

Attachment 9.2.8



The Chicago School Grievance Policy

Policy/Procedure Excerpt From:

The Chicago School 2023-2024 Academic Catalog and Student Handbook with Summer Addendum: Student Rights and Responsibilities, pgs. 71 - 77

The Chicago School is committed to mutual respect and the effective resolution of student complaints through an efficient and fair procedure. The school seeks to maintain an environment that encourages all community members to work together to address complaints using informal resolution. When informal resolution is not possible, the school is committed to a fair and reasonable resolution of issues through the formal complaint procedure articulated in this policy.

A student who believes they have been subject to unlawful discrimination or harassment based on protected category should direct their concern to the appropriate school official as articulated in the Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment, and Title IX Policy.

What is a Complaint?

A complaint is an allegation of unfair treatment made by a current student (hereafter Reporting Party) in which they experience adverse effects caused by decisions, actions, or inactions that were made by employees or agents of the school (hereafter Responding Party). The Reporting Party must be the alleged victim of unfair treatment. A complaint may not be filed by one party on behalf of another party.

Issues Eligible for Review: Issues eligible for review include the implementation of policies and procedures, and issues concerning transcripts, financial aid, classroom issues, course scheduling, personal hardship matters, student accounts, military benefits matters, access accommodation-related matters, and advising.

Issues Ineligible for Review: Issues ineligible for review include the substance of any duly adopted policy or procedure, the substance that forms the basis for student performance evaluation, academic performance, grade appeals, transfer credits, course content, decisions regarding a student's academic status (including SAP), content or quality of services that do not arise from a specific act or incident and/or where a student cannot show disadvantage or unfair treatment; comments about the general content or provision of a course or program, and general allegations of misconduct or inappropriate behavior by students.

Time Limits

A formal complaint must be received by the College Dean no later than 45 business days after the Reporting Party first became aware of the facts which gave rise to the complaint. The complaint must be submitted via the online Student Complaint Intake Form. The time limit may be extended by the College Dean if the Reporting Party requests an extension within the 45 business day period for good cause shown, e.g., an active effort at informal resolution.

Informal Complaint Resolution

Prior to invoking the formal complaint resolution procedure, the Reporting Party is strongly encouraged to make active efforts to resolve matters through professional and direct communication with the Responding Party. These efforts should take place as soon as the Reporting Party becomes aware of the act or condition that is the basis of the complaint. If unsure of how to proceed, the Reporting Party may enlist the assistance of another member of the school community, e.g., Faculty Advisor, Academic Department Lead, to help identify a proper course of action or to mediate problems, if necessary. The Reporting Party has the right to end the informal complaint resolution process at any time.

Formal Complaint Resolution

The student complaint procedure is an institutional process not a judicial one, so the presence of legal counsel, whether in person or virtual, is prohibited for any party to the complaint. This policy cannot be substituted for other appeal processes.

Filing a Formal Complaint

The submission of the Student Complaint Intake Form and supporting documentation is used to invoke a review of a formal complaint. The complaint filing must include a completed intake form and:

- Be in writing;
- State how the decision or action is unfair and harmful to the Reporting Party and list the school policies or state or federal laws that have been violated, if known;
- Name the Responding Party;
- State how the Responding Party is responsible for the action or decision; and
- State the requested remedy.

The formal complaint procedure is managed by the Reporting Party's College Dean. If the Reporting Party has good cause to believe that the College Dean is unable to be impartial, they may request that the Dean for Student Success reassign the complaint to another College Dean.

The College Deans responsible for complaints as of the date of publication of this Academic Catalog and Student Handbook are:

- College of Graduate and Professional Studies: Dr. Alisha DeWalt, adewalt@thechicagoschool.edu, 312-488-6012

- College of Professional Psychology: Dr. Lance Garrison, lgarrison@thechicagoschool.edu, 469-941-8360
- College of Undergraduate Studies: Dr. Jonathan Dodrill, jdodrill@thechicagoschool.edu, 312-467-2540
- Nursing and Healthcare Administration: Dr. Tonya Sawyer-McGee, tmcgee@thechicagoschool.edu, 469-941-8331

Current College Dean information can be found online. Should an attorney file a complaint with the school on behalf of a Reporting Party, it will be referred to Legal Affairs.

Processing a Formal Complaint

The College Dean must initiate the formal complaint resolution procedure within 10 business days of receipt of the formal complaint.

The College Dean will determine whether the complaint may be reviewed in accordance with the criteria articulated in this policy. If the matter is deemed not eligible for review, it will be dismissed, and a letter will be submitted to the Reporting Party stating the same. If the matter is deemed reviewable, the College Dean will appoint an ad hoc committee that will review the complaint.

Selecting the Ad Hoc Committee

The ad hoc committee is comprised of two faculty members and one student. The College Dean will designate one of the faculty members to serve as ad hoc committee chairperson. At any time during the formal complaint review, the College Dean and ad hoc committee may make further attempts to resolve the complaint informally.

If the Reporting Party has good cause to believe that a member of the ad hoc committee is unable to be impartial, they may request that the College Dean disqualify that member. Such a disqualification shall be granted only upon the demonstration of a conflict of interest. The decision to alter or preserve the composition of the ad hoc committee rests solely with the College Dean, and the College Dean's decision is final.

