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STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY

Columbia Gorge Community College has established these procedures which are designed to provide students an avenue whereby complaints, concerns and decisions made within the college can be appealed within the college.

A student who has a grievance and/or appeal shall follow the specified steps of this grievance procedure to assure the grievance and/or appeal is given fair and careful consideration. The procedures described here are separated based on the type of grievance. The President shall be responsible for taking appropriate action to coordinate the processing of grievances.

A student with a concern must appeal through the steps as follows:

Matters Related to Instruction and any Form of Harassment or Discrimination

Step

1. Instructor
2. Dean of Instruction
3. President
4. Discretionary Grievance Committee Review
5. Board of Education

Matters Related to Student Services/Student Life

Step

1. Student Services staff person concerned
2. Director of Student Development
3. President
4. Discretionary Grievance Committee Review
5. Board of Education

Matters Related to Business Affairs/Fiscal Services

Step

1. Business Office staff person concerned
2. Business Manager
3. President
4. Discretionary Grievance Committee Review
5. Board of Education

Specific Grievance Procedures

A student must initiate the grievance procedure within 30 calendar days of the event which is the subject of the grievance or the student loses the opportunity to grieve the issue. If a student misses a step deadline, the grievance is considered terminated.

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Step 1: Unless the President determines that the grievance should be initiated at Step 2 in light of the circumstances involved, the first step in resolving the grievance shall be a person-to-person discussion between the student and the Step 1 decision maker in order to resolve the grievance informally as quickly as possible. The student must exhaust this step within ten working days of initiating the grievance.

Step 2: If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the Step 1 conference, or if the President determines that the grievance should be initiated at Step 2, the student shall orally present the grievance to the appropriate Step 2 decision maker within five working days of (a) the exhaustion of Step 1, or (b) the President's notification to the student that the grievance shall be initiated at Step 2. The student and the Step 2 decision maker shall have five working days to resolve the grievance informally.

Step 3: If the student is not satisfied with the attempt to informally resolve the grievance at Step 2, the student must reduce the grievance to writing, date and sign it, and present the written grievance to the President for consideration. The written grievance shall include:

1. The specific factual basis for the grievance, including the date of its occurrence and the identification of all involved parties;
2. The specific remedy sought which would resolve the grievance.

The student must present the written grievance to the President within five working days after the exhaustion of Step 2 or the student loses the opportunity to further grieve the issue. Unless the President determines that the grievance is frivolous and should be immediately rejected, within five working days after receiving the student's written grievance, the President shall request that the Step 2 decision maker provide the President a written response regarding the background of the grievance and the attempts to resolve it informally. The President may, at the President's sole discretion, then elect to (a) reject the grievance, (b) uphold the grievance, in whole or part, and determine an appropriate remedy, (c) decide to further investigate the grievance before making a decision, or (d) refer the grievance for a hearing before the Grievance Committee.

Step 4: The grievance shall be submitted for a hearing before the Grievance Committee if the President determines that such a hearing is appropriate after considering the matter at Step 3. The committee shall include:

1. Three students designated by the Coordinator of the A.S.C.G.C.C.;
2. Two college staff members designated by the President, neither of whom have been involved in the particular grievance;
3. Two faculty members designated by the Dean of Instruction, neither of whom have been involved in the grievance.

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A quorum of the Grievance Committee permitted to reach a decision will be four members with at least one representing each group. The committee members shall select a chairperson, conduct a hearing at which the student and relevant staff and witnesses may be called to present information, and reach a decision within 20 working days of the submission of the matter to the Grievance Committee.

If the President does not submit the grievance to the Grievance Committee, the President's decision is final, subject to the limited review described in Step 5.

Step 5: If the matter was not submitted to the Grievance Committee by the President, the student may appeal the President's decision by submitting a written appeal to the Board of Education ("Board") within five working days of the President's decision at Step 3. If the matter was submitted to the Grievance Committee by the President, either the student or the President may appeal the Grievance Committee's decision to the Board within five working days of the Grievance Committee's decision.

The student and the President must submit all information they wish to be considered by the Board in writing, including a copy of the original grievance.

The nonappealing party may submit a written reply to the Board within seven working days after the written appeal is filed with the Board. If both sides appeal the Grievance Committee's decision, each party will have seven working days to file a reply to the other party's written grievance appeal. The decision of the Board, based upon a review of the written submission, shall be final and not subject to further appeal.

END OF POLICY

Legal Reference:

ORS Chapter 341

Cross References:

Policy AC - Nondiscrimination
Policy GBN - Sexual Harassment
Policy KL - Complaint Procedure