

 <b>ASSINIBOINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE</b>	# Pages	Number
	1 of 4	A4
Policies and Procedures	Originator	
	Vice-President, Academic	
Title	Effective Date	Replaces
Student Concerns and Complaints	July 1, 2007	New

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to establish internal procedures so that the concerns of students can be addressed appropriately without fear of reprisal and so that complaints by students concerning college policies, procedures or members of staff can be resolved.

**Policy:**

A complaint in the context of this policy is understood to mean the expression, either oral or written, of some discontent or dissatisfaction with the college, its operation or its employees, made to the appropriate administrator in good faith and in the expectation that some remedy or corrective action may be available. All employees of the college who deal with a complaint shall respect the student’s right to confidentiality.

Individuals/students wishing to deal with matters not included in this policy should refer to the following:

- For student appeals of academic or disciplinary decisions and consequences, grades, academic suspension, and other decisions that impact on a student’s continuation in his/her program of studies, see Policy A1 Academic and Disciplinary Appeals.
- For complaints related to any form of harassment or any violations of the Manitoba Human Rights Code, see Policy M9 Harassment.

**Definitions:**

Administrator: An administrator is any college employee who administrates a college department, i.e. Chairperson, Dean/Director, Vice-President, Co-ordinator, Director, Manager of Community Learning, Registrar, etc.

Administrative Supervisor/Supervisor: An administrative supervisor or supervisor refers to the person who is responsible for a particular policy or procedure or the person who directly supervises a staff member.

**Procedure:**

Complaint Procedures (Formal and Informal)

***Scope and Time Limits***

1. A complaint may be made by students currently registered at Assiniboine Community College and by former students registered at the time of the occurrence of the incident giving rise to the complaint. A complaint must be made within 30 days of the incident(s) giving rise to the complaint, except in extenuating circumstances which, in the opinion of the college, would justify an extension.

2. This policy recognizes that a group of students may delegate one or more of its members to voice a complaint on its behalf. However, no one shall initiate a complaint on behalf of another person or persons without the permission of the person(s). The decision whether to hear from other members of the group or to deal only with the delegate rests with the administrator(s) or supervisor(s) to whom the complaint is addressed. For a formal complaint, permission to initiate a complaint on behalf of another person or persons must be in writing.

### ***Informal Complaint Procedure***

1. A student is encouraged to attempt an informal resolution of a complaint before proceeding with the formal complaint procedure. Failure to pursue an informal route by the student does not preclude the student from proceeding with a formal complaint.
2. If the complaint is of a general nature, for example a complaint about departmental/school procedures or the application of a policy, the student should speak directly with the appropriate administrative supervisor.
3. If the complaint concerns a member of staff, the student is encouraged to discuss the matter with the member of staff whose action gave rise to the complaint. Failing resolution, the students should discuss the concern with the immediate supervisor of the member of staff whose action gave rise to the complaint.
4. Administrative Responsibilities:
  - a) An administrator, upon hearing an informal complaint, shall consider, investigate and respond within 14 calendar days of hearing the complaint or, within a longer period of time mutually agreed to by the administrator and the student. A student who has not received a response within 14 calendar days may initiate a formal complaint.
  - b) In every case where an administrator hears an informal complaint about a member of staff with whom there is a direct reporting relationship, the administrator shall determine whether the complainant has approached the staff member.
  - c) If in the judgment of the supervisor, a student complaint can only be dealt with by giving the name of the complainant to the member of staff against whom the complaint has been made, then the supervisor will so inform the student. In such cases, the supervisor will not deal with the complaint unless the complainant gives permission in writing for his/her name to be given to the member of staff.

### ***Formal Complaint Procedure***

1. To initiate a formal complaint under this policy, the complainant(s) shall, in writing using the attached form, identify the nature of the complaint, providing, where appropriate and possible, the following information:
  - a) the grounds on which the complaint is based;
  - b) the name(s) of the party(ies) involved;
  - c) the date(s) of the alleged occurrence(s);
  - d) the desired resolution.
2. The written complaint shall be signed and dated by the complainant(s).
3. Complaints against college policies, procedures or departmental/school procedures shall be directed to the appropriate administrative supervisor.
4. A complaint concerning a member of staff shall be directed to the immediate supervisor of the member of staff.
5. Where it appears to the supervisor that the complaint is one that could or should be more appropriately dealt with by another policy, the supervisor shall direct the complainant in writing to the proper policy and procedure. Where the complaint should be addressed by another supervisor or administrator, it will be forwarded to him/her and the student so advised in writing.

