

STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES AND GRIEVANCE & DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS GUIDE

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Non-Discrimination Policy

Richland Community College subscribes to the principles and laws of the State of Illinois and the Federal Government pertaining to civil rights and equal opportunity, including applicable Executive Orders.

Richland Community College policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, marital or parental status, national origin or ancestry, age, mental or physical disability (except where it is a bonafide occupational qualification), sexual orientation, gender identify, military or veteran's status, or other legally protected characteristics or conduct.

The College's nondiscrimination policy applies to the admission and retention of students, recruitment, employment, and retention of faculty and staff, and access to and treatment in the College's programs and activities. Complaints alleging violations of this policy should be immediately reported to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Officer, as designated by the President. Complaints reported to the EEOC Officer shall be resolved within the College grievance resolution process.

**For additional information,
please contact**

Richland Community College
Student and Academic Services
One College Park
Decatur, IL 62521
217/875-7211, Ext. 292
www.richland.edu

Richland Community College

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Richland Community College, an open-door institution, recognizes the rights of its students guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Illinois. The College further recognizes and identifies students' rights to equal access to all programs, information, freedom of speech, inquiry, and assembly, to the peaceful pursuit of an education, and to the reasonable use of services and facilities of the College.

Richland Community College is committed to teaching and learning. As a teaching and learning community, relationships among students, faculty, and staff are marked by mutual respect and appreciation for each other's roles and responsibilities.

Further, Richland Community College strives to maintain an educational environment that supports the academic, professional, and/or personal development of all members of the community and identifies responsibilities assigned to students as members of the learning community.

Richland Community College has established a "Statement of Student Rights" and a "Statement of Student Responsibilities" to educate students about the manner in which they are to pursue their own educational objectives as well as support the objectives of others. These statements identify the rights to which students are entitled through membership in the Richland learning community along with the responsible behaviors in which students should be engaged as members of the learning community.

College Policies

For College policies, refer to the Board Policy Manual, College [Catalog](#), or [Student Handbook](#), available in the Student Services Center, Room C129, and online.

Statement of Student Rights

As members of Richland's learning community, students are entitled to certain rights and provisions, including a quality education and quality services. In addition, students have the right to know the following:

- College admissions requirements
- Degrees and certificates offered
- Types of career and personal development resources available
- When classes are offered
- Course requirements
- Policy on class attendance and participation
- Grading policies and procedures
- Cost of attendance
- Financial aid available
- How financial aid awards are calculated
- When financial aid is awarded
- College and financial aid satisfactory academic progress requirements and their implications
- College refund policy
- College policies and procedures
- Academic and other support services available
- Student activities available
- Campus crime statistics
- Graduation rates
- Graduation requirements

- Job placement rates
- Emergency procedures
- Building hours
- College operational hours
- How to inspect their academic record
- How to establish confidentiality of their academic record
- How to suppress their directory information
- How to file a grievance

Statement of Student Responsibilities

Listed below are the responsibilities that Richland students accept through membership in the College's learning community. Each student should approach academic endeavors, relationships, and personal responsibilities with a strong commitment to personal integrity and mutual respect. As members of the Richland teaching and learning community, students have a responsibility to

- Read the College [Catalog](#) and [Student Handbook](#)
- Become knowledgeable about College policies and procedures
- Abide by College policies and procedures
- Be aware of academic and graduation requirements
- Provide accurate information on College forms
- Meet financial obligations to the College
- Attend classes and be on time
- Complete assignments and exams based upon course syllabus information
- Participate in class
- Fulfill their academic responsibilities in an honest and forthright manner
- Seek help from faculty when needed
- Seek out answers to questions
- Abide by the "Responsible Use of Technology" policy
- Meet published deadlines
- Notify College officials if a condition exists which is in violation of a student's rights, College policies, rules, standards, and procedures
- Join/seek out groups and individuals that will help students achieve their goals
- Abide by state and federal laws
- Conduct themselves in a responsible manner in and out of the classroom
- Protect, support, and contribute to a safe environment within the learning community
- Show regard for the property of the College, its community members and visitors
- Assist the College in fulfilling its administrative responsibilities

Student Conduct Policy

Students enrolled at Richland Community College are considered by the College to have reached the age of responsible citizenship and are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner while on campus.

