



Student Complaint Policy and Procedure

Stellar Career College

Purpose

Stellar Career College is committed to providing a learning environment where students are treated fairly and respectfully. When a student believes that a policy has not been followed or that they have been treated unjustly, the College provides a clear process to raise concerns and seek resolution.

This policy explains how students may submit complaints, the steps the College will take to review them, and how students may contact external agencies if they believe their concerns remain unresolved.

Definitions

Student Complaint/Grievance

A formal student complaint is a non-trivial concern, academic or non-academic in nature, submitted in writing by a student to a college employee. The complaint alleges that an action, decision, or behavior is unfair, inconsistent with college policy, or violates a law or regulation.

Examples of formal complaints include:

- Allegations of discrimination based on sex, race, disability, religion, or other protected status
- Allegations of harassment (including sexual, racial, or other harassment)
- Complaints about billing disputes, charges, or payment plans

- Concerns that the College is not complying with applicable regulations such as ADA, Title IX, or similar requirements
- Academic disputes regarding grades, instruction, or program progression - Violations of attendance policies or externship requirements

Informal Concerns

Some issues are better handled as informal concerns and may not rise to the level of a formal grievance. These are generally day-to-day operational or service issues that can usually be resolved quickly at the local level.

Examples of informal concerns include:

- Classroom or facility issues (temperature, seating, equipment not working)
- Delayed class start times - Questions or concerns about grade reports or the timing of grades
- Questions about follow-up communication or responses from staff
- Questions about transcript requests or routine forms
- Lack of classroom supplies or minor service delays

Communications Not Treated as Complaints

Not every written communication from a student is considered a complaint. The following are examples of items that would not normally be categorized as a formal complaint:

- Requests for exceptions or waivers to college policies (tuition or registration deadlines)
- General expressions of dissatisfaction with a policy that are not tied to a specific incident
- Letters or emails submitted by someone other than the student, unless the student has authorized representation

General Principles

- Key Guidelines for All Complaints
- Students are encouraged to first seek an informal resolution by discussing the concern directly with the person or office involved
- All complaints will be handled respectfully and confidentially to the extent possible
- Retaliation against any student for raising a concern or filing a complaint is strictly prohibited
- Complaints should be raised promptly so the issue can be effectively reviewed
- The College will make every effort to resolve complaints within 30 days

Complaint Procedures:

Academic Complaints

Academic complaints involve concerns related to grades, instruction, academic progression, attendance policies, or externship requirements.

Step 1: Direct Discussion with Instructor

The student should first request a conversation with the instructor or staff member most closely connected to the issue. During this meeting, the student should describe the concern clearly, share any relevant documentation, attempt to reach an understanding or resolution

Step 2: Program Director Review

If the matter is not resolved after Step 1, the student may file a complaint with Program Director, who will review the information and gather additional details, then work with the student to seek a solution.

Step 3: Formal Written Complaint with Dean of Students Office

If the concern remains unresolved, The Dean of Students serves as the primary point of coordination and student support within the complaint resolution process. The Dean will assist students in clarifying concerns, understanding applicable institutional policies and procedures, and encouraging appropriate early resolution. The student may submit a formal written complaint to the Dean of Students.

If the issue remains unresolved, the student may submit a written complaint to the Dean's office. The written complaint must include:

- Student's name and program
- Date(s) of the incident
- Individuals involved
- Detailed description of the concern
- Specific resolution requested
- Any supporting documentation.

The Campus Director maintains overall oversight of the process, while the Dean of Students and Program Director review relevant information, facilitate communication among involved parties, and support the identification of appropriate resolutions or corrective actions. While the Dean of Students and Program Director actively participate in the review and resolution process, final oversight and decision-making authority remain with the Campus Director and, when applicable, the Student Grievance Committee.

Non-Academic Complaints

Non-academic complaints involve concerns related to student services, administration, facilities, conduct, or any issue not directly related to academic matters.

Step 1: Direct Discussion

The student should first speak with the staff member most closely connected to the issue, following the same process as outlined in Academic Complaints Step 1.

Step 2: Program Director Escalation

If unresolved, escalate to the Program Director following the same process as outlined in Academic Complaints Step 2.

Step 3: Formal Written Complaint

Submit a formal written complaint to the Dean of Students using the same requirements as outlined in Academic Complaints Step 3.

Formal Review Process

Student Grievance Committee

Upon receiving a formal written complaint, the Campus Director will:

- 1. Assemble a Student Grievance Committee consisting of:**
 - Campus Director (chair)
 - Dean of Students
 - Program Director

- 2. Investigation Process:**
 - Review all submitted documentation
 - Interview relevant parties
 - Gather evidence as needed

- 3. Resolution:** The committee will determine recommended actions and communicate findings to the Campus Director within 30 days.

Final Decision

A final decision will be communicated to the student within 30 days of filing the formal complaint.

The decision will include:

1. Summary of the investigation
2. Findings and conclusions
3. Any corrective measures to be implemented
4. Information about external complaint options if the student remains unsatisfied.

External Complaint Options

Important: Stellar Career College strongly encourages students to fully utilize the College's internal complaint procedures first, as most issues can be resolved directly with campus staff. However, if students have completed the internal process and believe their concerns remain unresolved, they may contact the following agencies:

1. Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE)

Students may file a complaint with the Illinois Board of Higher Education's Private Business and Vocational Schools Division through their online complaint system:

Contact Information:

- Website: <https://complaints.ibhe.org/>
- Phone: (217) 782-2551
- Address: 1 N. Old State Capital Plaza, Suite 333, Springfield, IL 62701-1404

2. Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC)

Stellar Career College is accredited by ACCSC. Students may file a written complaint with ACCSC if they believe the College has not adequately addressed their complaint.

ACCSC Requirements:

- All complaints must be submitted in writing using the ACCSC Complaint Form
- Students must grant permission for ACCSC to forward a copy of the complaint to the school
- ACCSC will keep complainants informed of the status and final resolution
- Address: 2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 302, Arlington, VA 22201
- Phone: (703) 247-4212
- Email: complaints@accsc.org
- Website: www.accsc.org

Obtaining the ACCSC Complaint Form:

Available at the school's registrar

Online at: <https://www.accsc.org/Student-Corner/Complaints.aspx>

By email request to: complaints@accsc.org

Special Considerations

- **Title IX Complaints**

For complaints involving sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct, students should contact the Title IX Coordinator:

AK Buss

Stellar Career College

Email: akbuss@stellarcollege.edu

205 W. Randolph Street, Suite 200

Chicago, Illinois 60606

- **Attendance and Externship Complaints**

For complaints related to attendance policies or externship requirements, students should consult the relevant policies in the Student Handbook and follow the academic complaint procedure described above.

- **Emergency Situations:**

If a complaint involves an immediate safety concern or emergency, students should:

1. Call 911 if there is immediate danger.
2. Report the incident to the Campus Director as soon as possible.

- **Record Keeping:**

The College will retain records of all formal complaints for at least seven years. This includes the original complaint documentation, investigation records and findings,

final decisions and any corrective actions taken, and any associated follow-up documentation.

- **Policy Review:**

This policy is reviewed on as necessary to ensure compliance with federal and state laws, accreditation standards, and best practices in student services.

- **Contact Information for any inquiries:**

For questions about this policy, contact:

AK Buss
Email: akbuss@stellarcollege.edu
Stellar Career College
205 W. Randolph Street, Suite 200
Chicago, Illinois 60606
Phone: (312) 687-3000

***This policy is effective as of July 25th, 2025, and replaces all previous versions.**