

Student Grievance Process

RVC Administrative Procedure (4:10.160)

The College will maintain a student grievance process for students to request the review and consideration of an allegation of unjust or improper practice or harassment on the part of the College. Specific procedures governing the Student Grievance Process will be published by the College.

Purpose

The purpose of this Administrative Procedure is to establish a fair, timely, and equitable process for addressing student grievances. The procedure provides students with an opportunity to raise concerns regarding alleged unfair treatment, the application of College policies and procedures, or actions that adversely affect their educational experience while ensuring that grievances are reviewed and resolved through an impartial process.

Scope

This Administrative Procedure applies to all students enrolled at the College, including but not limited to: full-time, part-time, Community & Continuing Education, Workforce Development, Adult Education, etc.

This procedure applies to grievances involving:

- The application or interpretation of College policies and procedures;
- Actions or decisions by College employees, departments, or offices;
- Access to College services, programs, or resources;
- Other non-academic concerns affecting a student's educational experience.

This procedure does not apply to:

- Academic grade appeals;
- Academic misconduct matters;
- Student conduct proceedings;
- Title IX or sex-based misconduct complaints;
- Matters governed by another specific College procedure.

Students should utilize the applicable procedure when a separate appeal or complaint process exists.

Department and Primary Point of Contact Involved

Department Responsible for Administration: Dean of Students Office. **Primary Point of Contact:** Dean of Students

Definitions

Advisor/Support Person: An individual selected by a student to accompany them during the grievance process. The advisor may be a friend, family member, College

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employee, or peer and may provide support but may not speak on behalf of the student unless permitted by the College official conducting the review.

Business Day: Any day the College is open for normal business operations, excluding weekends, holidays, and College-designated closures.

Grievance: A written complaint submitted by a student alleging unfair treatment, improper application of College policy, or actions that adversely affect the student's educational experience.

Grievant: The student filing the grievance.

Respondent: The individual, office, department, or College representative against whom the grievance is filed.

Student: Includes all persons taking courses at Rock Valley College either full-time or part-time; persons who withdraw after allegedly violating the student code, who are not officially enrolled for a particular term but who have a continuing relationship with the college, or who have been notified of their acceptance for admission.

Witness: An individual who has direct knowledge of information relevant to the grievance.

Procedure

Informal Resolution

Students are encouraged to attempt to resolve concerns informally with the individual, office, or department involved prior to filing a formal grievance.

If the concern cannot be resolved informally, the student may submit a formal grievance.

Filing a Grievance

A student may submit a written grievance to the Dean of Students or designee.

Student may do this on the RVC Website by searching Dean of Students (they can then choose the link *File a Report or Complaint*).

The grievance should include:

- The student's name and contact information;
- A description of the concern;
- Relevant dates and circumstances;
- The parties involved;
- Any steps taken to resolve the concern informally;
- The requested resolution.

Anonymous complaints may be reviewed; however, anonymity may limit the College's ability to investigate and resolve the matter.

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Notice and Review

Upon receipt of a grievance, the Dean of Students or designee shall review the complaint to determine whether it falls within the scope of this procedure.

The Dean of Students may:

- Dismiss the grievance if it lacks sufficient information or falls outside the scope of the procedure;
- Refer the matter to another College office or procedure;
- Conduct an investigation;
- Request additional information from involved parties;
- Meet with the student and other relevant individuals.

Students may be accompanied by an advisor or support person during meetings related to the grievance.

Investigation

The Dean of Students or designee shall gather relevant information, which may include:

- Interviews with involved parties;
- Written statements;
- College records and documentation;
- Information provided by witnesses.

The investigation will be conducted in a fair and impartial manner.

Findings and Resolution

Following review of the available information, the Dean of Students or designee shall determine whether the grievance has merit and identify an appropriate resolution.

Possible outcomes include:

- Dismissal of the grievance;
- Corrective action;
- Referral to another College office;
- Recommendation for policy or procedural changes;
- Other appropriate remedies.

Written notification of the outcome shall be provided to the student.

Appeals

A student may appeal the grievance decision within ten (10) business days of receiving the written outcome.

Appeals must be submitted in writing and identify one or more of the following grounds:

- Procedural error that affected the outcome;

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- New information that was not reasonably available during the original review;
- Evidence that the decision was arbitrary or capricious.

Appeals shall be reviewed by the Dean of Students or their designee to determine if the appeal will be referred to the Grievance Review Board or the Chief Academic Officer (CAO). The Grievance Review Board may consist of a minimum of three (3) individuals and no more than six (6), two (2) faculty members appointed by Academic Affairs, two (2) students appointed by the Director of Student Life and Intercultural Student Services, and two (2) Student Affairs administrators (one of whom will serve as non-voting chairperson) appointed by the Chief Academic Officer (CAO). The Dean of Students, or their designee, shall serve as non-voting Secretary and advisor to the Grievance Review Board. Grievance Review Board members may not sit on the Board during a hearing if that member is a complainant, witness, has a direct or personal interest in the outcome of the hearing, or has previously acted in an advisory capacity to the accused student.

Appeal Hearing Procedures:

Formal appeal hearings will be conducted by the Grievance Review Board or the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) according to the following guidelines:

- A written appeal must be received within 10 business days from receiving the written notification of the outcome.
- The Dean of Students, or their designee, will determine if the appeal will be referred to the Grievance Review Board, or the Chief Academic Officer (CAO).
- The Dean of Students, or their designee, will notify the student of the appeal hearing within 15 days of receipt of appeal request. The notice will include the date, time, location and type of hearing.
- Decisions made by the Grievance Review Board or the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) are final.

Student Records and Confidentiality

Grievance records shall be maintained by the Dean of Students Office in accordance with applicable records retention requirements and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Information may be disclosed as permitted by FERPA or other applicable laws.

Related Documents

Student Handbook

Reference: AR 314

Implemented: April 8, 2014

Revised: July 18 2026