

# Augusta University

## Policy Library

### Student Concerns and Complaints

**Policy Manager: Dean of Students**

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Students at Augusta University (AU) have the right to express their opinions and/or complain, whether verbally or in writing, regarding any area of academic or student life without fear of coercion, harassment, intimidation, or reprisal from University employees. Students also should expect a timely response to any written complaint submitted. Defamatory or baseless charges may cause a student to be found responsible for violations of University academic and/or non-academic conduct policies through the applicable academic and/or nonacademic processes.

Student concerns should be resolved at the lowest possible University unit in the administrative structure that has the authority to act. When University policy outlines a specific complaint or grievance procedure to be applied, an aggrieved student must use that procedure as outlined to resolve a concern or complaint. Because no single process can serve the wide range of all possible complaints, the general complaint procedure, as outlined within this policy, should be followed when there is not a formal process established to resolve the concern or complaint.

#### **AFFECTED STAKEHOLDERS**

*Indicate all entities and persons within the Enterprise that are affected by this policy:*

- Alumni     Faculty     Graduate Students     Health Professional Students  
 Staff     Undergraduate Students     Vendors/Contractors     Visitors  
 Other:

#### **PROCESS & PROCEDURES**

##### **General Complaint Procedures for Students**

Students should try to resolve concerns at the lowest possible University unit and then move to the next level as outlined below. If the student does not know the most appropriate place to submit a complaint or begin the process, he/she may submit the complaint to the Office of the Dean of Students at [go.augusta.edu/student-complaints](http://go.augusta.edu/student-complaints). The Dean of Students or his/her designee will work with the student to determine the most appropriate University unit to address the issue and assist the student with understanding the appropriate process for resolution.

Students may use the following procedures to formally question the application of any University regulation, rule, policy, requirement, or procedure, not otherwise covered by a more specific policy or procedure. If a student is having difficulty receiving a response at any level outlined below or does not know who the next person in the administrative structure is, the student may contact the Office of the Dean of Students for assistance.

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**Office of Legal Affairs Use Only**

**Executive Sponsor: VP for Enrollment and Student Affairs**

**Next Review: 3/2025**

Step One:

The student should meet in person, via telephone, video conference, or by email with the appropriate University representative / decision-maker to discuss the complaint and attempt to arrive at a solution. This meeting should occur no later than 25 business days after the action that resulted in the complaint.

Step Two:

If the student's complaint is not resolved at Step One, that student should, within 10 business days of the Step One meeting, submit the written complaint to the next level in the University's administrative structure: department chair, director, or his/her designee within the administrative unit where the complaint originated. The name and title of the person to whom the request for resolution at the next level should be addressed can be obtained from the employee in Step One.

The complaint should be signed and dated by the student. An email will suffice for a time and date stamp, and the student's name should be at the bottom of the email as a signature.

A reasonable effort should be made by the administrator at Step Two to resolve the student's issue. The effort may require arranging a meeting by phone or in person to better understand the issue and ultimately render a decision. A response to the student with a decision, or a request for a meeting to better understand the issue, should be made within ten (10) business days of receipt of the complaint. The Step Two administrator should inform the student and all parties involved of the decision in writing.

Step Three:

If the student's complaint is not resolved to the student's satisfaction in Step Two, he/she may continue to the next highest level in the administrative structure of the University—unless the highest level of appeal has been reached--using a similar process as outlined in steps one and two.

**REFERENCES & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Online Student Complaints: [https://co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_54mm0hoBmmaN3zm&Q\\_JFE=0](https://co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_54mm0hoBmmaN3zm&Q_JFE=0)  
VPSA website  
Augusta University Student Manual  
Individual College Handbooks

**RELATED POLICIES**

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**APPROVED BY:**

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Augusta University  
Date: 3/10/2022

President, Augusta University

Date: 3/11/2022