





COMPLAINT AND CONFLICT PROCEDURES

All persons are expected to communicate in positive ways to resolve issues and conflicts. Constructive controversy promotes increased learning in a collaborative culture. It encourages better problem solving, creativity, and involvement because it influences individuals to view problems and issues from different perspectives and to rethink their response. Constructive controversy is most productive in an atmosphere where individuals

- make every attempt to first resolve conflicts with the person(s) involved
- value different viewpoints and remain open to be influenced by new ideas and information
- focus the controversy on ideas and determining the best direction or decision
- reflect on one’s actions, thoughts and the reaction of others
- communicate information accurately and clarify miscommunication
- recognize and communicate feelings as they relate to the issues being discussed

Generally, complaints are handled within each functional area and the student should ordinarily attempt to resolve the matter by making an informal complaint with the person involved and if dissatisfied with the outcome, appeal the issue through the Director of the Department or the Dean of the school.

RELATED TO COURSE WORK		RELATED TO CAMPUS LIFE		
STEP 1-IDENTIFY THE ISSUE OR CONCERN				
INFORMAL COMPLAINT				
	<p>When a complaint, disagreement or conflict happens with a student or faculty member within a course, identify the issue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review syllabi, assignments and other resource materials to clarify the issue and list facts. • Decide what is and is not known and what does and does not support your thoughts. • Consult resource persons (advisor, friend, staff member or mentor) to help clarify the issue. 	<p>When a complaint, disagreement or conflict happens with a student or staff member, identify the issue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Student Handbook, and other resource materials to clarify the issue and list facts. • Decide what is and is not known and what does and does not support your thoughts. • Consult resource persons (advisor, friend, staff member or mentor) to help clarify the issue. 		
STEP 2-TALK WITH THE PERSON INVOLVED				
<i>If the student has a justifiable basis for not going directly to the person involved, make a formal complaint.</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the issue. Discuss, advocate and challenge ideas, not the person. • Restate ideas that are not clear and ask for clarification or examples. Listen even if you don’t agree. • Look at the issue from both perspectives. • Brainstorm possible responses to the issue/problem. • Take notes or draw a picture of the information presented. • Synthesize the best advice and reason to create a resolution. 				
FORMAL COMPLAINT				
<p>A Formal Complaint needs to be completed within 4 weeks of the incident. Students, who believe that a member of the Alverno community has violated their rights, may make a formal complaint for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • response from the person involved is not satisfactory to the student or • the student has a justifiable basis for not going directly to the person involved. 				
STEP 3 -- IF THE CONFLICT OR ISSUE IS NOT RESOLVED, TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTION				
Related to Course Work		Related to Campus Life		
				
FORMAL COMPLAINT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>If not resolved</i>, write a letter (formal complaint) to the Associate Dean of the appropriate Division. Describe the conflict/concern and include documentation. The Associate Dean determines the next step/outcome and informs you. • <i>If not resolved</i>, write a letter (formal complaint) to the Dean of the School. Describe the conflict/concern and include documentation. The Dean determines the next step/outcome and informs you. • <i>If not resolved</i>, write a letter (formal complaint) to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Describe the conflict/concern and include documentation. The decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs is final. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a letter (formal complaint) to the Associate Dean of Students. Describe the conflict/concern and include documentation. • A copy of the letter is given to the individual accused, the immediate supervisor (if applicable) and the student making the complaint. • If appropriate, the immediate supervisor will inquire into the facts of the complaint and discuss the matter individually with the student and the person involved in the complaint. • If appropriate, the Associate Dean of Students may ask the accuser and the accused to meet in an effort to resolve the complaint. • The Associate Dean of Students will follow-up with involved parties to see if the issue has been resolved. • If appropriate, the Associate Dean of Students may refer the issue to the College Community Relations Board. • If not resolved, the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs will make a decision about the issue and their decision is final. 		