

Need Help With Your Appeal or Complaint?

The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, ask to speak to a Ombudsperson, can assist you with the preparation of your appeal or complaint. We are located on the second floor of the Student Services Building Office 2.1100, on the Pecan Campus in McAllen. Our phone number is (956)872-2180. You can also e-mail us at our departmental e-mail address: crc@southtexascollege.edu.

Contact Us

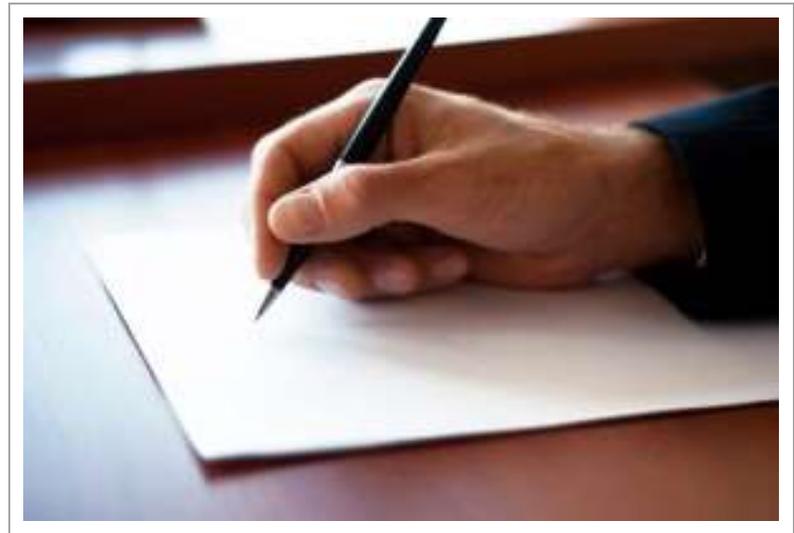
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Tips for Writing an Appeal or Complaint



SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE

Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities
Ombuds Services

PUTTING IT IN WRITING

If you are submitting an Enrollment and Registration Appeal, it must be presented in writing. If you have completed the first stage of the Complaint or Grade Appeal process you may be asked to submit something in writing. The following tips are intended to assist you in preparing your appeal or complaint.

STEP 1: DON'T KEEP THE READER IN THE DARK!

As you begin to get your thoughts together and put them in writing, your first objective is to let the reader know immediately why you are writing. You want to give the reader all of the details and avoid them having to guess or make assumptions. You may also want to sum up the situation in one or two sentences, for example:

ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION APPEAL:

- ✓ I am writing this appeal because I was _____.
- ✓ The reason I for my current situation is _____.
- ✓ I have attempted to resolve this matter with _____ and have been unable to come to an agreement.

GRADE APPEAL:

- ✓ I am contacting you because I feel that there has been an error in grading for my _____ course.
- ✓ I have tried to discuss this matter with my instructor directly and have been unable to come to an agreement.

COMPLAINT:

- ✓ I am contacting you because I feel that I have been mistreated by an individual from your staff.
- ✓ I have tried to discuss this matter with the person directly involved and have been unable to come to an agreement.

PROVIDE THE READER WITH YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION AND OTHER RELEVANT DATA. YOU MAY WANT TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- ✓ Name
- ✓ Address
- ✓ Student ID number (A00000000)
- ✓ Phone Number
- ✓ E-mail Address
- ✓ Course Number (if related to a course)
- ✓ Semester, Date and Time of Incident

STEP 2: JUST THE FACTS!

You should write in the shortest and most direct manner possible. The completed length should be kept to one or two pages typed and doubled spaced at the most. Detailed information, time lines or a sequence of events should be presented in bullet form; this will make the information easier to follow and understand. If you write a lengthy letter, there is a greater chance the reader may become distracted. With this in mind, you should include the following information:

- ✓ Provide facts that relate directly to the issue you are concerned about.
- ✓ Explain clearly and simply why you are writing.
- ✓ Keep in mind that you are attempting to persuade the reader or person you are talking to.
- ✓ You should avoid making demands.
- ✓ Remain truthful and as objective as possible.
- ✓ Avoid personal attacks; the focus should not be on the individual's ability, but on the reasons you have decided to file an appeal or complaint.
- ✓ Make sure your thoughts are well-organized. Prepare an outline before you write your appeal or complaint. This will also help to make sure you don't forget any important facts.
- ✓ Focus on the particular situation, bringing in others who are not directly involved will not be helpful and will only cause further confusion.

STEP 3: CLOSING

In closing, it is important for you to list possible resolutions to the situation. The individual(s) reading your appeal or complaint are not "mind readers" and will not know what you are asking unless you tell them clearly. If you give several options (at least two) it will help your appeal or complaint to be resolved more quickly and might even improve the chance that the decision will be in your favor.

Be sure that you remember to thank the reader for taking the time to consider your issue. Remembering to use **THANK YOU** and **PLEASE** is important as these words have the most power and influence in getting people to listen and to work with you.

Last, you may also want to include a date and time when you will be following up with the reader. You should also include the manner in which you can best be reached such as your phone number or e-mail address.