

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Every student has the right to voice concerns about policies, conditions, or personnel at the institution which creates an adverse effect on the education being pursued.

General Provision

The purpose of the grievance is to provide an orderly and efficient method by which students may communicate and resolve their complaints about conditions and policies within the technical college system under the jurisdiction of the Board of Supervisors for Community and Technical Colleges.

Definition of Grievance

A grievance is a student complaint about the conditions or policies within a technical college or a complaint about the actions of employees, students, or instructors within the college that affect the college environment for the aggrieved student. A disciplinary action taken by the college administration against the student is not considered a grievance. ALL grievances should be presented within 30 days from the date the grievant became aware of the cause of such grievance.

A student grievance may consist of a variety of issues. This procedure addresses grievances concerning discrimination and/or harassment or grievances concerning other issues related to the college. The following procedures address both types of grievance issues as indicated in each section:

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE For COMPLAINTS ALLEGING DISCRIMINATION BASED ON RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX, DISABILITY OR AGE

Discrimination is prohibited by statutes and regulations enforced by the Office of Civil Rights and state regulations. Therefore, it is the policy of LCTCS that unlawful discrimination against students is prohibited.

“Discrimination” is the illegal treatment of a person or a group of persons based on a prohibited factor, such as race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age.

“Harassment” is unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, national origin, disability, sex, and age, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law, ordinance or regulation. Harassment is physical, verbal and visual conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile environment which interferes with an individual’s education.

“Sexual harassment,” as prohibited under federal and state law, is defined as unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, and may include unwelcome sexual advances, sexual assaults, or requests for sexual favors. This and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:

- A. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s academic standing/student status;
- B. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting such individual; or
- C. such conduct is sufficiently serious that it has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive academic environment.

LCTCS and the LTC Region 4 campuses apply these definitions in and out of the classroom.

The procedures described below are to be used to address complaints alleging discrimination and/or harassment carried out by employees, other student or third parties.

No student is required to report or make a complaint of discrimination to the person who is allegedly engaging in the problematic conduct. Complaints should be presented as promptly as possible after the alleged incident occurs through the following avenues for this institution.

The college has designated a Discrimination Coordinator (listed below) to assist applicants and students with problems regarding possible discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age.

Name:	Connie Chopin
Title:	Discrimination Coordinator and Counselor
Location:	Student Services Department - Room 403E Lafayette Campus 1101 Bertrand Drive Lafayette, LA 70506
Contact Number:	337-262-5962

All grievances should be presented within **thirty (30) days** from the date the grievant became aware of the cause of such grievance. LCTCS and the LTC Region 4 campuses shall not coerce, intimidate, threaten, retaliate against, or interfere with any person who attempts to assert a right protected by the laws above or cooperates with investigation and enforcement proceedings under these laws - *Title VI (Race, Color, National Origin), Section 504 (Disability) and Title IX (Sex)*.

Informal Procedures (Complaints)

The grievant should try, if possible, to resolve the problem first by discussing the problem with the individual who is the cause of the complaint. If it is inappropriate to present the complaint directly to that individual, then the grievant should discuss the complaint with the appropriate individual as follows:

If the complaint is against a student, discuss the problem with the student's instructor or department head in which the student is enrolled. If the complaint is about an instructor or other college employee, discuss the problem with that individual's immediate supervisor.

1. Any student who believes he/she has been a victim of discrimination, including but not limited to sexual harassment, or other, harassment by another student enrolled in the same program area should discuss this with his/her instructor or the department head of that department. If the student is uncomfortable discussing this with these individuals, he/she should discuss the matter with the Discrimination Coordinator.
2. Any student who believes he/she has been the victim of discrimination, including but not limited to sexual harassment, or other, harassment by another student in a different department or by an instructor or an employee of the college or a third party should discuss the matter with the Discrimination Coordinator.
3. The student should present the complaint as promptly as possible after the alleged incident occurs. Every effort will be made to keep the discussion confidential.
4. Steps will be taken in an attempt to alleviate the problem so no further action will be required.
5. A brief synopsis of the complaint will be noted, in case the matter is not resolved at this level, and filed with the Discrimination Coordinator. The synopsis should include the name of the complainant(s), the name(s) of the alleged offenders, the date, time, and discrimination and/or harassment reported.