Ad Hoc Committee Procedures

All proceedings of the ad hoc committee are confidential. The ad hoc committee chairperson must meet with Dean for Student Success to receive an overview of the procedure and obtain forms prior to the opening of the review.

1. Within five business days of being appointed, the ad hoc committee chairperson will write a letter to the Reporting Party and the Responding Party to communicate the opening of the review and distribute the complaint documents.
 - a. The Responding Party has five business days to return a written response to the chairperson. The Responding Party must include any exhibits they wish to introduce as evidence, including the names of witnesses. The chairperson may extend the deadline for submitting a response upon a showing of good cause.

2. Upon receipt of the Responding Party's response, the chairperson will distribute all complaint documents to the Reporting Party, Responding Party, and committee members.
3. The complaint will be heard at a live/synchronous hearing that will include the Reporting Party, Responding Party, and any witnesses. During the live/synchronous hearing, each party will be permitted to hear the other party and any witnesses present information and will be permitted an opportunity to respond.
 - a. The Reporting Party may include one Chicago School faculty or staff member as a support person during the live hearing.
 - b. The hearing may be conducted using online meeting technology. All participants must appear on webcam for the duration of the hearing.

Ad Hoc Committee Deliberation and Decision

The ad hoc committee will be the final judge of what testimony or data is relevant. The committee will deliberate to evaluate the merits of the complaint and make findings of fact. Deliberations will be restricted to members of the ad hoc committee.

The committee's decision will be based solely on material presented in the review including written materials provided prior to the hearing and information presented during the hearing. A majority vote of the ad hoc committee will be required to make an affirmative decision on the complaint. The chairperson will have the right to vote.

Upon reaching a decision, the ad hoc committee will communicate its findings in writing to the Reporting Party, Responding Party, College Dean, and the appropriate institutional representative(s) who shall implement any actions recommended by the ad hoc committee within 30 business days after the close of the committee proceedings, if applicable.

Appeal Procedures

Reporting Party

The Reporting Party may appeal the committee's decision to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA). The appeal must:

- be in writing
- state the grounds for appeal including a list of alleged error(s) in the decision or decision-making process
- state the requested remedy
- include a copy of the decision being appealed
- be dated and signed.

An appeal received more than 10 business days after the ad hoc committee's decision was rendered will not be considered. The VPAA will notify the Responding Party of the appeal within two business days of its receipt.

The VPAA will communicate their decision on the appeal in writing within 10 business days of its receipt. The written decision will include the reason(s) for the decision, and it shall direct a remedy for the Reporting Party, if applicable. The decision on the appeal is final.

Neither the decision on the appeal nor the original committee decision can be appealed further.

Responding Party

The Responding Party may appeal the committee's decision to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA). If the Responding Party is a direct report of the VPAA, the appeal will be directed to the Director of Human Resources.

The appeal must:

- be in writing
- state the grounds for appeal including a list of alleged error(s) in the decision or decision-making process
- state the requested remedy
- include a copy of the decision being appealed
- be dated and signed.

An appeal received more than 10 business days after the ad hoc committee's decision was rendered will not be considered. The VPAA or Director will notify the Reporting Party of the appeal within two business days of its receipt.

The VPAA or Director will communicate their decision on the appeal in writing within 10 business days of its receipt. The written decision will include the reason(s) for the decision, and it shall direct a remedy for the Responding Party, if applicable. The decision on the appeal is final.

Neither the decision on the appeal nor the original committee decision can be appealed further.

Recordkeeping

The ad hoc committee chairperson will compile the official complaint record that will include a copy of all correspondence with all parties, all materials submitted to the committee, a summary of the committee's decision, and anything else considered by the committee in reaching its decision. All case files will be held in Maxient and the Responding Party's personnel file. The report will be retained for 10 calendar years following the year in which the complaint was resolved.

A member of the Student Support Counseling team tracks formal complaints and reports activity to the College Dean on a quarterly basis.

Complaints to External Agencies

A student is expected to follow the school's internal procedures before making a report to an external agency. A student who exhausts all internal complaint procedures and who is dissatisfied with the results may wish to raise the issue with the relevant state agency under which the institution operates.

State*	Agency Name & Contact Information
Alabama	Alabama Commission on Higher Education http://ache.edu/ACHE_Reports/Forms/SARA/StudentComp.pdf
Alaska	Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education https://acpe.alaska.gov/ConsumerProtection .
Arkansas	Arkansas Institutional Certification Advisory Committee, icac@adhe.edu https://www.adhe.edu/institutions/academic-affairs/institutional-certification-advisory-committee/
California	Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE) in the Department of Consumer Affairs https://www.bppe.ca.gov/forms_pubs/complaint.pdf
Connecticut	Connecticut Office of Higher Education Emily Bjornberg Senior Consultant Academic Affairs Connecticut Office of Higher Education 450 Columbus Blvd, Suite 707 Hartford, CT 06103 Emily.Bjornberg@ct.gov www.ohe.ct.gov https://veoci.com/v/p/181953/workflow/gjrt4qhrrvkv
Georgia	Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission 2082 E. Exchange Pl. #220, Tucker, GA 30084-5334 https://gnpec.georgia.gov/student-complaints
Illinois	Illinois Board of Higher Education

