

The Seattle School of Theology & Psychology Student Complaint Policy

The Seattle School participates in Federal student aid programs that are authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Title 34 CFR §600.9 requires states to have a "process to review and appropriately act on complaints concerning the institution including enforcing applicable State laws." In addition, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and University requires that, In accordance with USDE regulation 602.16(a)(1)(ix), an institution *shall make available an account of the student complaints it has received, its processing of those complaints, and how that processing comports with the institution's policies and procedures on the handling of grievances or complaints.*

To comply with this regulation, The Seattle School provides the following information to our students:

When possible, students should strive to resolve complaints by working informally with the person(s) whose actions or inactions have caused the dissatisfaction, or that person's department supervisor. As a next step, a student is encouraged, when possible, to make an informal or verbal complaint to the person who is responsible for the area to which the complaint is directed.

The Seattle School makes every effort to resolve student complaints internally, using policies and procedures outlined in the current *Academic Catalog* or *Student Handbook*. It is expected that students will fully utilize any and all of such administrative procedures to address concerns and/or complaints in as timely a manner as possible. Official processes are in place for the following types of student complaints, in the locations referenced below.

- **Academic and Financial Appeals** - see *Academic Catalog*.
- **Academic integrity violations** - see *Student Handbook*. Refer to the Ethical Code of Conduct
- **Grade Appeals** - see *Academic Catalog*.
- **Non-Academic Complaints** (incidents of unprofessional behavior and other complaints that are not of an academic grade concern) - see *Student Handbook* or *Academic Catalog* Refer to the Ethical Code of Conduct.
- **Title IX violations** - see *Academic Catalog* and *Student Handbook*. Refer to the Nondiscrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Violence Policy.
- **Americans with Disabilities Act:** *Academic Catalog* and *Student Handbook*. Refer to the Nondiscrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Violence Policy.
- **Harassment or Discrimination:** *Academic Catalog* and *Student Handbook*. Refer to the Nondiscrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Violence Policy.

- **Criminal Activity:** Complaints involving matters of a criminal nature, such as assault, battery, and theft should be directed to the Seattle Police Department.

If your complaint is not addressed by one of these policies, and you have attempted to informally resolve it on your own without success, then you may submit an official complaint as follows:

Filing a Complaint

If an unofficial complaint is not satisfactorily resolved or remains unresolved, a student may submit an Official Written Complaint through the Academic Services Office, Academic Dean, or the Office of Students & Alumni. The *Student Complaint Form* is available on Google Drive.

A written complaint must contain the following information:

- a. Name, date, and signature of the student filing the complaint.
- b. Description and date of the problem or concern;
- c. Names of persons, department or policy responsible for the complaint (if known);
- d. Description of any actions taken informally to resolve the problem or concern;
- e. Recommendation as to what could be possible resolution(s) of the complaint;
- f. Any background information believed to be relevant;

Student complaint records are kept in the office of the official to whom they are submitted. Summary information is recorded in the *Student Complaint Log* (located in the All-Staff folder on Google Drive).

Complaint resolution

The student filing the complaint will be informed of the action taken or progress accomplished within 15 working days, unless extenuating circumstances necessitate additional time. If extra time is needed the student will be informed of this, along with the nature of the extenuating circumstance. Any retaliatory action taken by any member of The Seattle School (student or employee) against any student or employee of the school as a result of a student seeking a resolution of a written complaint under this policy, or cooperating in an investigation, is prohibited.

In the unlikely event that an issue cannot be resolved by The Seattle School, students may file a complaint with the following. These agencies should be contacted only after the student has registered a complaint with the school and has not received a response to the request for resolution.

Washington Student Achievement Council

PO Box 43430, Olympia WA 98504-3430
(360) 753-7866

The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) has authority to investigate student complaints against specific schools. WSAC may not be able to investigate every student

complaint. Visit <https://www.wsac.wa.gov/student-complaints> for information regarding the WSAC complaint process.

Commission on Accrediting, Association of Theological Schools 10
Summit Park Drive, Pittsburgh PA 15275-1110
(412) 788-6505

www.ats.edu/uploads/accrediting/documents/commission-policies-and-procedures.pdf

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities The
Commission Office
8060 165th Ave NE, Suite 100
Redmond, WA 98052
(425) 558-4224

<http://www.nwccu.org/accreditation/standards-policies/policies/record-of-student-complaints-policy/>

Student Complaint Log

The information in the electronic log of student complaints, which is maintained by the Academic Services Office, includes the following confidential information on each complaint:

1. Date the complaint was submitted;
2. Person/Department receiving the complaint;
3. Nature of the complaint;
4. Action taken by the school to investigate and/or resolve the complaint, and all documentation associated with those steps;
5. Date and the final resolution, action or explanation regarding the complaint, including referral to outside agencies; and
6. Any other external actions initiated by the student to resolve the complaint, if known by The Seattle School (e.g. lawsuit, EEOC investigation, etc.)

Information on all student complaints may be made available for outside review by the Department of Education, The Seattle School's accrediting agencies, and any other official legally entitled to such review. However, steps will be taken to insure the anonymity of any student who files a complaint. The purpose of an outside review can include but is not limited to:

1. Establish that The Seattle School processes complaints in a timely manner
2. Demonstrate fairness and attention to student concerns, and
3. Identify any pattern in the complaints that suggests problems with institutional quality.

STUDENT COMPLAINT FORM

The Seattle School is committed to addressing student complaints. Students are encouraged to discuss their complaints directly with the person responsible whenever possible. If the issue is not or cannot be resolved through discussion with the responsible person, then the student should complete this form and submit it to the supervisor of the person against whom the complaint is to be made. Every effort will be made to respond to the complaint in an appropriate manner.

NAME:

DATE:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE:

EMAIL:

BRIEFLY DESCRIBE THE NATURE OF YOUR COMPLAINT.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO RESOLVE YOUR COMPLAINT?

Explain briefly what steps you have taken to resolve your complaint. Specify the dates and the persons to whom you made the complaint.

RESOLUTION:

Explain briefly what you might consider to be a satisfactory resolution to your complaint.

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

RECEIVED BY:

DATE:

DISPOSITION/RESOLUTION:

Administrative Actions Taken:

Final Results: