



Pima County Community College District Administrative Procedure

<i>AP Title:</i>	Student Complaints
<i>AP Number:</i>	AP 3.31.01
<i>Adoption Date:</i>	5/15/17
<i>Schedule for Review & Update:</i>	Every three years
<i>Review Date(s):</i>	
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<i>Sponsoring Unit/Department:</i>	Office of the Provost
<i>Policy Title(s) & No(s).</i>	Student Conduct, Ethics and Complaint Resolution, BP 3.31
<i>Legal Reference:</i>	
<i>Cross Reference:</i>	

PURPOSE

Pima Community College (the College) is committed to the highest level of service and continuous improvement in providing students with a safe place to learn, thrive, and achieve. The purpose of this administrative procedure is to ensure the College takes appropriate action in responding to complaints from students and that student complaints are addressed and resolved in a fair and timely manner. In the context of this Administrative Procedure, a “complaint” is any problem, conflict or issue that negatively impacts a student.

SECTION 1: Informal Resolution

The College encourages the resolution of any complaint through direct, respectful communication between those involved. Anyone directly involved in a complaint may seek the assistance of an appropriate College employee (i.e. designated campus contact person, or supervisor of the respondent). If the parties involved cannot resolve the complaint through informal means, the complainant may initiate

a formal complaint. Whenever possible, the complainant should submit a formal complaint within 30 calendar days of the last incident.

SECTION 2: Formal Complaint Resolution Process

To initiate the formal complaint process, the complainant must submit their complaint either to a Campus Student Complaint Resource Liaison or to the Office of Dispute Resolution. Complaints may be submitted in person, by phone, by email, by regular mail, or online. While complaints may be made anonymously, the ability to fully respond and bring about a resolution may be impacted. More information on submitting complaints can be found at:

<https://www.pima.edu/current-students/complaint-processes/index.html>

Upon receipt of the complaint, the Campus Student Complaint Resource Liaison or Office of Dispute Resolution will assign the case to the appropriate *Reviewer* based on the Formal Complaints Matrix.

Formal Complaints Matrix

<i>Type of Complaint</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Reviewer</i>	<i>Appeals</i>
Against the Chancellor and/or Governing Board	Complaints against the Chancellor and/or the Governing Board will be addressed in accordance with Standard Practice Guide (SPG) 1501/AA (AP conversion forthcoming) and Article XII of the Pima Community College District Board Bylaws.	Governing Board in consultation with General Counsel selects Reviewer	Governing Board
Against a Faculty Member	Student complaints regarding faculty and grades.	Department Chair/ Department Head	Division Dean or Vice President
Against Another Student	Student complaints regarding other students.	Division Dean or Student Affairs Dean	Vice President of Student Engagement
Against a Staff Member or Administrator (Non-Chancellor)	Student complaints regarding a staff member or administrator.	Direct Supervisor	Administrative Supervisor
Against a College policy, process or procedure	Student complaints over a College policy, process or procedure	Unit Supervisor	Administrative Supervisor
Discrimination or retaliation based on disability	Any alleged discrimination based on disability.	Access and Disability Resources (ADR) Director	College Equal Employment Opportunity

			Officer (EEO)
Discrimination or retaliation based on other protected class other than disability	Any alleged discrimination based on a protected class other than disability.	College Equal Employment Opportunity Officer (EEO)	Designee from Chancellor

SECTION 3: Investigation Procedures

Complaints will be reviewed by the assigned *Reviewer* following procedures detailed in the Administrative Procedures (APs) or Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of the program or unit of the *Reviewer*. In some instances, it may be necessary for several College departments and/or units (i.e. Campus Administration, Finance, General Counsel, Human Resources, Public Safety, and/or the Office of the Provost) or seek external assistance to complete the investigation. The investigation will include the following steps:

1. Determine if adequate information was provided to conduct an investigation and if an investigation is necessary.
2. Develop an investigative plan (i.e. determine the scope of the investigation, interviews to be conducted, documents to be reviewed, and appropriate offices/personnel involved).
3. Inform the parties of the expected timeframe for the review and provide updates regarding any extensions to the timeline.
4. Identify any potential reporting obligations and/or the need to notify external entities using the defined checklist on the investigation form.
5. Inform all parties regarding the status of the investigation as necessary.
6. Maintain appropriate documents to effectively support the complaint investigative process, appeals, outcomes, and recommended corrective actions.

Investigations should normally be concluded within 30 days of receipt of the complaint, although the timeframe may be extended when necessary due to the complexity of the investigation, availability of witnesses, and similar factors. At the conclusion of the investigation, the *Reviewer* will prepare a report detailing the outcomes, findings, and any recommendations for resolution. The report will be communicated to the complainant and the respondent as appropriate. Other appropriate parties may be informed on a need to know basis.

SECTION 4: Representation

The complainant and the respondent have the right to select another person as a representative during the complaint investigation process. A representative shall

not be a key witness or potential witness. If the representative has legal training or is an attorney, the representative may not act in the capacity of an attorney. The representative may act as an observer, note-taker, and advisor for the complainant or respondent. The representative may not speak for the complainant or respondent. The representative will be required to sign an acknowledgement form indicating that the representative understands and agrees to abide by confidentiality requirements.

SECTION 5: Appeals

If the complainant believes that an error was made in the review process, the complainant may make a written appeal request. The appeal must be made within 30 days of receiving the final decision and specify the error or flaw in the process justifying the appeal, such as an incomplete investigation, bias or conflict of interest of the investigator, newly discovered information, or incorrect interpretation of the applicable rule or standard.

The appeal will include the following steps:

1. Develop an appeal plan (i.e. determine the basis of the appeal, and if needed, whether interviews need to be conducted, documents reviewed, and appropriate offices/personnel involved).
2. Inform the parties of the expected timeframe for reviewing the appeal and provide updates regarding any extensions to the timeline.
3. Inform all parties regarding the status of the appeal as necessary.
4. Maintain appropriate documents to effectively support the appeal process, including a written response regarding the appeal decision.

The appeal decision is final.

SECTION 6: Retaliation

Any form of retaliation for bringing forward a complaint or being a witness in an investigation is prohibited and may result in discipline.