

### ***Complaint and Grievance Procedures***

Central Alabama Community College promotes the open exchange of ideas among all members of the College community, students, faculty, staff and administration. An environment conducive to the open exchange of ideas is essential for intellectual growth and positive change. Central Alabama Community College recognizes that in order to efficiently and effectively carry out its mission, employees and students must feel confident that any valid complaint or grievance an employee or student may make concerning the College will be promptly addressed by the appropriate authorities. Therefore, the following procedures for resolving such complaints and grievances have been adopted by the College.

#### **Student Complaint Procedures**

For purposes of this policy, a complaint will mean a specific event, activity or occurrence within the scope of the authority of the College administration or faculty about which an individual has a specific concern.

1. **Complaints Related to Academic Matters:** Complaints involving academic disputes must follow the academic policies of the college found in the College Catalog and in the Student Handbook.

Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will notify the Complainant in writing and may redirect the Complaint to the appropriate committee. If after a discussion between the Complainant and the Title IX Coordinator, the Title IX Coordinator determines that the complaint meets the criteria of a Title IX Complaint and the Complainant requests to file a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will initiate the formal complaint process.

4. **Other Types of Student Complaints:** Students with complaints related to any other matter are encouraged to report concerns in writing within ten (10) working days of the occurrence of the event prompting the complaint.

If a student complaint can be resolved immediately and informally after discussion between the student and the respective college official, the College official will take action to resolve the complaint. The college official who received the complaint will record and keep a written report of the complaint and the resolution of the complaint. The College official will provide a copy of the written report to the official's supervising administrator and to the Dean of Students.

If the student's complaint cannot be resolved immediately and informally, the appropriate College official who received the complaint will submit a written report, a "Plan of Resolution," to the Dean of Students. The report will be submitted within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the complaint and will detail the complaint and the plan to resolve the complaint. If the Plan of Resolution does not result in a satisfactory resolution to the complaint, the complainant may choose to pursue a grievance within fifteen (15) business days with the Dean of Students.

### **General Grievance Procedures**

A student who submits a written complaint to the appropriate college official and who is not informed of a satisfactory resolution or Plan of Resolution of the complaint within ten (10) business days of the complaint then has the right to file a grievance with the Dean of Students within fifteen (15) business days. Grievance Procedure Forms are available online at [www.cacc.edu](http://www.cacc.edu) and in the Office of Dean of Students.

The written grievance statement will include at least the following information:

1. Date the original complaint was reported,
2. Name of person to whom the original complaint was reported,
3. Facts of the complaint, and
4. Action taken, if any, by the receiving official to resolve the complaint.

The grievance statement may also contain other information relevant to the grievance that the Grievant wants considered by the Dean of Students.

### **Investigation Hearing and Findings**

The College will have thiwoe62(a)4(pprop)3(ria)5(te )22(C)-2(oll)-3(e)-5(g)182.9.00000912 0 612 79a3c5612 7

by either personal service or certified mail sent to the Grievant's and Respondent's respective home address.

### **Investigation Procedures**

The Dean of Students will conduct a factual investigation of the grievance allegations, either personally or with the assistance of any person(s) designated by the President, and will research any applicable statutes, regulations and/or policies, if any. After completion of the investigation, the Dean of Students will determine whether there is substantial support of the grievance. The factual findings of the investigation and the conclusions of the Dean of Students will be stated in a written report which will be submitted to the Grievant and to the party or parties against whom the grievance was made (the "Respondent"). The report will be made a part of the hearing record, if a hearing is requested by the Grievant. Each of the parties will have the opportunity to file written objections to any of the factual findings and to make their objections part of the hearing record if there is a hearing. Publications or verified photocopies containing relevant statutes, regulations and policies will also be prepared by the Dean of Students for the hearing record. If the Dean of

If the College, or the administration of the College at large, is the party against whom the grievance is filed, the President will designate a representative to appear at the hearing on behalf of the College. Any party to a grievance hearing will have the right to retain, at the respective party's cost, the assistance of legal counsel or other personal representative. However, the respective attorney or personal representative, if any, will act in an advisory role only and will not be allowed to address the hearing body or question any witnesses. The College must be given a minimum of 48 hours notice if the Grievant is being assisted by an attorney or personal representative. The names of the personal representative or attorney must be submitted 48 hours prior to the hearing to the Dean of Students. In the event that the College is the Respondent, the College representative will not be an attorney or use an attorney unless the Grievant is also assisted by an attorney or other personal representative. The hearing will be recorded by an electronic recording medium. In addition, all supporting documents or information offered by the parties, whether admitted or not, will be marked and preserved as part of the hearing record.

The hearing officer or committee will make the participants aware that the rules relating to the admissibility of statements and information during the hearing will be less stringent than those which apply to civil trials. Generally speaking, irrelevant, immaterial and privileged information (such as personal medical information or attorney-client communications) will be excludable. However, hearsay conversations and unauthenticated documentary information may be allowed if the hearing officer or chairperson determines that the information offered is of the type and nature commonly relied upon or taken into consideration by a reasonably prudent person in conducting his affairs.

In the event of an objection by any party to any statement, information or documentation offered at the hearing, the hearing officer or committee chairperson will have authority to make a final ruling on the objection.

supported, in whole or in part, by the information presented, the Dean of Students will advise the