

## STUDENT COMPLAINT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### *Policy*

William Penn University is committed to a respectful learning environment for all members of the campus community. Students have the right to seek a remedy for a dispute or disagreement when they believe they have been treated in an improper, unfair or arbitrary manner. Additionally, students have the right to seek a remedy for issues of institutional or program quality such as William Penn University's compliance with the standards of our accrediting body, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). No retaliation of any kind shall be taken against a student for participation in a complaint or grievance.

### *Definitions*

- A. Complaint: a written claim raised by a student alleging improper, unfair, arbitrary or discriminatory action by an employee involving the application of a specific provision of a university rule/regulation or a William Penn University policy or procedure. A grievance may also be about issues of institutional or program quality.
- B. Appeal: a request for reconsideration of a grievance application of a policy or procedure.
- C. Retaliation: retribution of any kind taken against a student for participating in a complaint or grievance.
- D. Student: an individual student, a group of students, or the student government.

### *Procedures*

Complaints about sexual assault, relationship misconduct, or harassment should be directed to the Title IX Coordinator:

Caree Gordon  
Title IX Coordinator  
Counseling Center, Dana Atkins Memorial Union  
William Penn University  
201 Trueblood Avenue  
Oskaloosa, Iowa 52577  
(641) 673-1703  
[Caree.Gordon@wmpenn.edu](mailto:Caree.Gordon@wmpenn.edu)

The procedures for all other types of complaints is as follows:

1. When a student has a complaint, she or he shall first meet on an informal basis with the WPU employee directly involved in the dispute in an attempt to resolve the complaint or grievance. For full consideration, the complaint or grievance should be discussed in the semester in which the concern arises, or within the first two weeks of the subsequent term.
2. When a student has a complaint, which remains unresolved after consultation with the WPU employee directly involved in the dispute, she or he may submit a written complaint via his or her [WPU Access Student Portal](#). The submission of the grievance will be assigned an ombudsperson that will notify the appropriate supervisor that a complaint has been filed.

This notification shall contain a statement indicating the intention of the student(s) to proceed with the complaint and the relief requested. The appropriate supervisor shall respond in writing to the student(s) within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the submitted complaint.

If the complaint is not resolved at the point of the supervisor, the student(s) may appeal to the area Vice President via the [WPU Access Student Portal](#). The submission of the grievance will be assigned an ombudsperson that will notify the area Vice President that a complaint or grievance has been filed. The area Vice President shall consider the appeal and make a decision. The area Vice President shall respond in writing to the student within fourteen (14) days of receipt [WPU Access Student Portal](#) grievance submission.

If the complaint is not resolved with the area Vice President, the student(s) may appeal to the University President via the [WPU Access Student Portal](#). The submission of the grievance will be assigned an ombudsperson that will notify the President that a complaint or grievance has been filed. The University President shall respond in writing to the student within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the submitted notice of appeal. The decision of the President is final and binding.

If the initial complaint is with the area Vice President, the student may appeal to the President of the University using the same process described above.

### ***Complaints Addressed to External Agencies***

If a student is unsatisfied with attempts to resolve the complaint within the University, the student has the option to file a complaint externally with the university's accrediting body the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), or the Iowa College Student Aid Commission (1-877-272-4456):

William Penn University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). A student who wishes to file a complaint about William Penn University with the HLC should contact the Commission:

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

William Penn University is registered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission to operate in Iowa and approved to participate in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements. Students who have a question or complaint about the University may contact the Commission:

Iowa Department of Education's Bureau of Iowa College Aid  
400 E 14th Street  
Des Moines, IA 50319  
Toll-Free (877) 272-4456  
<https://educate.iowa.gov/higher-ed/student-complaints>

### ***Record Keeping***

The University maintains a record of complaints submitted via the WPU Access Student Portal. All submitted student complaints will be stored by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Summary information regarding student complaints are presented by the Vice President for Academic Affairs to the president's Cabinet annually in June. Trends are reviewed and utilized in developing policies and procedures to help mitigate further complaints.

The log of complaints and resulting University actions is provided to the Higher Learning Commission, upon their request, and in compliance as part of the University's periodic accreditation review.

Questions regarding the student complaint policy and associated procedures should be directed to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, in person at Penn Hall, room 221, or by telephone, (641) 673-1010.