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I. DEFINITIONS

Grievance: A formal complaint raised by a member of the college community regarding a decision, action, or condition within the college; unless otherwise stated within the respective policies and their companion procedures, this grievance procedure does not apply to complaints raised in connection to Policy 3.3.4 - Discipline Action, Suspension, and Dismissal, Policy 3.3.7 - Discrimination, Harassment, & Title IX, Policy 3.3.9 - Reduction in Force / Involuntary Leave Without Pay, or any other policy that has its own grievance process.

Isolated Incidents: A grievance where the complaint is connected to a single behavior or incident. Grievances may be raised over isolated incidents, with the date of the incident establishing the date of the situation that is grieved.

Continuous Patterns of Behavior: A grievance where the complaint is connected to an on-going and continuous pattern of behavior or incidents. Grievances may be raised over continuous patterns of behavior, with the date of the last related incident establishing the date of the situation that is grieved.

Complainant: The individual or group raising the grievance.

Respondent: The individual or entity against whom the grievance is raised.

Grievance Officer: The Vice President of Operations and Advancement.

Deputy Grievance Officer: Any designee made by the Grievance Officer.

Justifiable Belief: A belief that would be held by a reasonable person in the same situation given the same circumstances.

II. GRIEVANCE PROCESS

A. Level I - Informal Grievance

Before filing a formal grievance, the complainant should attempt to resolve the issue through an informal discussion with the individual involved. Grievances should be raised and addressed in a timely fashion to quickly resolve workplace concerns and restore operational efficiency. Informal grievances should begin with an initial discussion with the employee's direct supervisor, and must be raised within thirty (30) business days from the date of the situation that is grieved. The supervisor may call higher-level supervisors into the discussion if the employee agrees or the supervisor may consult with higher-level supervisors to seek any needed advice, counsel, or support before giving an answer.

The complainant shall receive an answer within ten (10) business days of initiating the informal grievance process or be advised as to the conditions which prevent an answer within ten (10) business days and when an answer may be expected. In any event, an answer shall be provided in writing within thirty (30) business days. Both the employee and the direct supervisor are advised to keep documentation of the discussions and responses provided.

B. Level II - Formal Grievance

If the issue is not resolved informally, or if the complainant justifiably believes that raising an informal grievance could reasonably result in a violation of the complainant's rights under the College's policies, grievances must be submitted in writing using the official grievance form, which is available online at the Human Resources Section of the College website. When submitting the form, the grievance must include a clear statement of the issue, relevant facts, and the desired resolution. Grievances must be filed within thirty (30) business days from the date of the situation that is grieved or, if the informal grievance process has been followed, then from the date of unsatisfactory resolution of the informal process.

Upon receipt of the grievance, the Grievance Officer will acknowledge the complaint in writing within five (5) business days. The Grievance Officer or the Deputy Grievance Officer will conduct a thorough and impartial investigation, including but not limited to interviews with the complainant, respondent, and any witnesses. The investigation should be completed within thirty (30) business days of receiving the grievance, but may take longer depending upon the complexity of the grievance, the operational capacity of the College, the availability of involved individuals, and other relevant factors. Upon conclusion of the investigation, the Grievance Officer will provide a written report of the findings to the complainant, the respondent, and any appropriate College personnel, along with actions to be taken to resolve the grievance, if any, within ten (10) business days.

C. Level III - Appeal to the President

If the decision reached by the Formal Grievance Process is not satisfactory to the complainant, the complainant may appeal the decision to the President. The appeal must be in writing and

provided to the President within five (5) business days of the receipt of the Grievance Officer's decision.

The President will conduct an "on the record" review of the documents and supporting materials presented during the Formal Grievance Process. The President, at the President's sole discretion, may conduct further investigation and additional fact-finding activities as deemed necessary and appropriate. The President can accept, reject, or modify the original determination, and will make a decision within thirty (30) business days. The decision will be communicated to all appropriate persons. The President's decision is final and not otherwise appealable.

III. GRIEVANCE RULES AND WAIVER OF RIGHTS

Grievances must be processed in a timely manner to ensure both the fair evaluation and adjudication of matters aggrieved as well as to ensure operational efficiency. Grievances thus are subject to the following rules:

- If at any stage of the grievance the complainant does not take the next step within the time allotted, the grievance shall be considered settled in the manner of and as of the date of the last determination.
- In the event a grievance is not filed or processed in the manner and within the time set forth above, the College may still elect to take up the grievance, but it cannot guarantee a satisfactory resolution of the grievance due to impacts of the delay on operational relevance, the availability of documentation, and the reliability of memory.
- The claimant may withdraw the grievance at any level and at any time.

IV. STORAGE OF GRIEVANCE RECORDS

Grievances and related documentation shall be kept in the personnel files of each of the involved individuals. Personnel files are kept confidential as prescribed by Chapter 115D, Article 2A of the North Carolina General Statutes.

REFERENCES

Statutory References	N.C.G.S. Ch. 115D, Article 2A
Regulatory References	None
Relevant Guidance	None
Policy Manual Cross-References	Referencing: ● Policy 3.3.4 - Discipline Action, Suspension, and Dismissal ● Policy 3.3.7 - Discrimination and Harassment ● Policy 3.3.9 - Reduction in Force / Involuntary Leave Without Pay

PROCEDURE HISTORY

August 28, 2026	Adopted.