

## **‘FORMAL STUDENT COMPLAINT’, DEFINITION OF**

**Criterion:** Avila University students

**Policy Statement(s):**

1. At Avila University, a *formal student complaint* is defined as any nontrivial complaint, either academic or nonacademic. The complaint must be submitted formally in writing by a student to an office of a member of the Executive Committee or Human Resources, either through
  - a. a written complaint,
  - b. an email sent from a verified student email account or
  - c. through the online Campus Conduct Hotline (see procedure below).
2. The complaint will be investigated and a response will be provided to the student within a reasonable length of time.
3. Examples of items which would be considered a complaint include (but are not limited to):
  - a. Discrimination (e.g., sexual, racial, gender) complaint against a faculty, staff or student of Avila University.
  - b. Harassment (e.g., sexual, racial, gender) complaint against a faculty, staff or student of Avila University.
  - c. Complaint for failure of a University faculty or staff member to allow a student to pursue his/her rights to an appeal under university policies.
  - d. Written documents submitted as part of an appeal under Avila University policies (e.g., grade appeals, athletic eligibility appeals, financial aid SAP appeals, academic progress appeals, disability appeals, disciplinary action appeals).
  - e. Non-compliance with federal regulations and requirements such as ADA, Title IX, and all other federal compliance issues.
4. Not every written communication from a student is considered a complaint. Examples of items which would not be considered a complaint include (but are not limited to):
  - a. Requests for exceptions to university policies (e.g., tuition, financial aid, registration, athletic eligibility).
  - b. Written letters expressing a dislike of university personnel not connected to any of the complaint items listed above.
  - c. Written letters expressing a general dislike of a university policy not connected to any of the complaint items listed above.
  - d. Letters from parents on a student’s behalf.
  - e. Complaints submitted to a person other than a member of the Executive Committee or Human Resources office. In the event a student sends a complaint to another office, the student will be instructed to send the communication to the appropriate office.

**Procedure(s):**

1. Students with a complaint may send an email or a written letter to the office of a member of the Executive Committee or Human Resources. Complaints sent in one of these manners should be signed by the student. Members of the Executive Committee can be found on the Avila University web site.

2. The online Campus Conduct Hotline also may be used for submitting a complaint. The Hotline is available through the Avila University website at all times, seven days per week. The Hotline is operated by an independent organization so any calls made through this Hotline are completely confidential and can be anonymous. **Using this new reporting service is easy. If you have a complaint as defined above, simply dial toll-free to 866-943-5787 to make a report.**
3. Complaints received through the online hotline will be reviewed first by the Office of Human Resources. The Director of Human Resources will submit the complaint to the appropriate member of the Executive Committee for investigation and response.
4. Discrimination and harassment complaints will be reviewed first by the Office of Human Resources. The Director of Human Resources will submit the complaint to the appropriate member of the Executive Committee for investigation and response.
5. Non-compliance with Federal Regulations complaints will be reviewed first by the Office of Human Resources. The Director of Human Resources will submit the complaint to the appropriate member of the Executive Committee for investigation and response.
6. Grade appeals are submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs and the appeal process will follow the procedures outlined in the Grade Appeal Process Documents.
7. Athletic Eligibility Appeals are submitted to the Athletic Office. It is reviewed by the Athletic Eligibility Committee through the committee processes.
8. Financial Aid Appeals are submitted to the Financial Aid Office. The appeal follows the procedures outlined in the Financial Aid Appeals policy and procedure document.
9. Academic Progress Appeals are submitted to the Academic Affairs Office. Appeals are reviewed through the procedures outlined in the Academic Progress Appeals Policies and Procedures document.
10. Disability Appeals are submitted to the Student Learning Center Office. The appeal follows procedures outlined in the Disability Appeals Policies and Procedures document.
11. Disciplinary Appeals are submitted to the Office of Student Life. The appeal follows procedures outline in the Student Handbook for Disciplinary Appeals.
12. Complaints for failure to have access to appropriate appeal procedures are submitted to the Office of the President. The President will determine the appropriate investigation and response.

***Office—Person(s) Responsible for Implementation/Enforcement: Executive Committee Members and Human Resources Director***