Formal Procedures (Filing a Formal Complaint)

If a satisfactory solution to a complaint of discrimination and/or harassment is not reached using informal procedures, or should the student wish, a formal complaint can be filed for resolving the matter through the Student Grievance Procedure as follows:

1. The grievant submits, in writing, to the campus dean/ or designee of the college, a detailed narrative of the problem. Included in these details should be the following:
 - (a.) Name of the grievant submitting the grievance and date submitted.
 - (b.) Date(s), time(s), and location(s) when problem occurred.
 - (c.) Name(s) of individual(s) involved.
 - (d.) Witness(es) who observed activity, if applicable.
 - (e.) Problems caused by this activity.
 - (f.) Any steps taken prior to this formal grievance to stop problem, and
 - (g.) Solution to the problem the student is seeking.
2. Upon receiving the grievance, the campus dean/or designee will appoint a committee comprised of two students and four faculty members to investigate the allegations at a formal hearing.
3. Within three (3) college days of receiving the grievance, a certified letter will be sent to both parties and to any witnesses being called by the committee. This letter will include the date and time of the hearing, a copy of the written grievance and notification to each party of the right to call witnesses and have legal counsel present at the hearing.
4. Within seven (7) days of receiving the grievance, the committee will conduct an inquiry, call witnesses and gather whatever information it deems necessary in reaching a determination as to the merits of the allegations.
5. After the hearing has been completed, the findings and recommendations of the committee will be submitted, in writing, to the campus dean the day after the hearing.
6. The campus dean will submit his/her decision, in writing, by certified mail to both parties within ten (10) school days of receiving the report from the committee.
7. If the complainant or respondent wishes to appeal the findings of the committee and/or the ruling of the Campus Dean, the complainant or respondent must file his/her appeal, in writing, within five (5) days of being notified of the findings and ruling. This appeal must be made to the Regional Student Affairs Officer (located at the Lafayette Campus). Within five (5) days of receiving the appeal, the Regional Student Affairs Officer notifies, in writing, all parties to the grievance, the committee members, and the Campus Dean of his/her ruling on the appeal. A copy of the first-level appeal and the Regional Student Affairs Officer ruling is to be filed in the appellant's file and in the Grievance Files maintained by the Regional Student Affairs Officer.
8. If the complainant or respondent wishes to appeal the findings of the Regional Student Affairs Officer, the complainant or respondent must file his/her appeal, in writing, within five (5) days of being notified of the findings and ruling. This appeal must be made to the Regional Director. Within five (5) days of receiving the appeal, the Regional Director notifies, in writing, all parties to the grievance, of his/her ruling on the appeal. A copy of the Regional Director's ruling is to be filed in the appellant's file and in the Grievance Files maintained by the Regional Student Affairs Officer.
9. If the complainant or respondent wishes to appeal the ruling of the Regional Director, the complainant or respondent must file his/her final appeal to the LTC Vice President of Career and Technical Education, in writing, within five (5) days of being notified of the Regional Director's ruling.
10. A final appeal may be filed for the following reasons only: new evidence has been brought to light – not available by duly diligent effort at the time of the hearing or established procedures have not been followed.
11. Within ten (10) days of receiving the appeal, the Vice President for Career and Technical Education notifies, in writing, all parties to the grievance, the committee members, the Campus Dean, and the Regional Director of his/her ruling on the appeal. Copies of the second-level appeal and the Vice President for Career and Technical Education's ruling are filed in the appellant's files and in the Grievance Files

maintained by the Regional Student Affairs Officer.

12. If this investigation is not satisfactory to either party, further appeal can be made to the Council of the Commission for Occupational Education, the college's accrediting agency.
13. If appropriate, the college will take steps to prevent recurrence of any discrimination and/or harassment and to correct its discriminatory effects based on the complainant and any and all related issues.

(All documentation of allegations, findings, and action taken are to be kept in a confidential file.)

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LTC Region 4 Student Affairs

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