

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 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.

Documentation: When addressing Federal Requirement 4.5, the institution should provide a copy of its student complaint policy or policies and, for each policy, an example of how the institution follows it through resolution of the complaint. (An institution may have several policies adapted to student services, academics, etc.)

When addressing this policy statement, the institution should provide information to the Commission describing how the institution maintains its record and also include the following: (1) individuals/offices responsible for the maintenance of the record(s), (2) elements of a complaint review that are included in the record, and (3) where the record(s) is located (centralized or decentralized). The record itself will be reviewed during the on-site evaluation of the institution.

Judgment

Compliance Partial Compliance Non-Compliance Not Applicable

Narrative

Tennessee Technological University (TTU) has established student complaint policies and procedures that cover a wide range of academic and institutional matters, as described and documented in the report for FR 4.5. These procedures provide reasonable time frames for lodging concerns and generally involve multiple levels of review to ensure that the processes are fairly administered. In addition, these policies and procedures are made available to students in multiple ways, including the Undergraduate and Graduate catalogs, the Student Handbook, online at TTU Policy Central, and the websites of relevant campus offices, such as Student Affairs, Athletics, Financial Aid, Bursar, Title IX Coordinator, Disability Services, Internal Audit, and Residential Life.

Complaint and Discipline Procedures

Students may file a complaint on any subject online via the student complaint form [1], as described in the TTU Student Complaint Policy [2]. Students who have concerns related to course grades may lodge a grade appeal following the process described in the Student Handbook and in Policy Central [3]. Similarly, complaints related to discrimination or harassment [4a][4b] or sexual misconduct [5] may be addressed by following the policies related to the same.

Also, as a public institution, TTU has a detailed process for student discipline. This process allows students to lodge complaints but maintains fairness by relying on pre-charge investigations, impartial hearings, and extensive due process safeguards [6]. In addition, TTU provides a process for students or prospective students to file complaints related to violations of state law, including fraud, waste or abuse [7], or the conduct of University Police employees [8]. Students may file complaints regarding

the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with the Office of Human Resources [9a][9b]. Finally, TTU also provides several outlets for appealing financial decisions, such as financial aid determinations [10], housing agreements [11], tuition and fees [12], and traffic or parking tickets [13]. At the state level, the Tennessee Board of Regents provides a complaint procedure for TTU students regarding institutional accreditation or violations of state laws [14].

Complaint/Appeal Records

Records related to complaints or appeals are maintained in the office that is in charge of the procedure related to their resolution. Complaints may be reported initially to one office (e.g., Residential Life or University Police) but referred to the appropriate office (e.g., Dean of Students) for resolution. The following table lists the offices that are responsible for addressing particular types of complaints and maintaining the record of those complaints and their resolution:

















Table 1. Offices Responsible for Addressing and Maintaining Student Complaints.

TTU Office	Complaints/Appeals Type(s)	Officer	Location/Telephone
Dean of Students	Student misconduct, harassment	Dean of Students	RUC 122 / 372-3123
Student Affairs	General student complaints, problem resolution	VP Student Affairs	RUC 221 / 372-3411
University Police	Crime, misconduct	Chief of Police	FNDH-100 / 372-3234
Internal Audit	Accounts; operations; fraud, waste, abuse	Director, Internal Audit	FNDH 315 / 372-3045
Office of the President	General complaints from students and the public	President	DBRY 206 / 372-3241
Office of the Provost	General academic issues	Provost	DBRY 204 / 372-3224
Academic Departments	Grade appeals, faculty issues, misc. dept. matters	Chair/School Director	Various
Admissions	Admission appeals, requests for exceptions; Fresh Start	AVP Enrollment Mgmt	DBRY 209 / 372-3888
Athletics	Student-athlete grievances	Director	HOOP 300 / 372-3961
Financial Aid	Financial aid appeals	Director	RUC 208 / 372-3073
Residential Life	Housing appeals, misconduct	Director	MSCP 210 / 372-3415
Disability Services	ADA complaints	Director	RUC 112 / 372-6119
Human Resources	Employment, workplace issues, Title IX	AVP/Director	DBRY 146 / 372-3034
Registrar	Tuition/fee refunds, grades, withdrawals, transcripts, etc.	Registrar	DBRY 128 / 372-3317
Academic Services (Graduation)	Requests for exceptions, substitutions, etc.	Lead Admin Assoc	DBRY 122 / 372-3543

Conclusion

TTU administers and widely publicizes procedures for student complaints, specific and general, as well as maintaining records of student complaints and complaints received by the institution. Therefore, TTU is in compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.13.3.

Sources

-  [01] TTU Student Complaint Form
-  [02] 301_TTU Student Complaint Policy
-  [03] Grade Appeals Policy_No__218_4_20_2015
-  [04a] TTU Policy 141 Discrimination and Harrassment_Compliant and Investigation Procedures
-  [04b] Process for Filing Title VI Compliant
-  [05] TTU Policy 143 Sexual Misconduct
-  [06] Student Disciplinary Policies
-  [07] TTU Policy 131 Preventing and Reporting Fraud_Waste_or_Abuse
-  [08] University Police Complaint
-  [09a] TTU Policy 340 Services for Students with Disabilities
-  [09b] TTU Policy 605 Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance
-  [10] Scholarship_Recipient
-  [11] Student Housing and Agreement Rules
-  [12] TTU Policy 511.1_Student Fee Adjustments_Refunds_and_Appeals
-  [13] Parking and Traffic
-  [14] Program Integrity Student Compliant Form