

SUPERSEDES: March 14, 2017	SECTION: Academic and Student Affairs
POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL MERCY COLLEGE OF OHIO, TOLEDO, OHIO Signature on file <hr/> Signature: Dr. Susan Wajert, President	CODE NO.: 519
	SUBJECT: Student Complaint Policy
	DATE ORIGINATED: 05/11/2015
	DATE COMMITTEE BOARD APPROVED: 08/16/2021
	DATE BOARD APPROVED: 09/21/2021
	DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: 2024 Sept. 1-30

Student Complaint Policy

PURPOSE:

To establish a policy and procedure for promptly and fairly addressing student concerns and complaints.

SCOPE:

This policy applies only to concerns and complaints from students at Mercy College of Ohio (“the College”). 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 student. The Student Complaint Policy and Procedure exists to resolve student complaints about unfair or inequitable treatment or a student’s experience at the College. The procedure may not be used to address complaints where the subject matter of the complaint is covered by other existing policies and procedures (e.g., Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures, Student Code of Conduct, Student Academic Appeal Process). 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.

Before filing a complaint under this policy, students are 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.

The College prohibits retaliation against any individual for bringing a complaint under this policy or participating in an investigation.

External complaints: In addition to filing an internal complaint with the College using the procedure below, students 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) is the regional accrediting body for the College. Its complaint process allows individuals to raise concerns regarding an institution's compliance with the HLC Criteria for Accreditation or other requirements. The HLC complaint process is not designed to intervene in individual matters, but rather to review matters that pertain to the institution as a whole to the extent that such matters relate to HLC-specific requirements. Complaints may be filed with the HLC through the webpage listed below.

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: 09/21/2021
Board Committee Approved: 08/16/2021
Revised July 2021: Technical

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 who have concerns or complaints and are unsure of the applicable process or reporting mechanism should contact 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), 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 investigate 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.