

SUPERSEDES: March 14, 2017	SECTION: Academic and Student Affairs
POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL MERCY COLLEGE OF OHIO, TOLEDO, OHIO Signature on file	CODE NO.: 519
	SUBJECT: Student Complaint Policy
	DATE ORIGINATED: 05/11/2015
	DATE COMMITTEE BOARD APPROVED: 05/22/2018
Signature: Dr. Susan Wajert, President	DATE BOARD APPROVED: 06/12/2018
	DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: 2020 January 1-31

Student Complaint Policy

PURPOSE:

To establish a policy and procedure for addressing the concerns and complaints of students fairly and promptly, when there is no other more specific policy or procedure that governs the matter at hand.

SCOPE:

This policy applies only to concerns and complaints of students at Mercy College of Ohio (“the College”), and the procedure will only be utilized when the subject matter of the concern or complaint is not covered by another policy or procedure.

POLICY:

The College is committed to providing an educational climate that is conducive to the personal and professional development of each individual. The Student Complaint Policy and Procedure can be used when students believe they have been treated unfairly or inequitably by another member of the College community or if they have other complaints about their experience at the College, and the subject matter of the concern or complaint is not covered by existing policies and procedures, such as the College’s Title IX, Violence Against Women and Campus SaVE Policy and Procedures, the Student Code of Conduct and the Student Academic Appeal Process.

Before filing a complaint under this policy, a student is encouraged to seek an informal resolution of the matter by discussing it directly with the individual(s) involved. However, seeking informal resolution is not required. Also, note that the College prohibits retaliation against any individual for bringing a complaint under this policy or participating in an investigation. Additionally, students are advised that the Student Complaint Policy and Procedure will not be used as an additional appeal when another set of procedures has already been applied.

External complaints: In addition to filing an internal complaint with the College using the procedure below, students also have the right to file a complaint with any of the following:

Complaints to the Ohio Department of Higher Education (formerly the Ohio Board of Regents)

The Ohio Department of Higher Education is responsible for responding to formal complaints against public, independent non-profit and proprietary institutions of higher education in Ohio.

While the Ohio Department of Higher Education has limited authority over colleges and universities, and cannot offer legal advice or initiate civil court cases, their staff will review submitted complaints and work with student complainants and institutions.

Ohio Department of Higher Education
25 South Front Street
Columbus, OH 43215
Phone: (614) 466-6000
Fax: (614) 466-5866
hotline@highered.ohio.gov

Complaints to the Ohio Attorney General

The Ohio Attorney General reviews general consumer complaints about business, non-profit and public entities. More information is available via the Attorney General's office and website.

Ohio Attorney General
30 E. Broad St., 14th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
Phone: (800) 282-0515
<http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/about-ag/file-a-complaint.aspx>

Complaints to the Higher Learning Commission

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) has established a clear distinction between individual grievances and complaints that appear to involve broad institutional practices. Where a complaint does raise issues regarding the institution's ongoing ability to meet the Criteria of Accreditation, the Commission forwards the complaint to the institution and requests a formal response.

HLC Contact information:

The Higher Learning Commission
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, Illinois 60604-1411
Phone: (312) 263-0456 or 800-621-7440
Fax: (312) 263-7462
info@hlcommission.org

HLC complaints webpage: <https://www.ncahlc.org/HLC-Institutions/complaints.html>

REFERENCING FORMS

Form 511/519-A Concern and Complaint [Electronic Form](#)

Board Approved: 06/12/2018
Board Committee Approved: 05/22/2018
Revised February 2018: *(Added scope, separated policy from procedure, clarified procedures)*
Board Approved: 03/14/2017
Board Committee Approved: 02/28/2017
Revised: February 2017
Board Approved: 09/08/2015

Board Committee Approved: 08/25/2015
Originated: 05/11/2015

PROCEDURE 519

Students having concerns or complaints for which they are unsure of the applicable process or reporting mechanism may file such concern with the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students by utilizing Form 511/519-A Concern and Complaint [Electronic Form](#). The Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students will communicate with the student to gain an understanding of the situation. If the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students determines that another College policy or procedure governs the situation (e.g., grade appeal, sexual misconduct, etc.), the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students will act as a facilitator to ensure the information is directed to the appropriate College official. If the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students determines that no other College procedures govern, the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students will work informally with the student, and others as necessary, to reach a resolution of the situation.

If the student and Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students are unable to resolve the situation, the student may file a formal written complaint with the President of the College. The President of the College will conduct an investigation into the matter, taking all steps deemed necessary based on the circumstances, and will issue a written decision to the student. The President's decision is final and not subject to further appeal.

Documentation

Formal complaints made under this policy or other any other College policy, and their respective resolutions, are appropriately tracked and documented. Electronic copies of complaints are kept with the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students; however, resolutions may also be kept with the appropriate Vice President and/or member of Mercy College Administration. If applicable, hard copies of each complaint and any related documentation are kept with the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students' office in a locked file.

An annual summary of complaints will be prepared and kept by the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students. The summary will be brought to Executive Staff for review prior to May 1st of each year, and the summary will be shared with the Board of Trustees at the annual meeting in June.