

POLICY NUMBER: III-X

POLICY TITLE: Chain of Command

LEGAL AUTHORITY: Miami Dade College Manual of Procedures Sections 1.05 and 1.11; Miami Dade College Student Handbook

DATE OF LAST REVIEW: 08/2025

Policy Statement:

Students in the Benjamín León School of Nursing at Miami Dade College have the right to grieve/appeal academic grading/course complaints/controversies and program progression/dismissal decisions. To ensure effective communication and resolution of course-related concerns or complaints, students must follow a structured chain of command. This policy promotes professionalism, accountability, and respect while ensuring fairness and consistency in addressing issues.

Purpose

This policy establishes a clear and structured procedure for students in the Benjamín León School of Nursing at Miami Dade College to address course-related issues and complaints. The goal is to promote professionalism, accountability, and respectful communication while ensuring fairness and effective resolution of concerns. See Manual of Procedure 8301, Student Appeal of Grades:

<https://www.mdc.edu/procedures/Chapter8/8301.pdf>

See Manual of Procedure 4032, Student Complaints:

<https://www.mdc.edu/procedures/Chapter4/4032.pdf>

Procedure Grade Appeals and Complaints

Students should follow this order when addressing academic concerns

- At the outset of the course, the faculty member has the responsibility to make clear to students the grading and evaluation process that will be employed; this process will be stated in writing in the course syllabus.
- It is the responsibility of the student to seek further clarification if unclear about any portion of the stated evaluation and grading process.
- Should any misunderstanding or disagreement arise regarding grades assigned in any portion of the work, a student should seek clarification with the instructor at once rather than waiting for the end of the term and the final grade.
- Communication should be professional and respectful, outlining specific concerns and desired outcomes
- Keep records of emails, feedback, and meeting notes regarding the issue.
- If escalating, provide evidence (e.g. syllabus, graded assignments, email correspondence).

Appeal Process Informal

Step 1: Initial Communication with Instructor

- Students must first address any course-related issue directly with the instructor involved directly via email or office hours. This provides an opportunity for clarification and resolution at the source.

Step 2: Escalation to the Department Chairperson

- If the issue remains unresolved after speaking with the instructor, the student must schedule an appointment with the appropriate Department Chairperson within the Benjamín León School of Nursing.
- The Chairperson will review the situation and work with the student to find an appropriate resolution.

Step 3: Final Appeal to the Dean of Nursing

- Should the matter still not be resolved, the student may escalate the concern to the Dean of Nursing by scheduling a meeting.
- The Dean will evaluate the issue and provide a final decision.
- If the faculty member still believes the grade should stand, then the student will be informed by the last administrator to whom the informal appeal has been made.

Appeal Process Formal

- Only after the informal appeal process has concluded, the student then has the option to file a formal grade appeal.
- A formal grade appeal must be filed by the end of the next major term following the assignment of the grade
- To formally appeal an assigned course grade, the student must: obtain a Grade Appeal Form from the Dean of Faculty's Office, complete it, attach relevant documentation, and return the Grade Appeal Form and attachments to the Dean of Faculty's Office. See Manual of Procedure 8301, Student Appeal of Grades:
<https://www.mdc.edu/procedures/Chapter8/8301.pdf>
- For situations with extenuating circumstances in which a student was unable to officially withdraw from a course by the appropriate deadline, Procedure 4018 Student Petitions Process, specifies how a student may submit a written petition to the campus Petitions Committee for a grade change to "W". In no instance is the Petitions Committee authorized to deal with grade changes that question the professional judgment of the faculty member of a student's performance in the course. See Manual of Procedure 4018 Student Petition Process: <https://www.mdc.edu/procedures/Chapter4/4018.pdf>

Student Complaints

- As a first step, students are encouraged to discuss their concerns directly with the individual involved.
- Students will work through the internal complaint and appeal processes at Miami Dade College and again use the Chain of Command. Manual of Procedure 4032, Student Complaints: <https://www.mdc.edu/procedures/Chapter4/4032.pdf>
- If a student believes that his/her complaint has not been addressed satisfactorily by the College and the student has fully exhausted the complaint or grievance procedures at the College, then they may complete the applicable state grievance procedures by contacting the Florida Department of Education Florida College System. For additional information, visit: Florida Department of Education: <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system/about-us/concerns-complaints.shtml>

Mandatory Compliance

Adherence to this chain of command is mandatory. Students who bypass or fail to follow the outlined steps will be redirected to the appropriate level until proper procedures are followed.