By the act of registration for classes at the College, students obligate themselves to adhere to the rules and regulations which the institution formulates and publishes in the [College Catalog](#), [Student Handbook](#), and other published materials. Accordingly, students are expected to assume primary responsibility for their own conduct.

Disciplinary action may be imposed upon a student by an instructor or an administrator of the College for gross misconduct that would tend to interfere with the educational process, disrupt the normal activities of the institution, or infringe upon the rights of others while the student is on the College premises (owned, leased or rented) or at functions under the sponsorship of the College. In addition, the College reserves the right to remove any individual from the campus who is physically or verbally disrupting a class or disturbing the peace.

Students charged with misconduct or with violation of law and/or College rules and policies may be subject to written reprimand, restitution, temporary expulsion, disciplinary probation, suspension or expulsion. Individuals who are not students and who violate these regulations will be considered trespassers and will be treated accordingly.

In addition, charges of a disciplinary nature may be filed against a student by a fellow student.

When an action is taken against a student by a faculty member or other College personnel, the student has a right to a formal hearing. Prior to imposing an expulsion or a suspension of a semester or longer, the College's Judicial Board must conduct a formal hearing unless the student waives this right. Procedures for conducting a hearing will be published and made available to students.

Students removed from the College must apply for readmission through the Vice President of Student and Academic Services. Richland Community College reserves the right to require a psychological or psychiatric examination from any student at any time that such course of action would seem to be in the best interest of the student and/or the College District. Expenses incident to such an examination will be paid by the College.

Students, as citizens, remain subject to Federal, State, and local laws; therefore, the Judicial Board is not intended to replace or modify existing law. The College and its students recognize that violation of these laws may lead to prosecution by agencies or persons in addition to the College.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

Each student is expected to be honest in his/her class work or in the submission of information to the College. The College regards dishonesty in classroom and laboratories, on assignments and examinations, and the submission of false and misleading information to the College as a serious offense.

A student who cheats, plagiarizes, or furnishes false, misleading information to the College is subject to disciplinary action up to and including failure of a class or suspension/expulsion from the College.

Policy on Removal from a Class or the College

The College reserves the right to remove any individual from a class or the College for the following reasons:

- For physically or verbally disrupting a class or disturbing the peace.
- For unsatisfactory academic progress.
- For gross misconduct or any other actions or unlawful conduct which would tend to interfere with the educational process, disrupt the normal activities of the institution, or infringe upon the rights of others while the individual is on the College premises (owned, leased, or rented) or at functions under the sponsorship of the College.

Richland Community College Student Grievance and Disciplinary Proceedings Resolution Process

Student Grievance Policy

When a student believes that a condition exists which is in violation of his or her rights, College policies, rules, standards, or procedures, he or she has the right to file a grievance.

A grievance may be categorized as follows:

1. Academic Concerns
 - Academic Dishonesty
 - Academic Suspension
 - Educational Guarantee
 - Grade Appeals
 - Graduation Requirements
 - Other Academic Concerns
2. Americans With Disabilities Act (accommodations)
3. Discrimination (age, disability, gender, race, color, sexual orientation, religion)
4. Financial Aid Suspension
5. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (confidentiality)
6. Sexual Harassment (by students, staff, or faculty)
7. Student Conduct
8. Student Employment
9. Tuition Refunds
10. Others not represented above

A grievance may be resolved through either an informal or formal process. Informal or formal hearings and resolution of complaints will be conducted in a prompt and fair manner without fear of retribution.

Formal hearings are conducted by the College's Judicial Board or by a Special Committee appointed by the President.

The College student grievance process, although encouraged in resolving grievance issues, is not mandatory. Students may seek alternatives in resolving grievances. Every attempt will be made to resolve grievances or problems before initiating the grievance process.

Initiation of Grievance or Disciplinary Proceedings

If a student, faculty, or staff member feels that a condition exists in which a student's behavior is unsatisfactory or is in violation of College policies, rules, standards, or procedures, he or she may file a grievance against a student.

Every attempt will be made to resolve grievances or problems before initiating the grievance process.

Informal Resolution Process

FIRST:

Contact the faculty or staff member involved or the appropriate administrator to resolve the matter.

SECOND:

Contact the coordinator, director, dean or other appropriate administrator responsible for the area to resolve the matter.

THIRD:

Contact the Vice President over the area. In all cases where appropriate, grievances/complaints will be investigated by the appropriate administrators or third party.

If resolution of the grievance or disciplinary charge is reached informally, a written agreement (if deemed appropriate) must be signed by the student. The agreement shall outline the provisions of the resolution and indicate that the student was aware of, but waived the right, to a formal hearing.

In cases of sexual harassment or discrimination, a student has the right to bypass the informal process and request a formal hearing. In cases of academic dishonesty or academic suspension, the College has the right to bypass the informal process.

If a student grievance or disciplinary problem cannot be resolved at the informal level, a formal hearing of the Judicial Board or Special Committee appointed by the President may be convened.

(A sample of the Informal Student Appeal Process form appears on the next page.)

Formal Resolution Process

A formal hearing before the Judicial Board or Special Committee appointed by the President may occur at the request of a student, faculty or staff member.

Formal hearings must be coordinated through a Vice President or Director of Human Resources. The Vice President of Student and Academic Services will convene the Judicial Board. The President or designee will convene the Special Committee.

Students are encouraged to meet with the campus Ombudsperson in Campus Life in preparation of requesting a formal hearing.

(See page 9 of this [Guide](#) for formal hearing procedures.)

<u>RICHLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE</u>	
<u>INFORMAL STUDENT APPEAL PROCESS</u>	
Student Name: _____	ID#: _____
Course(s): _____	Grade(s): _____
_____	_____
_____	_____
Semester grade(s) received: _____	
Is request within 1 year time limit? (*See Below)	
____ Yes	
____ No (Request cannot be met)	
Met with instructor(s) involved and discussed situation: ____ Yes ____ No	
Situation resolved?	
____ Yes	
Resolution: _____	

Instructor(s) Signature(s): _____	Date: _____
_____	Date: _____
_____	Date: _____
_____	Date: _____
____ No (Proceed with Next Step)	
Met with Dean(s) involved and discussed situation: ____ Yes ____ No	
Situation resolved?	
____ Yes	
Resolution: _____	

Dean(s) Signature(s): _____	Date: _____
_____	Date: _____
_____	Date: _____
_____	Date: _____
____ No (Proceed with Next Step)	
If situation is not resolved at Instructor or Dean level, a <u>Request for Formal Hearing</u> form may be filled out by the student and submitted to the Vice President of Student and Academic Services. A Hearing of the Judicial Board will be scheduled within 30 days of the form's submission.	
*Richland Board Policy 4.6.3: "Grade appeals must be filed no later than one year from the last day of the term for which the grade was received."	
Rev. 9/09	

A sample of the Richland Community College Informal Student Appeal Process form is shown above. This form serves as a guide to ensure that all steps have been taken to try to resolve an academic issue using the informal student appeal process. Completing this form does not necessarily indicate that the student was aware of, but waived the right, to a formal hearing. If resolution of the grievance or disciplinary charge is reached informally, a written agreement (if deemed appropriate) must be signed by the student. Forms are available in Student and Academic Services, Human Resources, the Student Services Center, and all Division offices.

Student Resolution Process Chart

Contact individuals listed in sequential order.

Category	For Informal Resolution, Contact	To Initiate Resolution, Contact
Academic Concern - Academic Dishonesty - Educational Guarantee - Grade Appeals	Instructor * [1st] Program Director* [2nd] Dean [3rd] Appropriate V.P. [4th]	V.P. of Student & Academic Services
Academic Suspension	Dean, Enrollment Services [1st] V.P. of Student & Academic Services [2nd]	V.P. of Student & Academic Services
Americans with Disabilities Act (Accommodations)	Director, Learning Accommodation Serv. [1st] Dean, Teaching & Learning Support Services [2nd] V.P. of Student & Academic Services [3rd] Director of Human Resources [4th]	Director of Human Resources
Discrimination (such as Gender, Race, color, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, etc.)	Director of Human Resources	Director of Human Resources
Financial Aid Suspensions	Director of Financial Aid [1st] Dean, Enrollment Services [2nd] V.P. of Student & Academic Services [3rd]	V.P. of Student & Academic Services
Family Educational Rights And Privacy Act Issues (Confidentiality)	Registrar [1st] Dean, Enrollment Services [2nd] Program Director* [3rd] V.P. of Academic Area [4th]	V.P. of Student & Academic Services
Graduation Requirements	Registrar [1st] Dean, Enrollment Services [2nd] Program Director* [3rd] V.P. of Academic Area [4th]	V.P. of Student & Academic Services
Sexual Harassment (by faculty, staff, or student)	Director of Human Resources	Director of Human Resources
Student Conduct (In Classroom)	Instructor [1st] Academic Dean [2nd] Appropriate V.P. [3rd]	V.P. of Student & Academic Services
Student Conduct (Out of Classroom)	Dean, Teaching & Learning Support Services [1st] V.P. of Student & academic Services [2nd]	V.P. of Student & Academic Services
Student Employment (excluding sexual harassment)	Supervisor [1st] Dean or V.P., as appropriate [2nd] Dir. of Human Resources [3rd]	Director of Human Resources
Tuition Refunds	Director, Accounting [1st] V.P. of Finance & Admin. [2nd]	V.P. of Student & Academic Services
Others not listed	Staff member responsible for area involved	V.P. of Student & Academic Services [1st] Director of Human Resources [2nd]

