

Grievance Procedure

SFBC&TS' business and student operations are designed to be administered in an atmosphere of collegiate congeniality. Civility, respect, the Golden Rule, and Christian attitudes and actions are *expected* of all faculty, staff, and students. Whenever a situation occurs that results in a student or faculty member feeling that he/she has been slighted, harassed, or abused—intentionally or unintentionally—the student or faculty member has a right to formally submit a grievance to the College or Seminary. SFBC&TS will not tolerate such behavior and will always act to rectify the situation. In order for SFBC&TS to officially respond, the student or faculty member must submit a “Grievance Form.” The following policy/procedure concerns only Student Grievances while the detailed policy and procedures for grievances concerning Faculty can be found in the Faculty Handbook.

The “Student Grievance Form” may be obtained from the Dean of Student Services, the Registrar, or any staff member in the front office.

The Student Grievance Procedures shall apply to student grievances relating to the following:

Student Programs, Facilities, and Services: Allegations of violations of SFBC policies and procedures with respect to programs, services, activities or facilities.

Student Relations: Allegations of unfair treatment from faculty, administration, staff or fellow students.

INFORMAL

- **1a.** The student is to first discuss the problem informally with the fellow student, faculty member, Dean of Student Services' (DoSS) designee or staff member involved and where appropriate, with supervisors or administrators at sequentially higher levels.
- **1b.** A student may not proceed to formal review unless the informal review with those persons cited above has been exhausted.

FORMAL

- **1a.** If for any reason the grievance is not resolved informally to the satisfaction of the student within a reasonable period (minimum 3 work days; maximum 10 work days) the student should contact the DoSS.
- **1b.** The student shall prepare and submit a formal written complaint on a form provided by the DoSS which shall serve as the basis for all further considerations.
- **1c.** DoSS shall investigate all of the facts upon which the complaint is based. As soon as practicable, the DoSS shall notify the grievant of the results of the investigation.
- **1d.** If for any reason the student is not satisfied with the results of the investigation conducted by the DoSS, he/she may ask the DoSS to submit the matter to the Executive Vice President (EVP)
- **1e.** As soon as practicable, the DoSS shall:
 - (i) prepare a statement summarizing the actions taken
 - (ii) append such statement to the student's complaint form
 - (iii) forward the complaint form to the appropriate Appeal Officer (EVP)
- **1f.** Upon receipt of the formal complaint, the EVP shall review the grievance and the appeal. Within 10 work days following receipt of the complaint, the EVP shall render a decision and convey such decision to the student in writing.
- **1g.** If the student is not satisfied by the decision obtained by the EVP, he/she may ask the EVP to appeal to the President of SFBC or their designee on his/her behalf.
- **1h.** As soon as practicable, the EVP shall apprise the President or their designee of the details of the grievance and serve the President or their designee with a copy of the written complaint.
- **1i.** As soon as practicable after receipt of the written complaint, the President or their designee shall render a final decision which shall be conveyed in writing to the student.

Grievance Procedure Timeline

The following table outlines the order of and time lines for the steps of the grievance procedure. It is in everyone's best interest to reach resolution in a timely manner; therefore, every effort will be made to stay within the timelines listed below. Given the need to gather facts, and to review the claim, time frames may shift to accommodate schedules as needed; furthermore, the fact that a specified action is delayed does not dictate a breach of process or policy on SFBC's part.

Files Complaint With	Grievance Claim - Time Frame	Response Given - Time Frame
Dean of Student Services (verbally)	3 work days	Until determination that resolution cannot be reached verbally
Dean of Student Services (Grievance form filed)	3 work days	10 work days
EVP (in writing)	3 work days	10 work days
President (in writing)	3 work days	As outlined within policy

General

1. **Students:** Complete the entire "Grievance Form" and give it to the Dean of Student Services. The student may be asked to meet with the DoSS in order to discuss the problem and the circumstances involving the incident(s).
2. **Dean of Student Services:** DoSS will undertake the first level of response. DoSS will meet and speak with the offender and inform him/her that his/her actions may be in violation of SFBC&TS' policies. The offender will be instructed to cease any offending actions and warned not to repeat the behavior.
 - a. **Note:** If the offender is an SFBC&TS student, the student's file will be noted to reflect that he/she received an official warning regarding inappropriate behavior. If the offense continues or either party does not agree with the determination of the DoSS, the situation will be escalated to the EVP or President. In this situation, the EVP or President will counsel the student offender and provide them with a warning which will be placed in their permanent record. The EVP or President will determine the punitive measures the student will receive, which may include suspension and/or expulsion. In the event a student is expelled, no monetary refunds will be made under any circumstances.
 - b. **Note:** If the offender is a member of SFBC&TS' administration, faculty, or staff, the problem should be documented and given in written form to the EVP for evaluation. If the situation cannot be resolved by the EVP, the President should be involved with the process.
3. **Appeal Clause:** Any student or faculty member deemed culpable of inappropriate actions may make a formal appeal to the EVP or President of SFBC&TS. The EVP and President, after reviewing all documents and interview records, may elect to review the determination and speak with the appellant. If the President or Vice President feels the process has been adjudicated appropriately, the President will uphold the decision. If the President or EVP determine the action or process biased they reserve the right to overturn the decision without further consultation.
4. SFBC&TS will retain all documentation on-file in accordance with all applicable rules and regulations.

In the case of unresolved conflict, contact the Commission for Independent Education at 325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1414, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400, toll free telephone number (888) 224-6684, or the Association for Biblical Higher Education at 5850 T.G. Lee Blvd. Ste 130, Orlando, FL 32822, telephone number 407-207-0808.

Out-of-State Distance Education students, who have completed the internal institutional grievance process and the applicable state grievance process, may appeal non-Instructional complaints to the FL-SARA PRDEC Council. For additional information on the complaint process, please visit the [FL-SARA Complaint Process](#) page.