



POLICY STATEMENT

NO. 4.17.00

COORDINATED BY: Office of Student Development

EFFECTIVE: December 02, 2020

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<https://www.lsus.edu/offices-and-services/policies-and-manuals/policy-statements>

SUBJECT: STUDENT COMPLAINTS

I. PURPOSE

LSUS strives to make student experiences positive and meaningful. The University also values feedback from its students and affords students the opportunity to express their concerns about services, activities, or academics in a process free from duress or retaliation. The University strives to address student concerns in a responsive and prompt manner. Finally, the University is committed to working with students towards amicable resolutions for their continued experience at LSUS, but also as a valuable educational experience in preparing them to address issues in a professional and productive manner after they leave the University.

II. DEFINITIONS

Informal Complaint: Either a verbal or written complaint brought forward by a student directly to the individual(s) involved.

Formal Complaint: A written complaint brought forward by a student following an unsuccessful or unsatisfactory resolution during the informal process. Students must submit the complaint by completing the online [Student Complaint Form](#).

III. POLICY

This policy applies to complaints issued by University students, whether they are enrolled on campus or online, and for which no other process is outlined in official policy. For example, complaints about sex discrimination, harassment,

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and/or retaliation are handled in accordance with the Board of Regents' Uniform Policy on Sexual Misconduct, LSU PM-73, and LSUS Code of Student Conduct.

LSUS also distinguishes between student complaints and student appeals of University policies and decisions. A student appeal, whether for an exception to a policy, a decision made by a University Hearing Panel, a grade, a financial aid award, or a refund policy, is not considered a student complaint. There are specific procedures in place for students who wish to make an appeal; these procedures vary according to the type of appeal. Information about appeals procedures are located in the relevant sections of the Student Handbook and/or in the LSUS Academic Catalog.

LSUS strives to address student concerns in a responsive and prompt manner. Students are encouraged to resolve concerns themselves by first working directly with the involved faculty or staff member(s). The student should attempt to resolve the issue informally within 30 days of the occurrence. The Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Development is available as a resource for students who have complaints and can assist them during an informal resolution. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the student may file a formal written complaint.

If the informal resolution of the student's complaint cannot be accomplished, the student can submit a formal complaint directly to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Development by completing the Student Complaint Form. Submission via the Student Complaint Form requires identifying information such as reporting party, other parties involved, and a proposed resolution. Completion of the Student Complaint Form provides sufficient information to ensure the complaint can be addressed. The Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Development will review the information and assign it to the University personnel responsible for the department or service area from which the complaint originates.

The relevant University official will review the complaint and contact the student within ten business days to verify their receipt of the complaint, clarify any information provided by the student, and request any additional information that may be needed to fully evaluate the complaint. This contact provides the

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student with an additional opportunity to provide any and all information they would like considered and to request a meeting with the University official.

The University official will investigate the student's complaint, gathering information from parties revealed in the complaint and other relevant sources. The University official will make a good faith effort to reach a final determination within thirty business days of the receipt of the student's formal written complaint. However, circumstances may warrant a lengthier period of time. The student will be informed of any significant delays.

Once completed, the University official will provide the student and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Development with a written notification of the findings and the outcome of the complaint. If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may file a written appeal with the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Development within ten business days. The appeal must include an explanation of their grounds for appeal and proposed resolution. The Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Development will hear the appeal or assign to the senior administrator in the area from which the complaint originated. The Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Development or senior administrator will conduct additional investigation, as necessary, respond to the student in writing within ten business days. The decision of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Development or senior administrator is final and not subject to further appeal.

Students can submit anonymous complaints without the disclosure of names, identifying parties, or requesting any action. Anonymous complaints are received via the [LSU Ethics, Integrity, and Misconduct Helpline](#). Such complaints will be addressed to the extent the limited information makes possible. The complaint will be recorded as "report only" and there is no assurance that the complaint will be addressed or resolved.

IV. RETENTION OF COMPLAINTS

A record of all complaints and outcome decisions are kept on file in the Office of Student Development, as well as in the office of the area from which the complaint originated. These complaints are maintained for a period of seven years. The complaint record is reviewed annually by the Provost and the

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Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Development. Feedback is provided to relevant areas where patterns are revealed or policy changes are indicated.

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01/13/2021

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