A. Purpose

To outline the appropriate steps to be taken for the resolution of academic complaints by students. Resolution of the complaint may occur at any step in the procedures.

B. Background

An academic complaint relates to academic experiences, other than final grades. Academic matters are generally left to the discretion of the faculty member. Instructors have the academic freedom to cover the material on the departmentally approved syllabus in a variety of ways. Some instructors may have primarily lecture formats while others may have class discussion/participation-driven formats. Some classes, by nature of the course, cover controversial topics. This does not mean the instructor personally espouses a particular point of view (lifestyle, religious affiliation, ethnic view, etc.).

C. Responsibility

1. It is the responsibility of every student to follow these guidelines to resolve problems.

2. It is the responsibility of each faculty member and administrator to fulfill his or her role in accordance with these procedures.

D. Procedures

1. Any complaints about academic experiences (other than final grades – see 4-18 Student Final Grade Appeal) may be addressed informally or formally. If possible, the student should talk directly to the instructor in a professional, courteous manner about the issue, and all parties should make a good-faith effort to resolve the issue. The simplest, quickest, and most satisfactory solution may be accomplished at this level.

2. If this approach does not work to the student’s satisfaction, the student may make a formal, written Academic Complaint using the form and procedure outlined in the Student Handbook.

3. Students must follow the defined process unless an urgent issue of health, safety, or welfare warrants immediate attention.
E. Disability Complaints/Grievance

Gaston College is committed to providing individuals with disabilities an equal access to a higher education. For information related to disabilities, including procedures for complaints or grievances, please refer to The Student Guide to Disability Policies & Procedures. This guide is available in the Office of Student Services and on the College web site.