

Student Grievance/Complaint Policy

A grievance is a claim, a complaint, or an expression of concern made by a student regarding any aspect of his or her educational experience including misapplication of campus policies, rules, regulations, and procedures, or unfair treatment, such as coercion, reprisal, or intimidation by an instructor or other campus employee, including those on the ground and online. HCI College has a formal procedure to resolve complaints and concerns that students may have about the implementation of the policies and procedures that govern the institution. The institutional community benefits from prompt resolution of any issue that may arise. The student grievance/complaint procedure will be followed only in cases where there is not a grievance procedure governing a specific policy.

Students should initially discuss the grievance with their instructor or program director immediately. An appeal is the escalation of the complaint to a next level authority. If the appeal is about an academic decision such as a grade, please see the academic appeals process.

A student has the right to appeal all matters with respect to:

1. Disciplinary action taken for a violation of student conduct standards
2. Admissions decisions
3. Tuition and fee matters
4. Financial awards or policies, including satisfactory academic progress
5. Educational policies, procedures, and grading concerns

Concerns about academic matters should first be addressed through the academic appeals process; concerns about nonacademic matters should first be addressed directly with the head of the department or departments involved.

Certain decisions may not be appealed. If a student is terminated for failing to meet standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), including exceeding the maximum timeframe to complete the program, he or she is not entitled to appeal unless there is documented proof of mitigating circumstance such as a medical or disability condition that impacted their ability to study or participate in the program.

A student wishing to escalate their complaint should follow the steps listed below:

1. The first step in the process is to address and resolve the dispute with the person/instructor involved through discussion. A student with a grievance or complaint needs to raise their concerns as soon as possible.
2. If the dispute cannot be resolved within 72 hours the student is encouraged to make an appointment to discuss it with the Program Director.
3. If there are continuing concerns the student should submit them in writing to the Vice President of Student Services.

The written complaint must be submitted within seven calendar days of the incident or notification of termination. *The grievance document should include a description of the disputed items, the date or dates when the issue arose, the reason why the student is grieving the decision, and the steps the student has taken to resolve the dispute to date. When submitting an appeal, the student should include as much factual evidence as possible, such as evidence of extenuating circumstances. If the grievance is ongoing the VPSS will involve the VP of Academic Affairs.

4. The Vice President of Student Services and the Vice President of Academic Affairs will oversee the gathering of additional data about the issue or incident as necessary.

5. If the dispute cannot be resolved, it will be referred to the Campus Appeals Committee. The student reserves the right to call in to the Committee meeting and present their complaint. The committee will consist of: the heads of the applicable departments, the Systems Registrar, the Director of FA, the Vice President of Student Services, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and the Vice President of Administration, or their designee. They will meet with the student if requested and/or otherwise assess and develop a resolution to the complaint. A **response from the Campus Appeals Committee must be provided to the student within a reasonable time**. All decisions by the Campus Appeals Committee will be provided in writing and delivered to the student via their email of record with acknowledgement of receipt required. *****All decisions made by the Campus Appeals Committee are final.**
6. Under extraordinary circumstances the dispute may be unresolved by the Campus Appeals Committee, at this time the grievance will escalate to the Office of the President or students may address their concerns to the State Licensing Authority and/or the Institute's accrediting body. Students who reside out of state may contact any of the agencies listed below or the Campus President for information about agencies in their local area.

Student Complaint Right

ACCREDITING AGENCY - Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC)

Schools accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges must have a procedure and operational plan for handling student complaints. If a student does not feel that the school has adequately addressed a complaint or concern, the student may consider contacting the Accrediting Commission. All complaints reviewed by the Commission must be in written form and should grant permission for the Commission to forward a copy of the complaint to the school for a response. This can be accomplished by filing the ACCSC Complaint Form. The complainant(s) will be kept informed as to the status of the complaint as well as the final resolution by the Commission.

Please direct all inquiries to:

**Accrediting Commission of Career Schools &
Colleges 2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 302
Arlington, VA 22201
(703) 247-4212
www.accsc.org**

A copy of the ACCSC Complaint Form is available at the school and may be obtained at www.HCI.edu, by contacting the HCI College Campus President or online at www.accsc.org.

STATE LICENSING AUTHORITY – Commission for Independent Education

The U.S. Department of Education requires we provide you with contacts with the Florida Commission for Independent Education (CIE) whom you may contact in case you have an issue. We also remind and encourage students to attempt to resolve complaints with the institute itself. Applicable HCI College policies describing HCI College's Student Grievance Procedure and student complaint procedure can be found in the HCI College's Catalog. Students wishing to refer matters to the CIE may contact that agency by letter to:

**Commission for Independent
Education 325 W. Gaines Street,
Suite 1414
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400
Email to: cieinfo@fldoe.org
www.fldoe.org/policy/cie**

Additional information is available at: <http://www.fldoe.org/cie/file-a-complaint.shtml.Schools> licensed by the Commissioner for Independent Education.

Confidential Hotline

HCI College has contracted with Lighthouse Services, a third party, to provide a confidential hotline where students are welcome to offer comments, suggestions, and report an issue. Lighthouse can be reached at 844-510-0068 or at www.lighthouse-services.com/hci. There are posters with the contact information throughout the campus.