

DCTC Policy 3.8 Student Complaint and Grievance

Part 1. Policy Statement.

In accordance with Minnesota State Board Policy 3.8, a student has the right to seek remedy for a dispute or disagreement through the Dakota County Technical College (DCTC) complaint and grievance procedures. These procedures shall not:

- Substitute for other complaint/grievance procedures specified in Minnesota State board or Dakota County Technical College policies or procedures, regulations or negotiated agreements.
- Apply to academic grade disputes. Grade appeals must be handled under college procedure 2.13.1 Grade Appeals.
- Apply to student code of conduct violations. Code of conduct violations will be handled under college policy 3.6 (Code of Conduct for Student Behavior).

Part 2. Definitions

Subpart A. Appeal.

A written request for reconsideration of a grievance decision under policy 3.8.

Subpart B. Complaint.

A written claim made by a student using the Dakota County Technical College [Student Complaint Form](#), alleging improper, unfair, or arbitrary treatment or action taken by a Dakota County Technical College employee or student.

Subpart C. Day. Business day, excluding Saturday, Sunday, holidays, and breaks between semesters and summer session(s).

Subpart D. Grievance

A written claim made by a student using the Dakota County Technical College [Student Grievance Form](#), alleging improper, unfair, or arbitrary action by a Dakota County employee involving the application of a specific provision of Dakota County Technical College or Minnesota State Board policy or procedure.

Subpart E. Student.

An individual enrolled at Dakota County Technical College.

Part 3. Procedures

Subpart A. Complaints.

In order for the college to conduct thorough inquiries in response to complaints, complaints should be brought within 15 days of the first occurrence of the event giving rise to the complaint.

1. Students are encouraged to use available informal means to resolve concerns before filing a complaint.

2. A student shall document the complaint on DCTC's [Student Complaint Form](#), and include the reason for the complaint, factual summary of the complaint, and the remedy sought. The form can be accessed on the Dakota County Technical College website [here](#).
3. A representative of the college shall contact the student to discuss the complaint within ten working days ("working days" does not include Saturdays, Sundays, and breaks in the academic calendar). The student may have a campus representative (e.g., advisor or instructor), in attendance for any such discussion. A representative of the college shall inform the student of a reasonable date by which the student shall receive a written response.
4. Information submitted and gathered in a student complaint is subject to the Minnesota Data Practices Act.

Subpart B. Grievances.

If the student determines that the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved, and the complaint alleges improper, unfair, or arbitrary action by an employee involving the application of a specific provision of a college or Minnesota State Board policy or procedure, the student may file a grievance.

1. The grievance must be filed on DCTC's [Student Grievance Form](#) within 10 days of receipt of the written response to the complaint under Part 3, Subpart A. The grievance shall state the reason for the grievance, a factual summary of the grievance, the specific policy or procedure application that is the concern, and the requested remedy. The form can be accessed on the DCTC Website [here](#) obtained from Enrollment Services (2-110). The student may submit the grievance through the following individuals:
 - a. The administrator to whom the employee reports. The grievant may elect to waive this step if the grievant previously submitted the matter to the same administrator under the Complaint Process in Part 3, Subpart A.
 - b. The vice president to whom the employee reports. The grievance must be submitted to the vice president within 5 days of receipt of the written response in step 1, or if step 1 is waived, within 10 days of receipt of the written response to the complaint under Part 3, Subpart A.
2. Each administrator who receives the grievance shall meet with the student to discuss the grievance within ten working days (working days excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holiday breaks in the academic calendar). The administrator shall inform the grievant of, and document on the grievance form, a reasonable date by which the administrator shall make a written response.
3. Information submitted and gathered in a student grievance is subject to the Minnesota Data Practices Act.

Subpart C. Appeal.

If the grievance is not resolved, the student may submit a written appeal of the grievance, within five days after receiving the written response in Part 3, Subpart B.2, through the following steps:

1. To the college president. The president's decision is final and binding, except as provided for in Part 3, Subpart C.2.
2. If the grievance involves a Minnesota State Board policy, or the actions of the college President, to the Chancellor. The decision of the Chancellor is binding.

Subpart D. Timeframe.

If a complaint or grievance is not presented within the specified time limits, it will be considered waived by the student. If a complaint or grievance is not appealed to the next step within the established time limits, it will be considered settled on the basis of the last answer.

If, after presentation at any step, a college employee does not respond to the complaint or grievance within the specified 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.

The time limits for any step may be extended by mutual written agreement of the student and the appropriate college or Minnesota State personnel.

Subpart E. Retaliation.

Retaliation against a student for participating or not participating in a complaint or grievance is prohibited.

Subpart F. Procedure for change.

Procedures for instituting change at the college are available to students at both the local and state level. Individual students may submit items for consideration to the Student Senate or the appropriate college committee. Notice of Student Senate meetings and copies of minutes are posted, and all meetings are open to visitors. Contact the Student Senate Advisor or the Director of Student Life for further information.

Related Documents:

- Minnesota State Board Policy 3.8 and Procedure 3.8.1

Responsible Administrator: Associate Vice President of Student Affairs

Policy History:

Date of Adoption: NA

Last Revision date: 11/20/2017

Date most recent policy revisions go into effect: 11/20/2017

Date and Subject of Revisions:

11/20/2017 – Policy Review Fall 2016 through Fall 2017. Faculty Shared Governance Council 11/30/2016 and 1/18/2017. Academic Affairs and Standards Council 12/6/2016. Faculty and Staff Comment period 8/30 – 9/13/2017. Student Senate review 9/6/2017. Strategic Leadership Council Approval 10/31/2017. Policy completely re-written during policy review period Fall 2016 through Fall 2017. In Part 1, changed from Grade Appeal Policy to Grade Appeal Procedure. In Part 3, Subpart A, changed “shall” to “should” and removed language regarding knowledge of first occurrence giving rise the complaint. In Part 3, Subpart A, 2, changed language to reflect the new online complaint form and its location, removed language indicating the student shall present the complaint to the employee. In Part 3, Subpart A, 3, changed “college employee or supervisor” to representative of the college”. In Part 3, Subpart B, 1, changed language to reflect the new online grievance form and its location