

# Academic Grievances

The student grievance process is available to students who have concerns regarding academic matters such as violations of College policy. If a student resolution cannot be achieved or differences have not been resolved through discussion with the faculty or staff and the student seeks additional mediation, the student may initiate a formal grievance process.

1. Students must submit a letter to the Dean of Faculty's Office within 10 calendar days of the date in which the incident or the complaint occurred. In the case of a final grade discrepancy, the letter should be submitted within 15 calendar days of the release of grades. In the written complaint, the student should describe his or her concerns, the events that led to those concerns, and provide any supporting documentation.
2. The Dean may choose to meet with both the student and the faculty member involved in an attempt to resolve the issue. If the issue is not resolved, the Dean will convene the Academic Grievance Committee.
3. The Academic Grievance Committee will review the written grievance and all documentation. The Committee may or may not interview both the student and the faculty member. A member of the Committee will notify the student in writing of the Committee's decision within 5 working days.
4. If the student remains unsatisfied with the decision issued by the Academic Grievance Committee, the student may make a final appeal to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. This appeal must be in writing and submitted no later than 5 working days from the date of the decision issued by the Academic Grievance Committee. The appeal must specify in detail why the decision of the Academic Grievance Committee was unsatisfactory and must be supported with compelling justification, such as a procedural error (someone was involved who should not have been, a timeline was not met, or substantiated bias) or evidence that was previously unknown or unavailable. Within 10 working days of receipt of the student appeal the Vice President for Academic Affairs will issue a decision regarding the appeal. This decision will either uphold the decision of the Student Academic Appeals Committee or will issue other remedies as the Vice President for Academic Affairs deems appropriate. The decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs is final.

In the case where a complaint is levied against any member of the Academic Grievance Committee, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will appoint a substitute.

Except as otherwise specified, an appeal of an application of College policy or College decision must be made within one year. Policy determinations or results of decisions are considered to be final without opportunity for appeal at the one-year point.

## NC-SARA Member Out-Of-State Student Complaint

Pennsylvania Highlands Community College operates under the approval of "NC-SARA" (National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements). Students based outside of Pennsylvania who have a complaint regarding a distance education program should first seek to resolve such a complaint within the school in which the student is registered. If you wish to pursue a complaint through NC-SARA, please use the following links.

- [SARA Student Complaints | NC-SARA](#)
- [Students Complaints | Department of Education | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)