days of receipt of the grievance and will respond in writing to the student within five (5) instructional days after holding the meeting.

Step 2:

1. If the grievance is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student may go to the next step of the process by filing an appeal in writing with the Vice President of Instruction within five (5) instructional days of receipt of the dean's written decision.
2. The Vice President of Instruction or designee will notify the instructor and dean upon receipt of the grievance and give the instructor and dean the option to participate in a meeting with the student.
3. The Vice President of Instruction or designee will meet with the student within five (5) instructional days of receipt of the appeal and will respond in writing to the student within five (5) instructional days after the meeting.

Step 3:

1. If the student or the faculty member remains dissatisfied after the meeting with the Vice President of Instruction, either may appeal to the Instructional Grievance Committee. The Committee is the last step in this grievance procedure. The Committee's decision is final.
2. For up to ten (10) instructional days after the meeting with the Vice President of Instruction, the student or instructor may request in writing to the Vice President of Instruction a hearing before the Instructional Grievance Committee. This written request for a hearing should include the specific grievance and requested remedy. Breaks between the quarters will not be included in this ten (10-day period).
3. The Vice President of Instruction will assemble the Instructional Grievance Committee within five (5) instructional days unless there are extenuating circumstances. Before the initial Committee meeting, the Vice President of Instruction will give the Committee all available written materials pertaining to the grievance. At this meeting, the Committee elects a Faculty Chair. At this first meeting, the Committee will also review the request for a hearing and determine if a hearing is warranted. If the Committee determines that a hearing is warranted, the Chair will set a date for the hearing and contact both parties. All information, list of witnesses, statements, and other relevant material must be submitted to the Chairperson by both parties no later than 10 (ten) instructional days prior to the hearing.
4. Any information regarding the grievance gathered by either party and submitted to the Committee as evidence must be made available to the other party. It is the Chairperson's responsibility to see that both parties receive all pertinent information.
5. Committee Hearing Proceedings
 - a. All members of the Committee must be present to conduct the hearing. Both student and instructor or their representative must be present (in person or via videoconferencing). Attendance is limited to those invited by faculty members or student(s), unless both parties agree to an open hearing.
 - b. Either the student or the instructor may choose a representative, although this may not be an attorney.
 - c. The formal hearing will be recorded via the institution's videoconferencing software.
 - i. The Administrative Assistant to the Vice President of Instruction will be responsible for setting up the technology and archiving the recording per the institution's records retention policy.
 - d. The student and the instructor or their representative can cross-examine any witness presented at the hearing. Members of the Grievance Committee may also ask questions of either the student, the instructor, or any representative or witness present. The formal hearing is the last opportunity either party will have to present their side of the grievance. After the formal hearing, no member(s) of the Grievance Committee will accept additional information regarding the grievance from any source.
6. Decision of the Committee:

- a. Within five (5) instructional days of the hearing, the Committee will present its decision in writing. The decision will include a finding of facts associated with the grievance, a decision, and a written rationale for the decision. The decision can include changing grades.
- b. Consulting with the Committee, the Chairperson will prepare the rationale and include the important supporting and detracting factors in the case. The written decision must be signed by all members who support the decision.
- c. The Chairperson will send copies of this decision and its rationale to the student, the instructor, the dean, and the Vice President for Instruction. The Committee's decision is final.
- d. If the Committee agrees that a grade should be changed, the Chairperson will complete, sign, and attach a change of grade request. This request will be filed with the Registrar's Office.
- e. The Vice President of Instruction Office will keep an official record of the grievance and recordings.
 - i. The Administrative Assistant of the Vice President of Instruction will be the official record keeper.
- f. No one shall intimidate, threaten, or coerce, discriminate, or defame any individual because they have made a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in the grievance process.

II. INSTRUCTIONAL GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- A. The Instructional Grievance Committee is a standing five (5)-member Committee available to students to provide a fair and prompt forum for hearing student complaints about instructional or other academic issues. It has the authority to render decisions, including changing grades.
- B. It is composed of one (1) student (currently enrolled in credit courses) and an alternate appointed by SGA at the beginning of each academic year for one-year terms; two (2) faculty members, one (1) elected each spring quarter to serve for the next two academic years by the Senate; one (1) professional or administrative member of Instruction; and one (1) professional or administrative member of Student Services appointed by the Vice President of Student Services.
- C. Appointing Alternates
 1. For any of these positions, alternates can be appointed for any of the following reasons:
 - a. If the student or instructor believes that a particular Committee member might have a conflict of interest, either party may request in writing that one member be excused, or an alternate be appointed.
 - b. If one of the Committee members is out of town or unavailable because of a scheduling conflict, an alternate will be appointed.
 2. A list of Committee members will be submitted to both parties (instructor and student(s)). Either party has five (5) instructional days to submit a written request for replacement of Committee members to the Vice President of Instruction.
 3. If alternates are needed, the timelines will be extended until all are appointed. Within five (5) instructional days after all alternates are appointed the first meeting will be held and a chairperson chosen from three (3) faculty by a majority vote of all Committee members.

4. The following will appoint alternates when necessary: The Chair of the Senate or next available officer will appoint alternates for faculty members, the Vice President of Student Services for the Student Services Committee member, and the SGA President or next available student officer for student alternates. In the event no SGA officer is available, the student alternate will be appointed by the SGA advisor.

III. ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES

- A. The time limits in this procedure shall be followed unless the student or appropriate administrator is not available within the five (5) instructional day timeframe due to extenuating circumstances. Under such circumstances, an extension of five (5) additional instructional days may be added. If there are no extensions due to circumstances, then failure by the student to comply with the timelines will result in the automatic withdrawal of the grievance, and failure by the College to comply with the timelines will entitle the student to take the grievance from the informal stage to the formal stage or from Step 1 to Step 2.
- B. If a student wishes to have a grievance considered through this process but does not follow the steps as outlined (such as the student sending an appeal to the Vice President of Instruction prior to the instructor or dean review), the student will be referred to the steps in this process unless the Vice President of Instruction or dean believes there is a compelling reason to consider it.
- C. A student with questions about this process or how to contact the appropriate individuals can contact their advisor.
- D. The student has the option of being accompanied by a staff member or faculty advisor who appears primarily in an observing role and who offers guidance, support, and clarification about process.
- E. No new or additional grievances may be made after the initial written grievance is filed, except by written mutual agreement.
- F. If the College provides the requested remedy or a mutually-agreed-upon alternative, the grievance will be considered resolved and may not be moved to the next step.
- G. A student may withdraw a grievance at any time by notifying the instructor or the supervising dean in writing. If the student has advanced the grievance to the formal process, the student must also, notify in writing all other parties involved at that level of appeal (dean, VP of Instruction, and/or Instructional Grievance Committee).
- H. The grievance procedure does not supersede the written grievance procedures of other programs at WWCC (such as Nursing).

Policy Contact: <u>Vice President, Instruction</u>
Approved by (Department/Body): <u>Dr. Chad Hickox, President</u>
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