

SOUTHWEST TENNESSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**SUBJECT: Student Complaints****EFFECTIVE DATE: July 14, 2010; Revised October 28, 2013**

Southwest Tennessee Community College is committed to a policy of fair treatment of its students in their relationships with fellow students, faculty, staff and administration. Students are encouraged to seek an informal resolution of the matter directly with the faculty or individual(s) involved when possible. For matters where a resolution is not feasible, a student may submit a Student Complaint Form. Complaints should be submitted immediately or within ten (10) days of the incident. A student can expect resolution of the complaint within thirty business days after submission.

I. Procedure

A student who believes that his/her rights have been denied may seek resolution in the following manner.

- A. A student may submit a completed STUDENT COMPLAINT FORM to the Office of Advising and Counseling or online at www.southwest.tn.edu/counseling.
- B. The Office of Advising and Counseling will log in the complaint, send an e-mail to the student to acknowledge receipt, and forward the complaint to the appropriate administrator within five (5) business days of receipt of the complaint.
- C. Upon receipt of the complaint, the appropriate administrator will review the complaint and determine what additional information is necessary to resolve the problem.
- D. After considering the complaint and related information, the administrator makes a decision as to the merits of the student's complaint and notifies the student by email as to the resolution within thirty (30) days of the filing of the complaint.
- E. Students who feel that another review is necessary must respond by email to the administrator's email within five (5) business days, requesting that the complaint be forwarded to a higher level administrator. The complaint and supporting documentation will be forwarded to an appropriate higher level administrator within five (5) business days. That higher level administrator will review the complaint and inform the student of a decision by email within five (5) business days.

II. Tracking Student Complaints

Southwest recognizes that student complaints provide valuable feedback and are an opportunity to improve services and the educational experience. By tracking and analyzing the complaints, recommendations can be developed and continuous improvement actions implemented.

A. Location of Documentation

A copy of the complaint and the resolution will be sent to all parties. Paper/electronic files and supporting documentation will be maintained in either the Deans' Offices or the Vice President of Student Services and Enrollment Management for a period of three years.

1. Completed complaint files regarding academic affairs and the learning experience will be housed in the Deans' Offices.
2. Completed complaint files regarding any student support service; i.e. financial aid, testing, admissions, cashiering, etc. will be housed in the Office of the Vice President of Student Services and Enrollment Management.

B. Institutional Review

1. At the end of the academic year, the Deans and the Vice President of Student Services and Enrollment Management will compile an Institutional Record of Student Complaints summarizing the complaints housed in their areas. The report will not include the name of the complainant or name(s) of any individuals involved in the facts of complaint.
2. Tracking information will contain, but is not limited to, the following information:
 - a. The total number of complaints received
 - b. The nature of complaints received by category. (names are not be included)
 - c. A summary record of each complaint and the action taken
 - d. Recommendation for corrective actions, if warranted
3. The reports will be initially shared with the Provost/Executive Vice President, Vice President for Student Services and Enrollment Management, and the Vice President for Financial and Administrative Services.
4. After their review, the reports will be forwarded to the President who may work with his team to analyze the data to discover if there are systemic problems that require improvement. If improvement is warranted, it will be communicated to the proper parties to develop recommendations and/or additional corrective actions to ensure on-going quality service to students.
5. The recommendations will be forwarded to the appropriate unit to be included in their subsequent Institutional Effectiveness Plan.

6. When data is collected again the following year, the analysis will include reviewing the previous year's improvement processes to assess improvement's effectiveness. This will enable the College to identify and monitor any systemic issues and provide opportunities for ongoing improvement.

Source: Vice President for Student Services/Enrollment Management: July 14, 2010; Rev. 10-28-13