

## **Student Rights and Grievances**

The purpose of these procedures is to provide a prompt and equitable means for resolving student complaints. A complaint is defined as an actual or supposed circumstance that adversely affects the grades, status, or rights of a student. Complaints concerning course grades are permitted to the extent that such complaints allege mistake, fraud, bad faith or incompetence as set out in Education Code Section 76224 (a).

A student who contends that he/she has been treated unfairly has the right without fear of reprisal to right an alleged wrong. This complaint policy applies to unfairness as it relates to areas such as but not limited to:

**Assignment of grades      Deviation from course content**

**Access to classes              Refusal of instructor to confer with a student**

This policy does not apply to:

1. Student Code of Conduct issues
2. Allegations of discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual harassment), disability or age in any of its policies, procedures, or practices, in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (pertaining to race, color or nation origin), Title IX of the education Amendments of 1972 (pertaining to sex), Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (pertaining to disability) and the Age of Discrimination Act of 1975 (pertaining to age). For complaints of this nature please refer to the Discrimination Complaint Form.

For a clarification regarding student conduct issues of discrimination issues, the student may contact the Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Director of Disabled Student Programs and Services or Title IX Officer.

### **INFORMAL RESOLUTION**

A complaint must be initiated within twenty (20) instructional days of the alleged act or decision. If the alleged circumstance or act occurs during the last twenty (20) instructional days of the Spring semester, the complaint must be made prior to the end of the third Friday of the Fall semester.

#### **Step 1**

Discuss the problem with the individual involved or his/her counselor

#### **Step 2**

If a mutually satisfactory understanding has not been reached with the other person, the student may, within five (5) instructional days, present the complaint to the immediate supervisor.

If a complaint is about:

Contact:

Faculty	Division Chairperson/Director
Division Chairperson	Vice President for Academic Services
Administrator	Vice President/Dean/Associate Dean
Classified	Human Resources
Another Student	Associate Dean of Student Affairs

The supervisor must respond orally within ten (10) instructional days of the complaint.

### Step 3

If an informal resolution does not occur within ten (1) instructional days of the supervisor's response, a student may submit a complaint form (form may be found at the back of the handbook) to the Vice President for Academic Services regarding academic matters or the Associate Dean of Student Affairs regarding non-academic matters.

The Vice President for Academic Services or the Associate Dean of Student Affairs will respond in writing the complaint within ten (10) instructional days of receipt of complaint.

Students' Complaint forms are available from:

Associate Dean of Student Affairs	Student Affairs Office	(760) 355-6456
Director of Disabled Student Programs & Services	DSP&S Office	(760) 355-6312
Title IX Officer	Counseling	(760) 355-6257

### Step 4

If a student is not satisfied with the decision made by the Vice President for Academic Services or Associate Dean of Student Affairs, as student may request a hearing within five (5) instructional days of that decision (form may be found at the back of the handbook).

Academic matter will be heard by the Admissions, Petitions and Registration Committee. Non-Academic Matters will be heard by the Student Affairs Committee.

A REQUEST FOR A HEARING SHALL BE FILED NO LATER THAN THIRTY (30) INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS FOLLOWING THE INITIATION OF THE COMPLAINT (STEP2). IF A COMPLAINT IS FILED WITHIN THE LAST THIRTY (30) INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS OF THE SEMESTER THE PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE MAY DELAY ANY FURTHER ACTION ON THE COMPLAINT UNTIL THE NEXT SEMESTER.

Any committee member who has a direct involvement with the complaint shall be excluded from reviewing that complaint or participating in any manner in the determination of the ultimate outcome of that complaint.

## **Step 5**

### Hearing Procedures

- a. The appropriate committee will meet within ten (10) instructional days of the request for a hearing.
- b. the student shall bear the burden of proving the allegation of his/her complaint.
- c. Hearings and the investigation and gatherings of evidence conducted pursuant thereto shall be considered confidential unless all parties and the committee agree to a public hearing. The proceeding shall be recorded either by use of tape recorder, or by stenographic reporter.
- d. This is not a legal court proceeding, however all parties may have counsel or other representative present.
- e. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Committee shall meet privately to reach its decision by majority vote and prepare a written statement containing findings of fact, conclusions and its recommendation to the President/Superintendent for his/her approval, rejection or modification. The student will be instructed to contact the Associate Dean of Student Affairs the day following the hearing to be informed verbally of the Committee's recommendation. The committee's recommendation will also be sent to the student by certified mail within two (2) instructional days after the hearing.
- f. No reprisal of any kind will be taken by the President/Superintendent, any member of the Committee, faculty, staff, of the administration, or the Board of Trustees against any aggrieved person, or any witness in the complaint procedure by reason of the required participation.

## **Step 6**

### Appeals

If the student desires to appeal the hearing Committee's recommendation, this appeal must be made in writing directly to the President/Superintendent within five (5) instructional days of the hearing.

The President/Superintendent may approve, reject or modify the hearing Committee's recommendation within five (5) instructional days after the appeal is received.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision on the Board agenda, a request must be submitted at least ten (10) instructional days prior to the next Board meeting. The Board shall then notify the student(s) of its decision within five (5) instructional days of the meeting.

## **Definitions**

A "Student" is a person enrolled at Imperial Valley College within 30 days of the alleged act or decision.

"Instructional days" are those days when the college is in session and classes are being held, excluding Saturdays and Sundays.

**REFERENCE: TITLE IX, EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972; EDUCATION CODE SECTION 7**