



Bemidji State University	
Student Handbook	
Policies and Procedures	
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Policy	Student Complaints and Grievances

Student Complaints and Grievances

Policy

Bemidji State University is committed to a respectful learning environment for all members of the campus community. Students have the right to seek a remedy for a dispute or disagreement when they believe they have been treated in an improper, unfair or arbitrary manner. In addition, students have the right to seek a remedy for issues of institutional or program quality such as Bemidji State University's compliance with the standards of our accrediting body, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), or a claim of consumer fraud or deceptive trade practices. No retaliation of any kind shall be taken against a student for participation in a complaint or grievance.

Definitions

A. **Grievance** - A written claim raised by a student alleging improper, unfair, arbitrary, or discriminatory action by an employee involving the application of a specific provision of a university rule/regulation or a Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) Board policy or procedure. A grievance may also be about issues of institutional or program quality such as Bemidji State University's compliance with HLC standards, or a claim of consumer fraud or deceptive trade practices.

B. **Complaint** – A claim by a student alleging improper, unfair or arbitrary treatment. A complaint may also be about issues of institutional or program quality such as Bemidji State University's compliance with HLC standards, or a claim of consumer fraud or deceptive trade practices.

C. **Appeal** – A request for reconsideration of a grievance application of a policy or procedure.

D. **Retaliation** – Retribution of any kind taken against a student for participating in a complaint or grievance.

E. **Student** – An individual student, a group of students, or the student government.

Procedures

For certain types of policies, specific procedures are in place and must be followed. These procedures are found in the BSU Student Handbook.

Issue	Policy/Procedure Website
Harassment/Discrimination Complaints	http://www.bemidjistate.edu/students/handbook/policies/campus/harassment.cfm
Student Conduct Complaints	http://www.bemidjistate.edu/students/handbook/conduct/section4.cfm
Grade Challenges	http://www.bemidjistate.edu/students/handbook/policies/academic/grade_challenges.cfm
Parking	http://www.bemidjistate.edu/offices/safety/parking_regulations/violations/

The procedures for all other types of complaints or grievances follow.

1. When a student has a complaint or grievance, she or he shall first meet on an informal basis with the faculty member, staff member, or university administrator directly involved in the dispute in an attempt to resolve the complaint or grievance. For full consideration, the complaint or grievance should be filed in the semester in which the concern arises, or within the first two weeks of the subsequent term.
2. When a student has a complaint or grievance which remains unresolved after consultation with the faculty member, staff member, or university administrator directly involved in the dispute, she or he may file a written account of his or her grievance with the appropriate academic dean in cases where the dispute

involves teaching faculty, or the appropriate supervisor in cases where the dispute involves other university employees. A Student Grievance Form is available for this purpose in the Office of Student Development and Enrollment, the Office of Academic Affairs, the Office of Finance and Administration or online in the Student Handbook.

http://www.bemidjistate.edu/students/handbook/docs/grievance_form.pdf

This notification shall contain a statement indicating the intention of the student(s) to proceed with the grievance, and the relief requested. The academic dean, appropriate supervisor, or designee, shall respond in writing to the student(s) within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the written, signed notice of grievance.

3. If the grievance is not resolved at the meeting with the supervisor, the student(s) may appeal to the vice president for the area. The vice president shall consider the appeal and make a decision. The vice president shall respond in writing to the student within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the written, signed notice of appeal. If the supervisor consulted in #2 above is also a vice president, the student may appeal to the president of the University as described below.
4. If the grievance is not resolved at the meeting with the area vice president, the student(s) may appeal to the University president, who will consider the appeal and make a decision. The University president shall respond in writing to the student within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the written, signed notice of appeal. The decision of the president is final and binding.
5. If the grievance involves a Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board Policy, the actions of the Bemidji State University president, an issue of institutional or program quality such as BSU's compliance with the standards of HLC or other licensing agency standards, or a claim of consumer fraud or deceptive trade practice, a student may further appeal the university decision to the MnSCU chancellor. The decision of the chancellor is final and binding. The contact information for the Office of the Chancellor follows.
Academic and Student Affairs
Office of the Chancellor
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System
Wells Fargo Place
30 7th St. E., Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101-7804

Relevant MnSCU Board Procedures

The Bemidji State University Student Complaints and Grievances policy and procedures follow MnSCU Board Procedure 3.8.1.

<http://www.mnscu.edu/board/procedure/308p1.html>

Complaints to the Higher Learning Commission

Bemidji State University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA). A student who wishes to file a complaint about Bemidji State University with HLC should contact the Commission. The contact information for HLC follows.

The Higher Learning Commission
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, Illinois 60604-1411
Phone: 800.621.7440 / 312.263.0456 .
Fax: 312.263.7462

info@hlcommission.org

Record Keeping

The University maintains a record of written student complaints filed with the offices of the President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Student Development & Enrollment, and Vice President for Finance and Administration. Summary information regarding student complaints to these administrative offices is provided to the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), upon their request, and in compliance with data privacy policy, as a part of the University's periodic accreditation review.

Questions regarding student complaint/grievance procedures should be directed to the Office of the Vice President for Student Development & Enrollment, 755-2075.