Consequences for Noncompliance

Consequences are outlined in three tiers, escalating based on the severity and frequency of noncompliance:

Tier 1: Initial Noncompliance

- The student will receive a written reminder of the chain of command and be redirected to the appropriate step.
- No further action is taken if the student complies.

Tier 2: Repeated Noncompliance

- The student will be required to attend a mandatory meeting with the Department Chairperson to review the chain of command policy, discuss the importance of professionalism, and outline expectations for future behavior. During this meeting, the student will also be required to submit a written acknowledgment of the policy, affirming their understanding and commitment to adhere to it moving forward.
- A formal warning will be documented in the student's academic record. Additionally, the student may be placed on administrative probation for a specified period, during which any further violations of the policy could result in more severe disciplinary actions.
- Failure to attend the mandatory meeting or submit the written acknowledgment within the specified timeframe may result in immediate escalation to Tier 3 consequences.

Tier 3: Persistent Noncompliance

- The student may face disciplinary action in accordance with Miami Dade College's institutional policies. This may include probation, suspension, or other corrective actions as outlined in the Miami Dade College Manual of Procedures and Student Handbook.

Examples of Allowable Penalties

- **Administrative Probation:**

The student may be placed on administrative probation for a defined period (e.g., one academic semester). During this time, the student must demonstrate compliance with all institutional policies. Any further violations may result in immediate escalation to more severe consequences, such as suspension.

- **Temporary Suspension:**

The student may be suspended from participating in course activities or accessing campus facilities for a specified duration, as determined by the severity of the noncompliance. This suspension reinforces the importance of adherence to institutional policies.

- **Mandatory Remediation or Workshops:**

The student may be required to attend a professionalism workshop or other educational session to address the behavior in question. This ensures the student understands the importance of following proper procedures and engaging in respectful communication.

- **Loss of Privileges:**

The student may lose certain privileges, such as participation in extracurricular activities, leadership roles, or eligibility for scholarships or program-specific recognitions, until they demonstrate adherence to institutional expectations.

- **Dismissal from the Program:**

For repeated or egregious noncompliance, the student may be dismissed from the Benjamín León School of Nursing. Dismissal would be enacted following a thorough review process.

These penalties are implemented in alignment with Miami Dade College's institutional policies to maintain professionalism, accountability, and respect in the educational environment.

Alignment with Institutional Policies

This policy aligns with the Miami Dade College Student Handbook and Manual of Procedures, including:

- **Miami Dade College Student Handbook:** "Students are expected to communicate concerns promptly and appropriately through the designated channels, as outlined by their respective program policies."
- **Miami Dade College Student Handbook:** "Students may be required to complete additional steps to demonstrate compliance with program policies and expectations."
- **Manual of Procedures Section 1.05:** "When addressing academic or non-academic issues, students must follow the established administrative process to ensure fairness and clarity for all parties involved."; "In cases of severe or repeated violations, students may face dismissal after due process is followed."; "Grievance resolution procedures include options for addressing academic or non-academic issues through administrative processes."
- **Manual of Procedures Section 1.11:** "Failure to adhere to institutional procedures may result in corrective actions in alignment with College standards."; "Corrective actions may include limitations on participation or other measures deemed necessary to maintain College standards."

By following this structured chain of command, students uphold the values of professionalism, respect, and accountability.

References

1. Miami Dade College Manual of Procedures, Section 1.05
2. Miami Dade College Manual of Procedures, Section 1.11
3. Miami Dade College Student Handbook:
4. Manual of Procedure 8301, Student Appeal of Grades:
<https://www.mdc.edu/procedures/Chapter8/8301.pdf>
5. Manual of Procedure 4018 Student Petition Process:
<https://www.mdc.edu/procedures/Chapter4/4018.pdf>
6. Manual of Procedure 4032, Student Complaints:
<https://www.mdc.edu/procedures/Chapter4/4032.pdf>