	https://complaints.ibhe.org/
Indiana	Indiana Board for Proprietary Education https://www.in.gov/che/2744.htm
Iowa	Iowa College Student Aid Commission The Commission accepts questions, concerns, and complaints from Iowa residents attending any postsecondary school in the United States. https://www.iowacollegeaid.gov/StudentComplaintForm (877) 272-4456
Kansas	Kansas Board of Regents 1000 SW Jackson, Suite 520 Topeka, KS 66612-1368 (785)-430-4240 http://www.kansasregents.org/academic_affairs/private_out_of_state/complaint_process
Louisiana	Louisiana Board of Regents https://regents.la.gov/about/proprietary-schools/ https://www.regents.la.gov/assets/docs/2014/07/StudentComplaintProcedure.pdf
Maryland	Maryland Higher Education Commission http://mhec.maryland.gov/institutions_training/Pages/career/pcs/complaint.aspx
Minnesota	Minnesota Office of Higher Education http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=1078
Montana	Montana Department of Justice, Office of Consumer Protection https://www.mus.edu/MUS-statement-of-complaint-process.asp
New Mexico	New Mexico Higher Education Department http://www.hed.state.nm.us/students/hed-student-complaint-form.aspx
North Carolina	North Carolina Post-Secondary Education Complaints The University of North Carolina System Offices

	<p>Student Complaints</p> <p>910 Raleigh Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-2688</p> <p>(919) 962-4558</p> <p>studentcomplaints@northcarolina.edu; http://www.northcarolina.edu/complaints</p>
Ohio	<p>Ohio Department of Higher Education</p> <p>https://www.ohiohighered.org/students/complaints</p>
Oregon	<p>Students should attempt to resolve any grievances they may have with their school first. Should attempts to resolve these problems with appropriate school officials fail, or should the student be dissatisfied with the final outcome of the college complaint process, then the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), can respond to a formal complaint. Students may contact the HECC, 3225 25th St. SE, Salem, OR 97302 or by sending an email to complaints@hecc.oregon.gov. Students may also access our complaints web page:</p> <p>https://www.oregon.gov/highered/institutions-programs/private/pages/private-postsecondary-complaints.aspx</p>
Pennsylvania	<p>Pennsylvania Department of Education - Postsecondary and Adult Education</p> <p>https://www.education.pa.gov/Postsecondary-Adult/Pages/default.aspx</p>
Texas	<p>Texas Workforce Commission</p> <p>https://twc.texas.gov/jobseekers/career-schools-colleges-students#howToSubmitAComplaintAgainstASchool</p> <p>Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board</p> <p>For a description of the procedure for filing a complaint and required forms visit http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/studentcomplaints.</p> <p>Student complaints are governed by Title 19 of the Texas Administrative Code, Rules 1.110-1.120 accessible at http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=19&pt=1&ch=1&sch=E&rl=Y.</p>
Utah	<p>Utah Department of Commerce, Division of Consumer Protection</p> <p>https://consumerprotection.utah.gov/</p>
Washington, D.C.	<p>District of Columbia Higher Education Licensure Commission</p> <p>http://osse.dc.gov/service/education-licensure-commission-elc-public-complaints</p>

Washington (state)	The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) has authority to investigate student complaints against specific schools. WSAC may not be able to investigate every student complaint. Visit https://wsac.wa.gov/student-complaints for information regarding the WSAC complaint process.
West Virginia	West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission http://www.wvhepc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Student-Complaint-Process-revised.pdf
Wisconsin	Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services, Educational Approval Program https://dsps.wi.gov/pages/programs/educationalapproval/default.aspx
Wyoming	Wyoming Department of Education https://edu.wyoming.gov/beyond-the-classroom/school-programs/private-school-licensing/

*The Reporting Party is advised to find the state of residence. If the state of residence is not listed, the state in which the home campus is located should be selected.

An external complaint may be directed to the Western Association of Colleges and Schools, Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). WSCUC requires that a Reporting Party attempt to resolve an issue with the institution prior to filing a complaint. The Commission's complaint procedures are for the purpose of addressing significant non-compliance with the Standards of Accreditation and Commission policies. Thus, WSCUC will not interpose itself as an adjudicatory or complaint-resolving body in individual matters including admission, granting or transfer of academic credit, grades, fees, student financial aid, student discipline, or collective bargaining, faculty or staff appointments, promotion, tenure, contractual rights and obligations, and dismissals or similar matters.

The Commission's staff will investigate a complaint in order to determine whether it appears that a standard or policy was violated and, if such is the case, it will take appropriate action within the range of options that are available to it under Commission Standards and Policies. The WSCUC complaint form and process can be found under "Resources" at www.wascsenior.org. Inquiries may be directed to: Western Association of Colleges and Schools, Senior College and University Commission, 985 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 100, Alameda, CA 94501, Phone: (510) 748-9001.