

STUDENT CONCERN PROCEDURE

Policy 365

To provide an avenue for addressing and resolving student concerns, to ensure continued improvement of College processes, and to meet regional accreditation and federal compliance requirements, Glen Oaks Community College shall establish formal procedure(s) for receiving concerns, complaints, and grievances from students; shall provide clear information regarding such procedures; shall respond to concerns in a timely manner; and shall analyze them to improve processes. The College shall utilize a systematic tracking process for various concerns that effectively allow formal student complaints to be received, tracked, and handled in a timely manner. The College shall periodically review its concern policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the requirements of Higher Learning Commission Criteria for Accreditation and federal compliance.

Glen Oaks Community College shall provide students who have a College concern or issue that they are unable to resolve an opportunity to report such a concern formally to the appropriate College official. Examples of concerns include, but are not limited to, issues with customer service, complaints regarding an instructor or staff member, or challenges with a college policy or procedure. Information provided by students through this process gives the College the opportunity to improve services or processes when warranted. When a student has a conflict with a GOCC faculty or staff member, the College encourages students first to speak to the person with whom they have a conflict, as many concerns can be resolved informally. However, when a conflict cannot be resolved, or the student is reluctant to speak to the faculty or staff member, they are encouraged to utilize the formal Student Concern Procedure.

In addition, students are encouraged to report individuals displaying behaviors they perceive as concerning, worrisome, or threatening (no matter how minor the behavior may seem). Such reporting allows the college to intervene and find solutions, connect concerns to previous reports, and provide students with the levels of support that are needed. Examples of concerning behaviors include, but are not limited to, classroom misconduct, physical violence, excessive absences, direct statements indicating stress, deterioration of physical appearance or hygiene, angry or hostile outbursts, disorganized speech or confusion, substance abuse, or noticeable cuts, bruises, or burns.

The College also strongly encourages students to report any incidents of sexual misconduct, including dating or domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, or stalking. As "responsible employees," GOCC faculty, administrators, and staff are required to report incidents of potential sexual misconduct. Students who wish to speak to someone confidentially (without filing a report) may meet with a licensed counselor in Student Services, a private counselor, or clergy person.

Incidents involving sexual misconduct that meet appropriate criteria shall be handled under the College's Title IX policy (Policy 3.95). Student concerns about a final grade in a course shall be handled under the College's Grade Appeal Procedure (Policy 3.24).

STUDENT CONCERN PROCEDURE

1. A student expressing any concern related to the College will be directed to report it via the Report a Concern webpage on the College's website.

2. The student will complete and submit the information, including, at a minimum, the date and location of the incident, the nature of the report, the urgency of the situation, and the student's desired resolution to the complaint or concern. The student may submit any other relevant information, including supporting documentation.
3. Based on the student's selected report type and parties involved, the report will be routed to the office of the appropriate department (Student Services, Academics, or Human Resources).
4. The appropriate office will contact the complainant with an initial acknowledgement and/or request any additional information, unless the report was made anonymously, or not additional information is needed.
5. The appropriate office will conduct a preliminary investigation of the matter and determine whether additional information or appearance by parties may be needed.
6. Within two (2) weeks from initial receipt of the report, the appropriate office will conclude the investigation, unless a longer timeline is necessitated by the scheduling availability of involved parties. The complainant will receive periodic updates until the concern is resolved.
7. Student complainants may withdraw or amend their concern report at any time during the investigation.
8. Complainant confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible, subject to applicable laws. Students will be informed when personally identifying information must be disclosed to another party named in the concern report and will be informed of the consequences of declining to be identified. Investigations where a complainant declines to identify themselves to other parties, when required for complete resolution of the concern, as well as where a complainant stops participating in the resolution process, may be closed due to lack of complainant participation.
9. Once the concern is addressed, the complainant will receive a notice to that effect (unless the report was made anonymously), including the resolution reached. Concern resolutions may include a referral to outside agencies.
10. If a student complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, the complainant must file a written appeal within five (5) business days of the date of the notification of resolution to the office of the appropriate Vice President (Academics, Student Services, Finance and Administrative Services). An Appeal Committee will be formed to review the appeal and render a judgment. The committee will include at least three members. Possible members of this Appeal Committee include, but are not limited to, the President of the Faculty Senate, the Vice President of Academics, the Vice President of Student Services, and/or the President of Glen Oaks.

Policy History: Adopted by Board of Trustees 1/12/20, revised 2/29/20, 2012, 9/17/14, 1/20, 8/12/21, reviewed 3/9/23