

Grievance Policy

Laurel strives to meet the needs of all our students and address any concerns brought to our attention. Concerns regarding a particular class or instructor should first be discussed privately with that instructor. If a satisfactory solution has not been reached, then the student should discuss the situation with the Department Director or Campus President/Director. If further action is required, the student should speak with their Campus President or Campus Director.

- McKenna Gower, LBI Campus Director
- Sherri Rimel, LCOT Campus President
- Cindy Carey, LIOT Campus Director
- Lauren Chaney, LTI Campus Director
- Jennifer Foxman, Director of eLearning

Grade Appeal Process

A student who has a complaint about an individual faculty member should discuss it directly with that faculty member and try to resolve it at that level. See the *Grievance Policy* for any questions regarding official complaint procedures.

A student who attempts to initiate the Grade Appeal process at a higher administrative level will be encouraged to address the issue with the faculty member first. The Program Director/Lead Instructor shall make a good-faith effort to have the student initially confer with the faculty member. If the issue is not resolved at the faculty member level, the student can appeal to the appropriate Program Director/Lead Instructor.

Under no circumstances should a student become the subject of retaliation at any level of the process when seeking resolution of a student-faculty dispute.

PROCEDURE

If a student refuses to confer with the faculty member, the student is to confer with the faculty member's Program Director/Lead Instructor. If such a meeting occurs, the Program Director/Lead Instructor will:

1. If possible, inform the faculty member of the student's request and issue, if known, prior to the meeting;
2. Not engage in a substantive discussion with the student (i.e., not inquire into the actual details or circumstances surrounding the complaint), but will listen to the student's concerns;
3. Inform the student that the concerns expressed will be communicated to the faculty member.
4. After the meeting, inform the faculty member of the concerns raised by the student.
5. If the faculty member agrees to do so, arrange a meeting with the faculty member and the student in an attempt to resolve the issue.

If an acceptable solution is not reached, the student must document their complaint in writing and submit it to the Campus President/Director

1. The Campus President/Director will make a judgment about the student complaint. If the Campus President/Director finds against the complaint, the student may appeal to LEVEL II.
2. If the Campus President/Director judges that the student's complaint could be valid, the faculty member will be asked to respond in writing to the complaint.
3. The Campus President/Director will consider the faculty member's written response and could dismiss the complaint, at which time the student could appeal to LEVEL II.
4. Alternatively, the Campus President/Director could conclude that there is a basis for the complaint and would then schedule a conference with the student and the faculty member in an effort to resolve the issue.

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LEVEL II

As needed, a Grade Appeals Committee shall be appointed to determine whether there is a substantive basis for appeal. The VP of Education will appoint committee members unaffiliated with the situation to render an objective judgment on the claims presented. A hearing will be scheduled between the student and school officials to present the facts and render a decision.

To initiate Level II of the appeal, the student must file an appeal form with the VP of Education. The *Grade Appeal* form must be filed with the Office of the Vice President of Education within fourteen (14) calendar days following the date on which the grade was received.

If a student believes that an improper grade has been assigned, an appeal may be filed on the following grounds:

CAPRICIOUS EVALUATION: Significant and unwarranted deviation from grading procedures and course outlines set at the beginning of the course (ordinarily in a written statement during the first week of the course) or grade assigned arbitrarily on the basis of a whim or impulse. The student may not claim capriciousness if they disagree with the instructor's subjective professional evaluation.

ERROR: Demonstrable, objective determination that a mathematical or clerical error resulted in the entry of an incorrect grade.

In addition to the form, the student must submit written documentation of the complaint, and the faculty member must submit the course grading procedure and any other pertinent information in writing. Appeals based on capriciousness will be reviewed in light of the faculty members' announced evaluation and grading system. The Grade Appeals Committee, appointed by the VP of Education and composed of impartial Laurel employees, will review appeals. A Hearing will be scheduled with the student and school officials. The committee will decide the outcome, and the decision will be documented and sent to the student via email, standard mail, and certified mail following the hearing.

General Complaints

For general academic or operational complaints, students can submit a report via the school's online complaint form at www.laurel.edu/academic-report-form. Issues related to administration, staff, student services, or facilities should be addressed with Dr. Douglas S. Decker, COO. The faculty or administration will strive to clarify or resolve any concerns. If still dissatisfied, students may contact the Pennsylvania State Board of Private Licensed Schools, Division of Law Enforcement Education and Trade Schools, Pennsylvania Department of Education, at 607 South Drive, Floor 3E, Harrisburg, PA 17120, or call 1-717-783-8228. South Carolina students can file a written complaint with the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education at: SC Commission on Higher Education, Academic Affairs, Attn: Student Complaint, 1122 Lady Street, Suite 300, Columbia, SC 29201, or email submitcomplaint@che.sc.gov. More details are available at [https://che.sc.gov/sites/che/files/Documents/Institutions and Educators/Complaint_Procedures_and_Form.pdf](https://che.sc.gov/sites/che/files/Documents/Institutions%20and%20Educators/Complaint_Procedures_and_Form.pdf).

The school has copies of the ACCSC Complaint Form, which can also be obtained by contacting Leslea L. Eckhardt, Director of Human Resources, or online at ACCSC Complaint Form. The Accrediting Commission of Career Schools & Colleges is located at 2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 302, Arlington, VA 22201. Contact them at (703) 247-4212 or via email at complaints@accsc.org.