

COMPLAINT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Lane College is committed to maintaining a learning environment that promotes student academic excellence and personal development. If a student has a complaint/grievance against a member of the faculty or professional staff, other than a grade grievance or a claim of sexual harassment (each of which has a separate procedure outlined in this *Handbook*), the student shall take the following steps:

Department/Area Level

The student and faculty/professional staff member will meet to attempt resolution of the complaint.

If the matter is not resolved, the student and the faculty member/ professional staff will then meet with the Division Chairperson/ supervisor who will act as a facilitator, to determine if resolution is possible.

If the faculty/professional staff member is not accessible for any reason (illness, on leave, refuses to meet with student), or if the student fears reprisal, the student may initiate the process by first meeting with the Division Chairperson/supervisor.

In any case, if the matter is not resolved, the student must notify (in writing) the faculty/professional staff member or Division Chairperson/supervisor within twenty (20) calendar days from the date the student knew or should reasonably have known about the matter.

If the above-named persons are not available or cannot be contacted, the student must submit in writing her/his intention to pursue the process at the Divisional/Unit level. The written statement must be sent to the Division Chairperson/ supervisor within the same twenty (20) day period noted above.

If the student wishes to pursue the matter immediately, the Division Chairperson/supervisor must schedule a meeting between the faculty member/professional staff member and the aggrieved student within ten (10) working days after being contacted by the student and it must be held within fifteen (15) days of such contact. The student and faculty/professional staff member will be informed in writing by the Division Chairperson/ supervisor of the outcome of the meeting.

If the student wishes to delay pursuing the matter until the semester is over, the Division Chairperson and/or supervisor must schedule a meeting between the faculty/professional staff member and the aggrieved student within twenty (20) working days of the next semester. The student and faculty/professional staff member will be informed in writing by the Division Chairperson/supervisor of the outcome of the meeting.

If the grievance is against the Division Chairperson/ supervisor, the student may begin the complaint process at the College/Unit level.

College/Unit Level

If the issue is not resolved at the Divisional level, within fifteen (15) working days of the Divisional level meeting, the student shall schedule a meeting with the Vice President for

Academic Affairs or the Executive Vice President and will provide, in writing, the rationale for the complaint.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs or the Executive Vice President will convene a meeting to attempt to effect a reconciliation between the two parties within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving the student's written rationale for the grievance. Pertinent documentation provided by the faculty or professional staff member and/or the student shall form the basis for the discussion at this stage. The faculty or professional staff member and the student may be assisted in the meeting by an advisor. The advisor must be from within the College community and cannot speak for the faculty/professional staff member or the student. The advisor can only advise the parties they represent.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs/Director will render a written decision within fifteen (15) working days of the College-level meeting.

Off-campus Authorities

To the extent possible, students should seek a resolution of such matters through the institution's complaint procedure before involving others.

State of Tennessee Complaint Procedures

Should the institution not be able to resolve the student complaint, the student has the right to contact the state of Tennessee and its appropriate agency to determine the course of action. Complaints can be filed with the following agencies in Tennessee:

- Complaints related to the application of state laws or rules related to approval to operate or licensure of a particular professional program within a postsecondary institution shall be referred to the appropriate State Board (i.e., State Boards of Health, State Board of Education, and so on) within the Tennessee State Government and shall be reviewed and handled by that licensing board (<http://www.tn.gov>, and then search for the appropriate division).
- Complaints related to state consumer protection laws (e.g., laws related to fraud or false advertising) shall be referred to the Tennessee Division of Consumer Affairs and shall be reviewed and handled by that Unit (<http://www.tn.gov/consumer/>).

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)

Allegations regarding noncompliance with accreditation standards, policies, and procedures may be made to SACSCOC, 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097. (The Commission's complaint policy, procedure and the Complaint form may be found on their website, <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/complaintpolicy.pdf>).