

STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCESS

STUDENT PROCEDURES FOR FILING A COMPLAINT

The policies and procedures for filing student complaints is established to provide an appropriate framework and method to resolve student complaints. This policy is specifically designed to maintain the integrity of the academic environment and program to ensure that the rights of students in such matters are clearly ensured and protected. At Southern University and A & M College, students have certain rights and responsibilities as stated in the University policies and procedures and in the Student Code of Conduct. Pursuant to these rights and responsibilities, the following policy sets forth procedures for students in the Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology to follow in order to receive a fair hearing and equity in the resolution of complaints related to their affiliation with the department. To expedite a resolution, the procedure is designed to be initiated at the level closest to the issue. For example, instructor level (academic or clinic). In many instances, the student will achieve this resolution through communication with a faculty member or an advisor. There may be other that might be levels may be incrementally involved to assist the student. To assure that a problem is fully explored, complaints that reach the Department Chair level are entered into a log and tracked through final disposition. Students must complete the **Student Complaint Form** at the level of occurrence to begin the process.

Level I: Faculty Member/Instructor/Advisor

The appeal must be made in writing.

Seek resolution of a concern or complaint at the level of occurrence. (Example: A course-related complaint [e.g., assignment, activity, attendance, or grade] must be discussed with the instructor prior to requesting intervention by the Department Chair.)

Level II: Department Chair

The appeal must be made in writing using the **Student Complaint Form**. Consider an initial resolution of a complaint at a level above the level of occurrence when there is concern with the potential for reprisal if resolution is attempted at the level of occurrence. (Example: If the student wishes clarification of his/her rights and fears reprisal if approaching the instructor directly with the complaint, initial inquiry can be made to the Department Chair.)

Consider appealing the resolution to the complaint rendered at the level of occurrence. (Example: A student can provide documentation or information that significantly questions the appropriateness of the resolution at the level of occurrence and

believes the complaint requires involvement of a neutral, third party. In example #1 above, the student would appeal the decision made by the faculty member, instructor or advisor to the Department Chair.)

Level III: College Level –Dean of the College

For an appeal to be addressed at this level, it must be accompanied by the completed Student Complaint Form, signed by the Department Chair. At the College of Nursing and Allied Health level, the final appeal resides with the Office of the Dean.

Consider an appeal to the Office of the Dean when documentation and factual information the student can provide directly contradict the appropriateness of the resolution of the complaint at the previous level (Department Chair). The Dean of the College with the concurrence of the Department Chair may resolve the complaint or request that the complaint be referred to the College Grievance Committee. (Example: The Dean of the College will review the appeal and enter into fact-finding before rendering a final decision or referring the appeal to the College Grievance Committee. Decisions of the College Grievance Committee will be conveyed to the student by the Dean of the College.)

Level IV: University Level-Senior Associate Vice Chancellor, Executive Vice President, Vice Chancellor

If the fairness of the action is still viewed by the student as unacceptable, the issue may, in most instances, be directed to the Senior Associate Vice Chancellor and/or Executive Vice President/Vice Chancellor.

Student Complaint Process at the

Departmental Level

Students in the Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology are encouraged to follow the University's recommended sequence for addressing problems and complaints. The student is advised to consult with individuals in the order listed below; that is, they should consult the first person on the list and move to the next person or office on the list if the problem is not resolved to their satisfaction. Students must complete the **Student Complaint Form** at the level of occurrence to begin the process.

- 1) Class Instructor or Direct Clinical Supervisor
- 2) Academic Advisor or Clinic Coordinator or External Placement Coordinator
- 3) Graduate Program Director
- 4) Chair of the Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology
- 5) Dean of the College of Nursing and Allied Health
- 6) Office of Academic Affairs

CONTACTING COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION IN AUDIOLOGY AND SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY (CAA)

ASHA's Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech Language Pathology (CAA) is obligated by federal regulations to review complaints it receives about any accredited program or program in candidacy status. A complaint process is also in place for considering complaints filed against the CAA. Below please find an overview of the options available to students with concerns. Please visit the CAA website for detailed information and instructions regarding filing a complaint.

If students have major concerns or complaints about the Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology graduate program, they may file them with the CAA. Complaints must relate to the Standards for Accreditation of Entry-Level Graduate Education Programs in Audiology or Speech-Language Pathology in effect at the time the conduct for the complaint occurred. CAA does not accept complaints over the phone, so all complaints must be submitted in writing using the CAA's official Complaint Form, and mailed to the following address:

Chair, Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
2200 Research Boulevard, #310
Rockville, MD 20850

PROCEDURES FOR COMPLAINTS AGAINST GRADUATE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) Contact

Concerns and questions relative to the academic and clinical training issues of the department's accredited program should be directed to the Department Chair and Program Director.

If problems cannot be resolved at these levels students may also contact the American-Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) at 2200 Research Boulevard, Mailstop 310, Rockville, MD 20850-3289. Telephone: 1-800-498- 2071(ASHA).

A complaint about any accredited program or program in candidacy status may be submitted by any student, instructional staff member, speech-language pathologist, and/or member of the public.

Criteria for Complaints:

Complaints about programs must:

- (A) Be related against an accredited educational program or program in candidacy status in audiology and speech-language pathology,
- (B) Related to the standards for accreditation of educational programs in audiology and speech-language pathology, and
- (C) Include verification, if the complaint is from a student or faculty/instructional staff member, that the complainant exhausted all institutional grievance and review mechanisms before submitting a complaint to the council for academic accreditation.

All complaints must be signed and submitted in writing to the Chair, Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech- Language Pathology, American Speech Language Hearing Association, 2200 Research Boulevard, Mailstop 310, Rockville, MD 20850-3289. The complaint must clearly describe the specific nature of the complaint and the relationship of the complaint to the accreditation standards and provide supporting data for the charge. The complainant's burden of proof is a preponderance or greater weight of the evidence. Complaints cannot be sent by email or facsimile. Additional information can be located on the ASHA web site at: (<http://professional/asha.org/academic/standards/cfm>).

Complaints Against the CAA

The CAA also has a process in place for complaints to be filed against the CAA. Before filing a complaint, it is strongly recommended that you read Chapter XIII: Complaints in the Accreditation Handbook. Complaints against the CAA must be filed within 1 year of the date the conduct being complained about occurred, and must relate to the content or the application of the Standards for Accreditation of Entry-Level Graduate Education Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology, or the policies, procedures, and operations that were in use by the CAA at the time the conduct being complained about occurred. There is no formal complaint form for filing complaints against the CAA. However, the complaint must address all the required criteria and be submitted in writing to:

Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs (“Vice Presidents”)
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
2200 Research Boulevard, #310
Rockville, MD 20850