

## **Uniform Student Grievance Policy**

- 1) The ombuds officers (i.e., first point of contacts) for students who wish to explore the possibility of filing a complaint or lodging a grievance at Mary Baldwin College are:
  - a) The assistant dean of the college (currently Dr. Edward Scott) for matters dealing with academic programs and coursework.
  - b) The associate vice president for student affairs (currently Ms. Diane Kent) for matters dealing with student life, residence life, extra-curricular programs, and other issues not involving academic programs and coursework.
  
- 2) For grievances involving academic programs, faculty, and coursework:
  - a) **GRADE APPEALS:** The assistant dean of the college will explain the college's grade appeal policy (published annually in the college catalog), guide the student in following the established procedure and, if the appeal is not resolved, refer the matter to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College.
  - b) **COMPLAINTS ABOUT FACULTY MEMBERS:** The assistant dean of the college will hear the student's concern and determine an appropriate course of action. In most cases, this course of action will consist of one or more of the following: mediation, counseling, referral to the dean, submission of a written statement to the dean, or resolution with no action.
  - c) **OTHER ACADEMIC COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES:** The assistant dean of the college will hear the student's concern and determine an appropriate course of action. In most cases, this course of action will consist of one or more of the following: mediation, counseling, referral to the dean, submission of a written statement to the dean, or resolution with no action.
  
- 3) For grievances involving admissions, student life, and extra-curricular programs:
  - a) **STUDENT SENATE:** Every student has the option of referring issues and concerns to the Student Senate through her Senator. She should consult her Hall President to determine if the issue or concern is appropriately referred to that body.
  - b) **COMPLAINTS ABOUT A STAFF MEMBER.** An Associate Vice President for Student Life will hear the student's concern and determine an appropriate course of action. In most cases, this course of action will consist of one or more of the following: mediation, counseling, referral to the dean of students, submission of a written statement to the dean, or resolution with no action.
  - c) **OTHER COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES:** An Associate Vice President for Student Life will hear the student's concern and determine an appropriate course of action. In most cases, this course of action will consist of one or more of the following: mediation, counseling, referral to the dean of students, submission of a written statement to the dean, or resolution with no action.
  
- 4) For grievances about aspects of College policy or procedure not falling into either of the above categories, the student complaint is forwarded from the staff recipient of the complaint to the Executive Staff member responsible for the area of concern. That person attempts to resolve the complaint to the student's satisfaction. For

example, a complaint about food that initially was submitted to the Food Service Director would go to the VP for Business and Finance. The responsible executive staff member will report steps taken to the complainant within 90 days of receiving the complaint.

- 5) If grievances cannot be resolved in the above manner:
  - a) The complainant may present a written appeal to the president of the institution. Such an appeal will not be received unless the complainant documents that he or she has gone through the steps, above.
  - b) If the president receives the appeal, she will, at her sole discretion, determine whether or not further intervention is necessary and take whatever steps she feels are appropriate. The president will report steps taken to the complainant within 90 days of receiving the complaint.
  - c) If the complainant has proceeded through all the steps leading through 4(b) above, he/she has exhausted all possibilities of internal intervention to resolve the issue.
  
- 6) If the complainant feels that his/her complaint involves a violation of accreditation standards:
  - a) The complainant may file a written complaint to the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. That complaint must follow the protocol established by the Commission on Colleges in its policy, "Complain Procedures for the Commission or its Accredited Institutions."
  - b) The protocol for filing complaints and the required forms may be obtained from the Commission's web site ([www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org)) or from the institution's accreditation liaison, currently Dr. Lewis Askegaard, Office of the Registrar.

Approved by Executive Staff, April, 2006