

Purpose of this Policy

This Policy is designed to help assure our students a quality education, provide excellent student support services, and help the University identify any serious or systemic problems or issues affecting the quality of student life. The principles and procedures are intended to help Southern University and A&M College identify patterns of conduct that raise a legitimate concern with respect to the University's academic or business programs, and to comply with obligations imposed by federal regulations for receiving, responding to and tracking student complaints.

Application of this Policy

This Policy applies to all students who are enrolled at Southern University and A&M College at the time that the complaint is filed in accordance with the Policy. The Office of the Dean of Students will not consider/review complaints that are filed by non-students.

Definitions Used in this Policy

Student: The term "student" denotes individuals enrolled in courses at Southern University and A&M College, whether full-time or part-time, for credit or non-credit and is inclusive of those individuals who have been notified of their acceptance for admission, persons who withdraw after allegedly violating the *Student Code of Conduct*, persons who are not enrolled for a particular term (but who have not officially withdrawn from the University), and those who have a continuing relationship with the University, (e.g., on academic dismissal, disciplinary suspension, or studying abroad). An individual is no longer considered a student upon graduation, official withdrawal from the University, expulsion from the University, or death.

Parents, relatives, employers, agents, and other persons acting for or on behalf of a student are not students within the meaning of this Policy.

Student Complaint: Any written complaint made and signed by a student that is received by the Office of the Dean of Students.

Exemptions from this Policy

The following matters are not handled as student complaints within the scope of this policy, but may be directed for attention as follows:

- Complaints or grievances arising from, or made in connection with, a student's employment by the University in any capacity, should be directed to the Office of Human Resources.
- A grade appeal; except that unethical, illegal, or improper conduct of a faculty member may be the subject of a student complaint, even if it occurs in the context of a grade decision or appeal. Grade appeals must be directed as set forth by the procedures of the Office of Academic Affairs.
- Curriculum matters and related appeals must be directed to the Office of Academic Affairs.
- Matters concerning graduation requirements are governed by the Office of Academic Affairs and such complaints must be directed to that office.
- Registration complaints and appeals must be directed to the Office of the Registrar.
- A sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, or sex discrimination complaint, or any complaint concerning discrimination. Such complaints are governed under separate policies. See the Office of the Title IX Coordinator or the Office of Human Resources.
- Disputes related to financial issues such as tuition and fee assessment, or departments' fees, may be made directly to the Office of the Bursar or the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration.

Policy Statement

Southern University and A&M College is committed to treating all students fairly and respectfully. The University's policies that apply to students are published in the *Student Code of Conduct* and related documents, in addition to those found in other resources from individual departments and offices. In an instance of perceived violation of a University policy, a student may file a complaint in accordance with this Policy.

Policy Provisions

When a student encounters a problem on campus that he/she does not know how to resolve, he/she should always try to work the problem out by first discussing it with those involved. Dealing with concerns in the most direct and honest fashion should always be the first step toward resolution. Many problems are resolved when a student makes an appointment with a faculty or staff member and calmly and honestly communicates their concerns.

If however, an issue or problem still exists, a student may initiate the formal complaint procedures at Southern University and A&M College. All formal complaints must be put in writing and must be signed by the student, including electronic or digital facsimile signatures clearly attributable to the student (for example, the student's name in an email message received from his or her Southern University email account).

Procedures for Filing a Written Complaint

1. Attempt an informal resolution of the matter as noted above.
2. Complete and submit the Student Complaint Form to the Office of the Dean of Students:

Office of the Dean of Students
2nd Floor, Smith-Brown Memorial Student Union
PO Box 13405
Baton Rouge, LA 70813
Web: www.subr.edu/dos
Email: dos@subr.edu
Phone: (225) 771 – 3922
Fax: (225) 771 – 2202

The Office of the Dean of Students will notify the student with an acknowledgement that the complaint was received.

NOTE: All student complaints must be submitted in writing. A complaint reported by telephone will not be considered as submitted for review.

Complaint Review and Resolution Process

The Office of the Dean of Students is not an advocate for any party to a dispute, but is an advocate for a fair process. Acting as a neutral, third party, the Office of the Dean of Students will first attempt to resolve the complaint by working with the student and the appropriate University employees and officials to assure a fair process. This assures that the complaint is considered by the appropriate officials and receives an impartial review.

If the matter is not able to be resolved informally, the Office of the Dean of Students will forward the complaint to the appropriate University Vice Chancellor or other official for further review and attempt to resolve the matter. If the matter is still not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the Office of the Dean of Students will help identify other resources that may be available to the student.

A record of the complaint and its disposition will be maintained in the Office of the Dean of Students.

Complaint Tracking

The Office of the Dean of Students will track each student complaint, and will maintain a record that includes, at a minimum, the following information:

- The date that the student complaint was received;
- The student(s) identified with the complaint;
- The nature of the complaint, including a copy of the student complaint, to be retained for not less than two (2) years after its final disposition;
- The University officials who were asked to address the complaint and the steps taken to resolve it;
- The final resolution or disposition of the complaint;
- Any external actions taken by the complainant, if any, of which the Office of the Dean of Students becomes aware.

Compliance with this Policy

Failure to comply with this policy may result in no action being taken with respect to the subject matter of a complaint, or other disposition by the Office of the Dean of Students. Where such failure also causes a violation of rules and policies regarding student or employee conduct, disciplinary action may result in accordance with the applicable rules and policies.