



## FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY POLICY

**Policy Number:** 1.010

**Policy Title:** Student Disputes Resolution

**Responsible Division/Office:** Office of the President

### A. POLICY STATEMENT

Florida Gulf Coast University (University) promotes the informal resolution of a student dispute directly between student and the University faculty or staff with whom the student has the dispute. Prior to filing for a formal review of the dispute under this policy, students must address the dispute directly with the relevant University faculty or staff. Although a student's use of the Office of the Ombuds is voluntary and shall not be a required step in this resolution process, the University strongly encourages the student to use the services of the Office of the Ombuds to facilitate discussion to identify best options to resolve the student dispute. If informal resolution methods do not succeed, the student may then consider the use of the formal procedures described in this policy.

### B. REASON FOR POLICY

This policy provides direction to a student how he or she may seek the review of a decision related to access to courses and credit granted toward a degree or certain other decisions which affect a student's participation in University activities.

### C. DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. *Day*: Calendar day, unless expressly stated otherwise. University holidays (i.e., days when the University is closed) are excluded from the computation of time. If the deadline ends on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, the deadline is extended to the following day the University is open for business.
2. *Office*: Office of the Ombuds.
3. *Ombuds*: The University official designated to be the student Ombudsman for purposes of this policy.
4. *Student*: A person enrolled in a course of study at the University.
5. *Student Dispute*: A University decision related to a Student's access to courses and credit granted toward a degree or other certain decisions which affect a student's participation in University activities, for which a Student requests a review.

### D. PROCEDURES

1. Informal Resolution

The Office encourages the Student to work directly with the University faculty or staff with whom the student has the Student Dispute to resolve the issues contained in the Student Dispute. To that end, the Office will provide support to the parties and shall not advocate for any individual. The Office shall advocate for fair and equitably administered processes and shall facilitate discussion to identify best options to resolve problems. The Office shall provide services such as: (1) providing information regarding personnel and/or processes appropriate to the unit(s) under which the issue(s) fall; (2) meeting separately with each party or both parties to help clarify the issues; and (3) acting as a facilitator for discussions between the Student and the respondent. A Student should work with the Office prior to requesting that a formal resolution review the Student Dispute.

## 2. Referral for Formal Resolution

- a) If informal resolution efforts do not succeed, the Ombuds will refer the student to the appropriate Vice President or designee, or President's Direct Report for resolution of the Student Dispute. The Ombuds may forward any fact-finding results and any supporting documentation to the appropriate Vice President or designee, or President's Direct Report. The Ombuds and the Vice President or designee, or President's Direct Report may discuss the dispute. The Vice President or designee, or President's Direct Report will communicate directly with the Student prior to providing the Student with a written decision. The Student may, with or without a request, provide the Vice President or designee, or President's Direct Report with any documents or materials that support the Student's position in the dispute.
  - b) The Vice President or designee, or President's Direct Report will provide a written decision to the Student within fifteen (15) Days of receipt of the Ombuds' referral. Any action necessary to implement the decision of the Vice President or designee, or President's Direct Report will be taken by the appropriate University official as directed by that Vice President or designee, or President's Direct Report. The decision of the Vice President or designee, or President's Direct Report is the final University decision. The written decision of the Vice President or designee, or President's Direct Report, along with a record of action taken, will be provided to the Student and the Office.
3. The Ombuds is the custodian of records associated with the resolution, including the written decision of the Vice President or designee, or President's Direct Report, of the Student Dispute.

*Related Information*

*Sections 1002.21(5) and 1006.51, Florida Statutes*

*Board of Governors Regulation 1.001 and 6.011*

*Regulation FGCU-PR4.004 Student Disputes Resolution*

*History of Policy*

*New: 05/19/09; Amended 9/27/16*



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**Effective Date:** 9/27/2016

**APPROVED**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'W. G. Bradshaw'.

Wilson G. Bradshaw, President

09/27/2016