

# Student Grievance/Complaint Procedures

## Informal Student Complaint Process

Northwest Shoals Community College has a variety of procedures for dealing with student-related issues, including grade appeals, student discipline, harassment complaints, and Student Grievance policies. The informal complaint provides students with a procedure for addressing complaints about faculty/staff treatment of students that are not covered by other procedures. The following procedures apply to both traditional on-campus students and distance education students. Additional information regarding grievance procedures for Distance Education students may be found in the Distance Education Student Handbook on the Virtual Learning page of the college website.

Whenever possible, complaints at Northwest Shoals Community College are handled in an informal manner. Administrators, faculty, and staff maintain an “open-door” policy to discuss issues of concern for all students. Students are encouraged to first attempt to resolve complaints with the faculty or staff person. If unresolved, students should speak to the departmental chairperson or supervisor of the program. If no resolution is reached, the student should lodge his or her complaint with the Dean of Students.

## Formal Student Complaint Process

If an informal conference regarding a complaint fails to reach the outcome requested by the student, the student may initiate the formal process by filing a written complaint with the Dean of Students. Complaints will be handled as expeditiously as possible. Complaints by students will be processed within at least five days of the written report. Intensive student complaints can take as long as 30 days to reach a resolution. The student will be notified in writing should the response require a longer evaluation. The response will be made by the Department Head/ Division Chair or the Dean of Students. The President of the College will make the final judgment.

The College supports the student’s right to file a formal complaint; therefore, assurances are given that no adverse action will be taken against the student. All student complaints and issues will be handled objectively.