

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS POLICY

Policy Title: **STUDENT COMPLAINT**

Policy Number: 2.0.0.0

Campus: ☐ Lisle ☐ Mesa ☒ Both

Policy Status: ☒ New policy ☐ Continuing/active policy ☐ Archive policy

Supersedes: (if applicable)

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Associated Division(s): Academic Affairs

Responsible Office(s): Office of the Provost and Dean of Students

Name(s) of Designated Policy Owner(s): Kate Lang and Marco Masini

Approved By:

- **University Planning Council Subcommittee on Policies:**
Tim Marin, Ellen Ziliak 11/17/2025
- **President:**
Joseph Foy 11/17/2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear, fair, and accessible process for students to raise concerns, file complaints, and seek resolution regarding University policies, procedures, personnel, services, or administrative actions.

Consistent with Benedictine University's Catholic and Benedictine mission, this policy promotes dignity, justice, and responsible stewardship by ensuring that student concerns are addressed in a timely, respectful, and transparent manner. It supports institutional accountability while encouraging informal resolution whenever appropriate.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled at Benedictine University (Lisle and Mesa campuses, and online programs).

It governs complaints related to:

- Academic matters
- Student life policies and procedures
- Administrative services and operations
- Financial concerns
- Health-related matters
- Matters involving discrimination, harassment, or accessibility

This policy does not replace specialized processes governed by separate policies (e.g., Title IX, ADA/Section 504), but provides guidance on how such concerns are directed.

3. Definitions

Complaint: A written expression of dissatisfaction concerning a University employee, department, service, process, or administrative action requiring clarification, investigation, and/or resolution.

Grievance: A formal complaint that has progressed beyond initial or informal resolution attempts.

Informal Resolution: An attempt to resolve a concern through direct communication with the involved party or supervisory channels prior to filing a formal complaint.

Student Complaint Form: The official online mechanism through which students submit formal complaints to the University.

Appropriate Office: The University unit responsible for reviewing and resolving a specific category of complaint.

Business Days: Days on which the University is officially open for operations, excluding weekends and holidays.

4. Policy Statement

Benedictine University is committed to resolving student complaints in a manner that is timely, equitable, and consistent with its mission and applicable laws.

Students are encouraged to seek informal resolution first when appropriate. When informal resolution is not possible or effective, students may submit a formal complaint using the designated Student Complaint Form.

The University will:

- Acknowledge receipt of complaints in a timely manner

- Review complaints objectively and fairly
- Communicate status updates and outcomes within defined timeframes
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality consistent with legal and institutional obligations

Certain matters, including those involving personnel actions or protected information, may limit the level of detail shared in outcomes.

5. Procedures

5.1 Informal Resolution

Consistent with the University's Benedictine values of community, respect for persons, and stewardship, students and University personnel are encouraged to engage concerns in a spirit of mutual respect and good faith.

- Students are encouraged to first address concerns directly with the relevant faculty member, staff member, or department.
- If unresolved, concerns may be elevated to a supervisor, program director, or department chair.

5.2 Submission of Formal Complaint

- Complaints must be submitted in writing using the official Student Complaint Form: https://benu.formstack.com/forms/student_complaint_form
- To ensure timely and fair review, complaints should be submitted within a reasonable timeframe in which the concern remains timely, relevant, and capable of being fairly and thoroughly addressed.

5.3 Complaint Review Process

Upon submission:

1. **Acknowledgment:** The appropriate office will confirm receipt via email.
2. **Initial Review:** The complaint is evaluated to determine the appropriate course of action.
3. **Status Notification (within 10 business days):** The student is informed of the complaint status and next steps.
4. **Resolution (within 20 business days):** The University provides a written resolution.
 - If additional time is required, the student will be notified.
5. **Documentation:** The resolution is documented by the responsible office.

5.4 Escalation

If a complaint remains unresolved:

- Academic concerns → Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Non-academic concerns → Dean of Students

Students may also pursue complaints with appropriate external/state agencies.

5.5 Complaint Categories and Pathways

A. Academic Complaints

Progression:

1. Instructor
2. Program Director / Department Chair
3. Dean
4. Provost

Includes:

- Grade disputes
- Academic integrity issues
- Instructional concerns

B. Discrimination, Harassment, and Title IX

Handled under the University's Title IX and related policies.

Contact:

- Title IX Coordinator
- Title IX reporting form

Reports may be made at any time.

C. Accessibility and Accommodations

Students should contact the Office of Accommodations and Accessibility.

Appeals may be filed regarding denial of accommodations or eligibility determinations.

D. Financial Complaints

Initial contact:

- Ben Central

Unresolved issues are escalated internally as needed.

E. Health-Related Complaints

Contact:

- Student Health Services

May include:

- Immunization requirements
- Medical exemptions
- Health protocols

F. Student Life Complaints

Progression:

1. Direct supervisor (e.g., coach, RA, advisor)
2. Program Director
3. Formal complaint submission

Includes:

- Residence life
- Athletics

- Student activities

Students should consult Appendix A for a detailed listing of University offices, areas of oversight, and procedural guidance associated with each complaint category.

5.6 Confidentiality and Limitations

- The University will protect privacy to the extent permitted by law.
- Certain outcomes, particularly those involving personnel actions or protected student or employee information, may not be fully disclosed, consistent with applicable privacy laws and University policies.

6. Related Policies and Documents

- Title IX Policy
- Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy
- ADA/Section 504 Policy
- Student Handbook
- University Catalog

7. Related Forms

- Student Complaint Form
- Title IX Reporting Form

Appendix A: Complaint Resolution Offices and Responsibilities

A1. Academic Complaint Points of Contact

Office/Administrator	Areas of Oversight	Procedural Guidance
Dean of the Goodwin College of Business and Liberal Arts	Business, Education, Liberal Arts, Writing Program	University Catalog
Dean of the College of Science and Health	Science and Health Programs	University Catalog
Director of General Education	General Education Curriculum	General Education Website
Director of the Scholars Program	Scholars Program	Scholars Program Website
Director of Advising	Advising and Degree Requirements	Advising Center

Office/Administrator	Areas of Oversight	Procedural Guidance
Registrar	Enrollment, transcripts, degree audits, transfer credit	Registrar Website
Director of Accommodations and Accessibility	Academic accommodations	Academic Support Center
Director of the Library	Library services, tutoring, learning support	Library Website

A2. Student Life Complaint Points of Contact

Office/Administrator	Areas of Oversight	Procedural Guidance	Additional Information
Director of Athletics	Athletics	Student-Athlete Handbook	Athletics Website
Director of Student Activities and Recreational Sports	Student organizations, recreation	RSO Manual	Student Activities Website
Director of Residence Life	Housing	Residence Life Handbook	Residence Life Website
Dean of Students	Student services, counseling, dining	Student Life Manual	Student Life Website
Director of Student Affairs	Operations, orientation, bookstore, mailroom	Student Life Manual	Student Life Website
Director of Accommodations and Accessibility	Accessibility services	ADA/Section 504	Academic Support Center
Title IX Coordinator	Title IX compliance	Federal and state law	Title IX Website
Student Health Services	Health services	Public health regulations	Student Health Website
Financial Aid Counselors	Financial aid	Aid policies	Financial Aid Website