**First Level of Formal Complaint:****Complaints Concerning a Member of Staff**

1. The supervisor, in receipt of the complaint, shall acknowledge receipt and shall deal with and decide the matter at the earliest possible time, no later than 14 calendar days, or in extenuating circumstances, within a longer period of time mutually agreed to by the supervisor and the student.
2. Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the supervisor shall advise the complainant that a copy of the complaint will be given to the member of staff against whom the complaint has been made. The supervisor will give a copy of the complaint to the member of staff with an opportunity to reply to the complaint expeditiously.
3. The supervisor shall discuss the complaint with the complainant and respondent and others as may be appropriate.
4. The supervisor shall provide a written statement to the complainant, the respondent, and his/her administrator, advising, to the extent possible, the decision and/or action resulting from the complaint which has been or will be taken by the college.
5. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the supervisor or has not received a written response within 14 calendar days of registering the written complaint with the supervisor (or in extenuating circumstances, within a longer period of time mutually agreed to by the student and the supervisor) the student may proceed to the final level of the complaint procedure.

**Complaints Concerning College Policies/Procedures**

1. The appropriate administrative supervisor receiving the complaint shall conduct any necessary investigation. This individual shall inform the complainant in writing of any decision and/or action resulting and the rationale within 14 calendar days of registering the complaint or within extenuating circumstance, a longer period of time mutually agreed to by the student and the administrative supervisor.
2. Failing resolution of the complaint or failing receipt of the written response from the administrative supervisor within 14 calendar days, or in extenuating circumstances, within a longer period of time mutually agreed to the by student and the administrative supervisor, the student may proceed to the final level of the formal complaint procedure.

**Final Level of Formal Complaint:**

1. The final level of the formal complaint procedure shall be available to a complainant where the administrator at the first level has not dealt with or decided the matter within 14 calendar days, (or, in extenuating circumstances, within a longer period of time mutually agreed to by the student and the supervisor or administrator) or where the student disagrees with the decision of the supervisor or administrator at the first level. The student will forward a request in writing to the appropriate Vice-President.
2. The Vice-President shall review the matter with the persons concerned and make such inquiries as are necessary to deal with and resolve the issues raised in the formal complaint. The Vice-President shall deal with and decide the matter.
3. The Vice-President may appoint a committee to review, to investigate the complaint and issue a written report of findings to the Vice-President.
4. The Vice-President will inform the complainant in writing of any decision and/or action resulting.
5. Any decision of the Vice-President is final.

***Records***

The supervisor(s) or administrator(s) responsible for hearing the complaint will keep records of any relevant documentation.

***Protection from Reprisals***

In order to protect individuals who make use of this policy or participate in proceedings as part of the complaint procedure, the college prohibits reprisal or threat of reprisal against these individuals.

***Advocacy***

Students are encouraged to seek the services of a student advisor before initiating a complaint. Student advisors can provide information and consultation on the college's policies and procedures, and can assist students in arriving at informed decisions regarding their complaint by exploring with them the full dimensions of the problem.

At the formal level of complaint, students are strongly encouraged to utilize the services of the Assiniboine Community College Student Advocate Service. Students may obtain information on the Student Advocate Service from the Executive Director of the Students' Association. Advocates may assist students in preparing their complaints, and if a student wishes, may assist a student during complaint proceedings.

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Date

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President

**NOTICE OF FORMAL COMPLAINT**

Date:	
Name of Student:	
Student #:	
Current Address:	
Telephone Number:	
School:	
Program:	
Identify the grounds on which the complaint is based:	
Name the party(ies) involved:	
Provide the date(s) of the alleged occurrence(s):	
State the desired solution:	

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature(s) of Complainant(s)  
 Revised: March 13/07

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 Date