

Student Grievance Procedure

A grievance is an individual student's claim of unfair and/or non-equitable treatment regarding established policies, procedures, and regulations of Bellin College. A student has a right to express a grievance without prejudice, penalty, or reprisal. The College believes in resolving issues at the lowest level possible. If there is more than one student involved, each student must file a separate grievance. A grievance submitted by a group of students will not be accepted.

To provide students with a direction to voice their concerns, a four (4) step grievance procedure has been established for an individual student to express problems, concerns, or disagreements relative to their experiences at the College. If resolution is obtained in any given step, that resolution is considered final. The procedural steps outlined below need to be completed sequentially within the timeframes outlined in each step.

All aspects of the Student Grievance Procedure are confidential. All parties, student and employees, are required to exercise confidentiality and privacy in relation to all verbal and written communications.

Conflict of Interest: In the event of any conflict of interest which will be identified through self-declaration by any of the members regarding a particular potential grievance, the individual will remove him or herself from the Student Grievance process. The Dean of Student Services (or designee) will rule on any challenges regarding conflict of interest.

Step 1: Informal Grievance Process

The student speaks to the College employee (faculty or staff member) to whom he/she has the concern with about the believed infringement of unfair and/or non-equitable treatment regarding established policies, procedures, and regulations of Bellin College. The concern must be articulated in a manner that is specific to the infringement and/or unaccepted treatment. This is to occur within one (1) business day of the incident. The College employee completes the Student Grievance Procedure Step 1 Form.

Possible following outcome:

- The issue is resolved.
- The issue is unresolved and proceeds to Step 2.

Step 2: Informal Grievance Process

The student speaks to the administrator (Dean, Vice President, or President/CEO) of the College faculty or staff member. This is to occur within 2 business days following Step 1. Should the student need to identify the appropriate administrator, the student is to consult the employee directories on the College website or inquire to the Advisor and Career Services Coordinator. The student completes the Grievance Procedure Step 2 Form.

The administrator is accountable to:

- Provide the student with the name of the employee's immediate supervisor.
- Notify the involved employee of the situation via a face-to-face meeting.
- Arrange and meet with the involved employee, their supervisor, and the student within 3 business days of the notification of the dispute to attempt to resolve the concern at the lowest level possible.

Possible following outcome:

- The issue is resolved.
- The issue is unresolved and proceeds to Step 3.

Step 3: Formal Grievance Process:

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of Steps 1 & 2, the student may begin a formal grievance process by documenting his/her grievance and the steps that have been taken to resolve the situation. The student completes the Student Grievance Procedure Step 3 Form located in the Advisor and Career Services Coordinator office.

- Student name, address, phone number, and College email address.

- Date of situation/incident.
- Description the situation or incident to include the name of the College employee involved.
- Steps that have been taken to resolve the situation.
- Outcome of prior steps and communications with those involved.
- Expectations for resolution.
- Provision (attachment) of any supporting documentation related to the grievance.
- Student signature and date to certify that the student has reviewed the Student Grievance Procedure, and understands their rights, obligations, and responsibility to the process.

The documented Student Grievance Form is submitted to the involved College employee with copies submitted to the employee's immediate supervisor and within three (3) business days of Step 2. The College employee has three (3) business days from receipt of the formal grievance to respond in writing to the student. A copy of the response should be provided to the employee's immediate supervisor. The immediate supervisor will provide a copy of all the formal grievance documentation and the employee's response to the student and the appropriate administrator.

Possible following outcome:

- The issue is resolved.
- The issue is unresolved and proceeds to Step 4.

Step 4: Formal Grievance Process:

If the formal grievance proceeds to Step 4, the immediate supervisor will provide all documentation to the Dean of Student Services (or designee). The Dean of Student Services (or designee) will meet with the student within three (3) business days of receipt of the formal grievance and explain the steps for a formal grievance process. Then Dean of Student Services (or designee) then meets with the College employee to inform them that a formal grievance has been filed and provides him/her with steps of the formal grievance process. If the Dean of Student Services is the administrator of the employee involved, the Dean will be recused and replace with another administrator of President's Cabinet.

The Dean of Students Services (or designee) convenes and meets with the Student Grievance Ad Hoc Committee within three (3) business days of meeting with the student. This Committee is chaired by the Dean of Student Services (or designee) and members include: appropriate Dean of Academic Affairs, appropriate Program Director, a staff member, a student representative chosen from the Student Senate. If any member(s) of the Committee feels he/she is unable to be impartial they will be recused and replaced with another member.

The student and involved College employee will be given the opportunity to meet with the Committee to expound on their side of the grievance, as the committee may ask for further information or clarification from any or all involved during the meeting. The Student Grievance Ad Hoc Committee has 5 business days to make a determination on the Grievance based on the review of information provided and applicable College policies, procedures, and regulations. The committee shall base its decision upon the record of the meeting and shall not consider matters outside of the record.

The Student Grievance Ad Hoc Committee may determine:

- The Student Grievance is incomplete and request additional information. If additional information is required, the student or involved College employee has 3 business days to provide that information the Ad Hoc Committee.
- The Student Grievance is in favor of the student with the student's proposed resolution.
- The Student Grievance is in favor of the student with a new proposed resolution.
- The Student Grievance is dismissed and provides rationale for their decision.

The Dean of Student Services (or designee) shall provide to the College employee and student involved the outcome of the committee's decision in writing via certified mail and College email. A copy of the letter will be provided to the President/CEO. The outcome shall include:

- Findings of fact in chronological order.

- A statement of the individual student's claim of unfair and/or non-equitable treatment regarding established policies, procedures, and regulations of Bellin College that is alleged to have been violated.
- An opinion on the validity of the grievance.
- Remedial recommendations and final outcome.

An official record of the process and all steps taken to resolve the grievance will be documented and kept in a sealed file in the fireproof cabinet in the President's area.

Appeals Process:

If the student or College employee believes that the process and procedures outlined in this Policy were not followed, within 10 business days of the date of Student Grievance Ad Hoc Committee's decision an appeal may be submitted to the President/CEO in writing. The Appeals Form is located in the office of the Advisor and Career Services Coordinator.

Within 14 business days of receipt of the appeal, the President/CEO or designee(s) may review and communicate with the student, the College employee, the administrator and supervisor, or the members of the Ad Hoc Committee to determine whether the process and procedures were followed.

The President/CEO may render one of the following decisions:

- Finds evidence of violation of the process and procedures of this Policy, the President/CEO will direct the administrator to review the case anew.
- Finds no evidence of violation of the process and procedures of this Policy; the President/CEO will uphold the ruling of the Grievance Ad Hoc Committee.

The President/CEO will respond, in writing, within 15 business days of receipt of the appeal.

The decision of the President/CEO is final and not appealable.