

# Minnesota North College

## 3.8.1 Student Complaints and Grievances

### Purpose

A student has the right to seek a remedy for a dispute or disagreement through a designated complaint or grievance procedure. Minnesota North College has established the following procedure for handling complaints and grievances. This procedure shall not substitute for other grievance procedures specific in Minnesota State policy or negotiated agreements. Students should use available means to have decisions reconsidered before filing a complaint or grievance. No retaliation of any kind shall be taken against a student for participation in a complaint or grievance. This procedure shall comply with data privacy rights.

This complaint and grievance procedure does not apply to grade appeals or other academic affairs issues. A student seeking an academic affairs appeal should refer to [Academic Appeals Form].

### Definitions

The following definitions apply:

- **Appeal:** A request for reconsideration of a grievance decision.
- **Complaint:** An oral or written claim concerning a college issue brought by a student alleging improper, unfair, or arbitrary treatment.
- **Grievance:** A written claim raised by a student alleging improper, unfair, or arbitrary action by an employee involving the application of a specific provision of a college rule, regulation, board policy, or system procedure.
- **Retaliation:** Retribution of any kind taken against a student for participating in a complaint or grievance.
- **Student:** An individual student, a group of students, or student government.

### Notification and Publication

Minnesota North College shall inform students of the established complaints and grievances procedure. This procedure will be made available to all students at [web address]. The objective of the procedure is to resolve complaints as quickly and efficiently as possible at the level closest to the student so the student's educational progress can continue. Nothing within this procedure precludes a student from seeking legal counsel at any step.

### Process

1. The student with a complaint should begin by communicating with an instructor, advisor, counselor, or the Student Conduct Officer. The employee will attempt to work with the student and any other persons who are involved to resolve the problem.
2. If the complaint is not resolved in a satisfactory manner, the student may file a formal complaint or grievance by submitting a Complaints and Grievances Form (located at [web address]). The Complaints and Grievances Form should be submitted within twenty (20) business days of the incident.
3. The Student Conduct Officer will meet with the student, investigate the complaint or grievance, and make a recommendation to the [Associate Vice President of Student Affairs]. If the complaint or

grievance is against the Student Conduct Officer, the [Associate Vice President of Student Affairs] will coordinate these steps.

4. The [Associate Vice President of Student Affairs] will notify the student in writing of the resolution within ten (10) business days of the meeting between the student and the Student Conduct Officer.
5. If the student is not satisfied with the resolution, the student may make a written appeal to the [Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs] within ten (10) business days after the receipt of the resolution. The [Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs] shall respond within ten (10) business days from the date the appeal is received. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the [Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs], the student may make a written appeal to the College President.
6. The President will reconsider an appeal decision if additional information is presented. The President's decision is final and binding.
7. If a complaint or grievance involves a Board policy or the actions of the President, a student may further appeal the College decision on a state level by writing to the Chancellor of the Minnesota State system, detailing the complaint or grievance and providing supporting documentation. The Chancellor shall try to resolve the complaint or grievance through communication with College Administration and the complainant. If either party is unsatisfied with the results of this effort, that party (or both parties) shall write to the Chancellor requesting a review before the Board of Trustees.
8. If a complaint or grievance is not presented within the established time limits, it shall be considered "waived." If a complaint or grievance is not appealed to the next step within the established time limits, it shall be considered settled on the basis of the last decision. If a college employee does not communicate the results of a complaint or grievance within the established time limits, the student may treat the complaint or grievance as denied at that step and may appeal the complaint or grievance to the next step.
9. If a grievance resulted in discipline of an employee, a copy of the written grievance and settlement shall be filed in the Human Resources office. If the grievance and settlement do not result in discipline of the employee, no record shall be maintained. Maintenance of records shall be in compliance with the employee contract.
10. All written student complaints shall be filed in the office of the [Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs].

*Adopted: xx/xx/2021*