

Student Complaint and Grievance Procedures

I. Purpose/Policy Statement

The University of Central Missouri (UCM) is committed to providing a fair and transparent process for resolving student complaints. This policy outlines procedures available to students who may have concerns about their experience at UCM.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all current and prospective students, including those students enrolled in on-campus, online, or distance education programs.

III. Definitions

- a. **Complaint:** A written notice to the university that objectively can be understood as a request for the university to investigate and make a decision about a concern made by a student.
- b. **Informal complaint:** Student has provided a written notice to the appropriate office of a concern via email, handwritten letter, or other form of written communication. Informal complaints must include the student's name, email address, and a description of the complaint. These complaints can be resolved informally, but a student may be required to submit a formal complaint depending on the type of concern. Students who submit informal complaints are not guaranteed confidentiality.
- c. **Formal Complaint:** Student has utilized one of the internal procedures listed below and has initiated a formal complaint process for resolution.
- d. **External Procedure:** A complaint process and procedure that is provided by, managed by, and resolved by an external governing body or agency.
- e. **Internal Procedure:** A complaint process and procedure that is provided by, managed by, and resolved by University of Central Missouri office and staff.

IV. Procedure

Students are encouraged to first attempt to resolve their concerns informally by speaking directly with the appropriate faculty, staff, or department from which the concern originated. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the student should utilize the following procedures:

- a. Internal Procedures: Campus procedures vary depending on the type of complaint. All students should utilize the publicly available grievance procedures below based on their specific circumstances.
- i. Academic
 - [Student Academic Appeal Procedures](#)
 - [Academic Honesty Policy](#)
 - ii. Student Experience
 - [Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Retaliation](#): The scope of this policy outlines the procedures for discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, and retaliation based on age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, pregnancy or parental status, national origin, veteran status, genetic information, disability, and all other legally protected classes.
 - [Student Conduct](#): This manual provides standards for student behavior and processes for violations of the standards.
 - [Anti-Hazing Policy and Procedures](#)
 - iii. [Parking / Traffic Ticket Appeals](#)
- b. External Procedures: If a student has utilized the UCM campus procedure for their specific circumstances and is dissatisfied with the determination or believes the determination was the result of failed processes, a student may be able to file a complaint under the following procedures:
- i. [Missouri Department of Higher Education](#): Students may submit complaints to the Missouri state institution governing body after exhausting the grievance procedures above.
 - ii. [Missouri Better Business Bureau complaint](#)
 - iii. [Higher Learning Commission](#): Students may submit complaints to the accrediting body for University of Central Missouri.
 - iv. [Office of Civil Rights Complaint](#): The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) has the authority to investigate complaints of discrimination
 - v. [Federal Student Aid Student Complaint](#): The Ombudsman Office is a final resource after individuals look for help through other customer service avenues. Before contacting the Ombudsman, borrowers concerned about student loans should contact their loan holder or visit our website for further information. Current students should contact their financial aid office first.

- vi. [State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement Complaint](#): Higher Education is required to oversee the delivery of postsecondary distance education across state lines. The National Council - State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (NC-SARA) is a voluntary agreement among member states and U.S. territories. This agreement provides national standards for interstate acceptance, ensuring acceptance of an out-of-state degree. This agreement is intended to make it easier for students to take online courses offered by postsecondary institutions based in another state.