

3.13.3

Policy Compliance: Complaint Procedures Against the Commission or Its Accredited Institutions

Applicable Policy Statement: Each institution is required to have in place student grievance and public complaint policies and procedures that are reasonable, fairly administered, and well-publicized. (See FR 4.5). The Commission also requires, in accord with federal regulations, that each institution maintains a record of complaints received by the institution. This record is made available to the Commission upon request. This record will be reviewed and evaluated by the Commission as part of the institution's decennial evaluation.

Judgment

Compliant Non-Compliant Not Applicable

Narrative

Note: Text for all linked documents below can be increased/decreased for ease of reading by pressing your keyboard's Ctrl key while rotating the mouse wheel.

Angelo State University complies with the Commission's policy on Complaint Procedures Against the Commission or Its Accredited Institutions.

As summarized in Federal Requirement 4.5, Student complaints, ASU maintains a reasonable and well-publicized set of policies and procedures for addressing complaints and appeals submitted by students. Policies governing various types of student grievances are published in the Student Handbook 2011–2012, which is available through the institutional website on the Student Life page, and include the following:

- General student grievance and appeal procedures (Student Handbook 2011–2012, pp. 44–47). Procedures regarding sexual or racial harassment (Student Handbook 2011–2012, p. 43). NOTE: Policies regarding Title IX requirements concerning the handling of sexual harassment and sexual assault complaints are currently being reviewed by the Texas Tech University System (TTU System). This review process, to be completed by late summer 2012, will result in a uniform set of policies across the TTU System. Revisions will be incorporated into the ASU Student Handbook for the fall 2012 semester.
- Grade grievance procedures (Student Handbook 2011–2012, pp. 8-9). Grade grievance procedures are also published in the ASU operating policies and procedures (ASU OP 10.03, Grade Grievance) and in the institutional catalogs (ASU Undergraduate Catalog 2011–2012, p. 323; ASU Graduate Catalog 2011–2012, p. 34).
- The Academic Honor Code includes definitions related to academic integrity and outlines disciplinary procedures for academic dishonesty (Student Handbook 2011–2012, pp. 23–28).
- The ASU Code of Student Conduct describes specific examples of misconduct or attempted misconduct for which students may be subject to disciplinary action (Student Handbook 2011–2012, pp. 29–32), and ASU has established campus disciplinary procedures, including disciplinary

appeals procedures (Student Handbook 2011–2012, pp. 32–37), which are followed in cases of student misconduct.

- The office of Residential Programs has defined expectations for student conduct in the residence halls and outlined disciplinary procedures for incidents of student misconduct (Residence Hall Handbook, pp. 14–17, available on the Residential Programs page of the institutional website).

The relevant complaint policies and procedures are consistently followed and fairly administered when resolving student complaints, and ASU maintains a record of complaints received. Records concerning written student complaints and the outcomes of any appeals are generally maintained by the office responsible for resolving the complaint, as defined in the policies identified above. Complaint records are therefore decentralized. For example, complaint records are maintained by the Office of Student Life, the various academic departments, the five colleges, and in the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. When complaints cannot be resolved by a particular office, they are forwarded through the appropriate chain of command until resolved, as outlined in the relevant policies and procedures. For example, if a grade grievance cannot be resolved at the department level, the grievance is forwarded to the appropriate dean's office.

The Student Life Office provides advice regarding the fair administration of university grievance procedures, and the Executive Director of Student Life has primary authority and responsibility for implementing student disciplinary procedures. The office handles a variety of student complaints and inquiries and is often a first point of contact for students who are upset about a university policy or about the behavior of a faculty or staff member. The basic elements of a student complaint record in the Office of Student Life include the name of the student, campus ID number, and a written summary of the complaint. The Student Life Office also maintains records of disciplinary proceedings and appeals, including those related to violations of academic integrity.

Students enrolled via distance education have the same rights and responsibilities regarding complaints as students attending face-to-face classes at ASU, and the same policies and procedures apply.