



STUDENT COMPLAINT RESOLUTION POLICY

SUMMARY

Suffolk County Community College (“College”) is committed to providing quality education and support services for our students. Accordingly, the College has established a student complaint process to allow students to identify problems which need to be evaluated, referred, and addressed. Additionally, tracking student complaints will allow the College to monitor the quality of services provided in accordance with accreditation standards set forth in 34 CFR 602.16(a)(1)(ix).

PROCESS

I. Complaints Covered by This Procedure

Other than student complaints which may be resolved informally (see, paragraph III, below), formal student complaints covered by this procedure should be filed electronically or submitted, in writing, to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. The Vice President for Student Affairs or his/her designee, will forward the complaint to the Executive Dean of the appropriate campus. The Executive Dean thereafter determines whether a complaint meets the definitions set forth below and is of sufficient substance to be investigated. Such complaints will be tracked, documented and resolved by the Executive Dean, who shall provide a report of the resolution to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Definitions

A complaint must:

- Be of sufficient substance
- Not be a grievance for which a defined policy or process is provided
- Be in writing
- Identify the student making the complaint (not anonymous)
- Be filed electronically or submitted to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs

II. Complaints Not Covered by This Policy

- A. Grade disputes, academic grievances, and other matters related to a faculty member's assigned duties. The grievance process for these disputes is found at: [Course Grade Grievance Procedure](#).
- B. Issues of sexual harassment. These issues should be referred to the Chief Diversity Officer/Title IX Coordinator at vargasc@sunysuffolk.edu. The College's Sexual Harassment Policy and Grievance Procedure is found at:
<https://www.sunysuffolk.edu/legalaffairs/documents/sexualharrasststudentpolicy.pdf>.
- C. Issues related to harassment/discrimination. The College's Anti-Discrimination Policy and Grievance Procedure is found at:
<https://www.sunysuffolk.edu/legalaffairs/documents/f16studentdiscriminationpolicy.pdf>.
- D. Appeals process as a way to resolve disciplinary sanctions regarding non-compliance with student conduct regulations. The Student Code of Conduct outlines the appeal procedures for disciplinary sanctions and is found at:
<https://www.sunysuffolk.edu/legalaffairs/documents/f7studentcodeofconduct.pdf>.
- E. Appeals process as a way to resolve contested parking summonses. The College's Traffic and Parking Regulations are found at:
<https://www.sunysuffolk.edu/legalaffairs/documents/trafficandparkingregulations.pdf>.
- F. Issues relating to tuition refund appeals. The College's tuition refund policy is found at:
<https://www.sunysuffolk.edu/Students/Refund.asp>.
- G. Requests to have student education records amended. The College's Student Records Policy is found at: <https://www.sunysuffolk.edu/legalaffairs/documents/f9studentrecordspolicy.pdf>.
- H. Other established complaint/grievance processes.

III. Informal Complaint Resolution

Prior to filing a formal complaint against a College office or employee, students are encouraged to attempt a good-faith resolution of the complaint. This attempt may be made with the party directly involved with the disputed matter, or with the head of the department or unit in which the grievance arises. Please note that an individual may choose to bypass the informal complaint resolution process and go directly to the formal complaint resolution stage described below.

IV. Formal Complaint Resolution

If a student is unable to resolve his or her concerns informally, the College's formal complaint process may be employed. This process, outlined below, should be initiated within thirty (30) days of the failed informal resolution, if applicable.

Step 1

A formal complaint is filed electronically at:

http://www.sunysuffolk.edu/luminis_asp/comments_luminis.asp, or submitted, in writing, to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

The complaint should include the following:

- Name, address and phone number of the person making the complaint;
- Identification of the office or individual against whom the complaint is brought;
- A description of the specific College action or individual behavior resulting in this complaint;
- The date or period of time in which the behavior occurred and the location of the incident; and
- A listing of all individuals who witnessed any part of the incident in dispute.

Step 2

The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs forwards the complaint to the Office of the Executive Dean of the student's home campus. If the Executive Dean's office determines that no other complaint resolution process is available for this subject matter of the complaint and that the complaint is sufficiently substantive, this office will take all necessary steps to bring the complaint to resolution in a reasonable time period and communicate the resolution to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Thereafter, the Office of the Executive Dean communicates the resolution, in writing, to the individual who filed the complaint. A report documenting the complaint resolution process is then forwarded to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs for record-keeping purposes. Complaint records are retained for six (6) years after resolution of the complaint.

**Board of Trustees
January 19, 2017**