



UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND

Policy Manual

Policy #:	STU-5004	Policy Title:	Student Complaint Policy
Effective:	8/24/2020	Responsible Office:	Vice President for Student Development
Date Approved:	08/24/2020	Approval:	Vice President for Student Development
Replaces Policy Dated:	02/14/2020	Responsible University Official:	Vice President for Student Development

PURPOSE:

The University of Richmond (the “University”) values feedback from its students and believes students should be able to discuss problems and express concerns to the University and free from duress or retaliation. The University is committed to providing students with an avenue to express concerns and to work with University officials towards amicable resolutions. The University believes engaging in this process can also be an inherently valuable educational experience for students and can help prepare students to address issues in professional and productive manner after they leave the University.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to complaints issued by University students only, in writing.

This policy does not displace and is not intended to supplant other policies and procedures applicable to the handling of a student's complaint.

Specifically,

- Complaints about sex discrimination, harassment and/or retaliation are handled in accordance with the University's [Policy Prohibiting Sexual Misconduct](#).
- Complaints about discrimination, harassment and/or retaliation, not based on sex, are handled in accordance with the University's [Policy on Preventing and Responding to Discrimination and Harassment Against Students](#) and corresponding procedures.
- Complaints concerning alleged failures by the University of Richmond to comply with the requirements of FERPA should be communicated to the [Registrar's Office](#).

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- Complaints regarding the University of Richmond Police Department should be submitted in accordance with their [complaint procedure](#).
- Complaints related to the ADA/Section 504 accommodation process or related to the implementation of approved reasonable accommodations are handled in accordance with the University's [Disability Services Grievance and Appeal Process](#).
- Academic petitions and appeals are handled by the relevant department, school or committee in accordance with the provisions of the academic catalog

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POLICY STATEMENT:

STU-5004.1 – Policy Statement

Student complaints not falling under the categories identified above and for which no other process is outlined in official policy should be made to the supervisor or responsible staff member of the area from which the complaint originates or relates for attempted informal resolution of the complaint. Resolution of a majority of complaints can likely be resolved at this informal level.

If an informal resolution of the student's complaint cannot be accomplished, or if the complaint is about the supervisor or responsible staff member for the area, the student should then submit their complaint formally by completing and submitting the [Student Complaint Form](#). The Student Complaint Form can be submitted anonymously without the disclosure of name, the identification of parties involved, or requesting any action; such complaints will be addressed to the extent possible with limited information and recorded as "report only".

Upon receipt of a Student Complaint Form, the Assistant to the Vice President for Student Development will assign it to the University official responsible for the department from which the complaint originates. The relevant University official will review the complaint and contact the student within ten (10) 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 from the student for the University official to fully evaluate the complaint. This also provides the student with an additional opportunity to provide any and all information they would like considered and to request a meeting with the University official if they so desire.

The University official will then undertake efforts to evaluate and investigate the student's complaint to reach a determination. The University official will endeavor to reach a final determination within thirty (30) days of receipt of the student's formal written complaint, although circumstances may warrant a lengthier period of time and the student will be notified of the same.

The University official will provide the student with a written notification of the determination and outcome of their complaint. If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may file an appeal with the Vice President for Student Development. The appeal must be filed in writing within ten (10) business days of receipt of the outcome notification and include the grounds for the appeal. The Vice President for Student Development may hear the appeal or designate the dean or appropriate senior leader in the area from which the complaint originated to hear the appeal. The Vice President for Student Development or designee will consider timely appeals, conduct any additional investigation (if necessary), and make a final decision within ten (10) business days of receipt of the appeal. The Vice President for Student Development or designee will inform the student in writing of the outcome of the appeal. The decision of the Vice President for Student Development or designee is final and not subject to further appeal.

Students who are pursuing distance learning from a state covered by the University's NC-SARA Agreement may appeal the University's resolution of their complaint to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) so long as the complaint is not related to grades or student conduct matters. The University will comply with all SCHEV actions regarding the resolution of student complaint appeals from students pursuing distance learning under the the NC-SARA agreement.

STU-5004.2 – Applicable Accreditation Standards

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges *The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement Section 12: Academic and Student Support Services* 4. The institution (a) publishes appropriate and clear procedures for addressing written student complaints, (b) demonstrates that it follows the procedures when resolving them, and (c) maintains a record of student complaints that can be accessed upon request by SACSCOC. (*Student complaints*)

American Bar Association Standard 510. *Student Complaint Policies:*

- (a) A law school shall adopt, publish, and adhere to a policy or policies for addressing student complaints. The policy or policies must address, at a minimum, procedures for filing and addressing complaints, appeal rights, if any, and timelines.
- (b) A law school shall maintain a record of student complaints submitted according to the law school's complaint policy or policies that allege facts implicating the law school's compliance with the Standards even if a specific Standard is not cited in the complaint. The law school shall determine if the alleged facts implicate a Standard.
- (c) A law school shall maintain a record of student complaints implicating the law school's compliance with the Standards submitted during the most recent accreditation period. The record shall include the resolution of the complaints.

POLICY BACKGROUND:

This policy was revised in August 2020.

The February 2020 policy replaced the University's previous, longstanding complaint policy.

President's Cabinet and School Deans reviewed this policy prior to approval on 02/10/2020.

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Non-substantive edits made to policy on 08/07/2023 by VP for Student Development during policy review process.

Non-substantive edits made to policy on 3/5/2025 to update ABA Accreditation Standards.

POLICY CONTACT:

Vice President for Student Development