*If Applicable

Richland Personnel Listed on Resolution Process Chart

COLLEGE PERSONNEL	OFFICE	PHONE EXTENSION
Director, Accounting	N114	244
Director, Financial Aid and Veterans Affairs	N140	285
Director, Human Resources	W121	222
Director, Learning Accommodation Services	S146	362
Director of Student Records/Registrar	N128	284
Dean, Business and Technology Division	C218	473
Dean, Communications, Education, Humanities and Fine Arts Division	C162	342
Dean, Continuing Education and Engineering Technologies	SC06	239
Dean, Correctional Education	W206	517
Dean, Enrollment Services Division	N131	253
Dean, Health Professions Division	S176	751
Dean, Mathematics and Sciences Division	S119	384
Dean, Teaching and Learning Support Services	S145A	282
Vice President, Student and Academic Services	W141	250
VP, Economic Development & Innovation Workforce Solutions	E183	745
VP, Finance and Administration	N108	214
Security Office	E134A	555

To speak with an instructor or a program director, please contact the appropriate Division office.

Formal Hearing Procedures

The following general rules govern a formal hearing:

1. A "Request for a Formal Hearing" Form shall be completed and delivered to the appropriate administrative officer. (Refer to the Resolution Process Chart, page 7.) Forms are available in Student and Academic Services, Human Resources, the Student Services Center, and all Division offices. (See sample, page 11-12.)
2. The appropriate administrative officer will review the completed Request for a Formal Hearing form along with any information relevant to the complaint, and explain the formal hearing process to the grievant.
3. The appropriate administrative officer will notify the appropriate parties that a grievance has been filed and a formal hearing is requested.
4. A hearing shall be held not less than three (3) nor more than thirty (30) school days after the filing of the statement of charges with the administrative officer. For good cause, the Judicial Board or Special Committee may grant a reasonable postponement.
5. The individual(s) involved will be notified in writing as to the location and time of the hearing.
6. The hearing shall be closed to the public.
7. Attendance at the hearing MAY include (1) the student involved in the charge, (2) members of the Judicial Board or Special Committee, (3) a recording secretary, (4) person(s) presenting the case for the College, (5) witnesses, (6) advisor or counsel for the student, and (7) security personnel when deemed appropriate.
8. A student may elect to have an attorney present at his or her own expense.
9. All information or evidence pertinent to the complaint must be submitted to the appropriate administrative officer at least 24 hours prior to the convening of the Judicial Board or Special Committee. All information and evidence offered or received at the investigation shall be fully disclosed to both the Judicial Board or Special Committee and the individual(s) charged.
10. The failure of a student or representative to appear shall not be taken as an admission of guilt. The Judicial Board or Special Committee may proceed in the absence of any party.
11. Decisions shall be made by a majority of the Judicial Board or Special Committee members present. In the case of a tie, the Chair would cast the deciding vote.
12. The decision of the Judicial Board or Special Committee shall be communicated in writing to the student and other appropriate individuals within seven (7) days following the hearing.
13. The decision of the Judicial Board or Special Committee shall be final and not appealable.

The disposition of the hearing shall be communicated to the President. Complaints against a Vice President, Chief of Staff, Executive Director of the Foundation, or Director of Human Resources shall be directed to the President of the College.

Composition of the Judicial Board

The Judicial Board voting members shall include the Student Trustee, one student appointed by the President of the Student Senate, two faculty members from different divisions, one counselor, one Dean appointed by the Vice President of Student and Academic Services, and one administrative staff member (professional/technical or classified) appointed by the President. When it becomes necessary to hear academic concerns, the Dean and the administrative staff member will be replaced by one student and two additional faculty members from different divisions, appointed by the Vice President of Student and Academic Services. The voting members should select a Chairperson. The Vice President of Student and Academic Services, the Vice President of Finance and Administration, the Vice President of Economic Development and Innovative Workforce Solutions, and the Director of Human Resources will serve in ex-officio capacities when a formal hearing pertains to their area of responsibility.

Terms of Office of the Judicial Board

Students shall serve one-year terms. Members shall serve one-, two-, or three-year terms as designated in the chart below. In the event a member cannot serve a full term, a replacement will be chosen through the same process that was used for the individual he or she replaces. Members must rotate off for a year after serving two terms.

TERMS OF OFFICE				
JUDICIAL BOARD COMPOSITION				
Judicial Board Membership (Non-Academic Concerns)	Member	Term	Judicial Board Membership (Academic Concerns)	Term
Student Trustee	X	1 year	X	1 year
Student	X	1 year	X	1 year
Faculty Member	X	2 years	X	2 years
Faculty Member	X	3 years	X	3 years
Counselor	X	3 years	X	3 years
Classified/ Professional Technical	X	1 year	No	
Dean	X	2 years	No	
Faculty Member	No		X	2 years
Faculty Member	No		X	3 years
Student	No		X	1 year

In the event that charges involve a member of the Judicial Board, an alternate will be appointed by the Vice President of Student and Academic Services to serve on the Board as his or her replacement.

Convening of the Judicial Board

When the Judicial Board needs to be convened for a hearing, the following will occur:

1. The Executive Administrative Assistant in the Student and Academic Services Office will notify the Chair of the Judicial Board. The Chair (through the Executive Administrative Assistant) will send out a notice to the members of the Judicial Board.
2. At the beginning of each semester, the Executive Administrative Assistant will make a conflict schedule to determine the time when all members of the Judicial Board are able to attend. Upon agreement of the members of the Judicial Board, the standard meeting time may be adjusted to accommodate a grievant or respondent. The Judicial Board should convene at least 30 minutes read the charges and review any related materials.
3. The Executive Administrative Assistant will send a written notice to the other parties involved in the complaint.

Implementation of Sanctions

Sanctions will be implemented by the appropriate administrator.



Request for Formal Hearing

Richland Community College

Date _____

Name _____ I.D. No. _____

Address _____ Soc. Sec. No. _____

City _____ Zip _____ Telephone _____/_____

Type of Grievance/Appeal (Check)

- Academic Dishonesty
- Grade Appeals
- Graduation Requirements
- Other Academic-Related Issue

- Academic Suspension
- Educational Guarantee
- Student Conduct (in class)

Return This Form To:

Vice President
of
Student and Academic
Services

- Americans with Disabilities Act
(Accommodations)
- Sexual Harassment
(by student, staff, faculty)

- Discrimination
(age, disability, gender, race)
- Student Employment

Director
of
Personnel

- Financial Aid Suspension
- Student Conduct
(out of class)

- Confidentiality of Records

Vice President
of
Student and Academic
Services

- Tuition Refunds

Vice President of
Finance and Administration

Action Requested:

Indicate what specific action you wish the College to take (your suggested solution):

Describe details of grievance/complaint on reverse side)

9.09

Describe in as much detail as possible the nature of the problem and what steps you have taken to this point to resolve the problem through the informal process (i.e., people with whom you have spoken, etc.) Attach any supporting information to document/verify your situation. Refer to the Student Rights & Responsibilities and Grievance & Disciplinary Proceedings Guide for detailed information about the formal resolution process.

Use additional sheets as necessary.

SAMPLE

Student Signature _____ Date _____

A sample of the front side of the Richland Community College Request for Formal Hearing form is shown above. Forms are available in Student and Academic Services, Human Resources, the Student Services Center, and all Division offices.

A sample of the back side of the Richland Community College Request for Formal Hearing form is shown above. Forms are available in Student and Academic Services, Human Resources, the Student Services Center, and all Division offices.