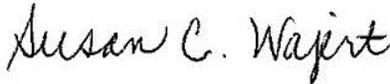


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| <b>SUPERSEDES:</b> September 8, 2015  | <b>SECTION:</b> Academic and Student Affairs            |
| <b>POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL</b>  | <b>CODE NO.:</b> 519                                    |
| <b>MERCY COLLEGE OF OHIO, TOLEDO, OHIO</b>  | <b>SUBJECT:</b> Student Complaint Policy                |
| <br>Signature: Dr. Susan Wajert, President | <b>DATE ORIGINATED:</b> May 11, 2015                    |
|   | <b>DATE COMMITTEE BOARD APPROVED:</b> February 28, 2017 |
|   | <b>DATE BOARD APPROVED:</b> March 14, 2017              |
|   | <b>DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:</b> 2018 January 1-31           |

## Student Complaint Policy

### PURPOSE:

To provide a resource for faculty, staff, students and the Mercy College of Ohio (“the College”) Community to ensure that the concerns and complaints of students are addressed fairly and resolved promptly.

### POLICY:

The College is committed to providing an educational climate that is conducive to the personal and professional development of each individual. The Student Complaint Policy and Procedure can be used when students believe they have been treated unfairly or inequitably by another member of the College community or if they have other complaints about their experience at the College.

This policy is to be used when a student concern is not covered by existing policies, such as the College’s Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures, Student Code of Conduct/Student Judicial System; and the Student Academic Appeal Process. Additionally, the Student Complaint Policy and Procedure will not be used as an additional appeal when another set of procedures has already been applied. The objective is to settle the issue at the level closest to the student. The main categories of complaints and their respective line of reporting are as follows:

- Academic – Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA)
- Non-Academic – Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA)
- Gender-based Harassment/Misconduct – Title IX Coordinator
- Enrollment Management – Vice President of Strategic Planning and Enrollment Management

The complaint procedures for each of these areas are outlined in the College Catalog and on the website.

No retribution or retaliation against any individual complainant may be taken by any faculty member, staff member, or College committee simply because the complaint was brought. All student concerns and complaints are taken seriously and kept confidential.

**PROCEDURE**

1. Informal Complaint
  - a. Informal complaints are a matter of advice and students are encouraged to seek an informal resolution of the matter by discussing the situation directly with the individual(s) involved.
2. Formal Complaint
  - a. Students have the right to put in writing complaints regarding any aspect of the college. The complaint should be addressed to the Vice President of the division to which the complaint applies. (See Policy section for appropriate Vice President)
  - b. The Vice President/Title IX Coordinator will convene an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of one member each from the following divisions: Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and Enrollment Management. This committee will investigate the complaint and determine a course of action within ten (10) business days of the date the complaint was received. The investigation may include interviewing witnesses and other involved parties, and reviewing other evidence submitted in support of the complaint.
  - c. In all cases, the accused party will be notified in writing within ten (10) business days of the date the complaint was received and will have the opportunity to respond in writing to the Ad Hoc Committee conducting the investigation within ten (10) days of receipt of the notice of complaint.
  - d. The Ad Hoc Committee will determine a course of action, which may lead to the following:
    - The complaint has no merit and will be dropped.
    - The complaint has merit and an appropriate outcome is reached.
3. If the outcome is not satisfactory, the student may appeal in writing to the President of the College within ten (10) business days of receipt of the written decision to seek resolution. The President will respond in writing within ten (10) business days to the appeal, and the President's decision is final.

***Documentation***

Formal Complaints, as defined by the college, and their respective resolutions are appropriately tracked and documented. Electronic copies are kept with the respective Vice President/Title IX Coordinator. Hard copies of each complaint are kept with the respective Vice President/Title IX Coordinator's office in a locked file.

An annual summary of each complaint along with its resolution will be prepared by each Vice President/Title IX Coordinator and kept by the respective Vice President/Title IX Coordinator. The summary will be brought to Executive Staff for review prior to April 1<sup>st</sup> of each year and the summary will be shared with the Board of Trustees at the annual meeting in June.

At any time students have the right to file a complaint with any of the following:

***Complaints to the Ohio Department of Higher Education (formerly the Ohio Board of Regents)***

The Ohio Department of Higher Education is responsible for responding to formal complaints against public, independent non-profit and proprietary institutions of higher education in Ohio. While the Ohio Department of Higher Education has limited authority over colleges and universities, and cannot offer legal advice or initiate civil court cases, their staff will review submitted complaints and work with student complainants and institutions.

Ohio Department of Higher Education  
25 South Front Street  
Columbus, OH 43215  
Phone: (614) 466-6000  
Fax: (614) 466-5866  
[hotline@highered.ohio.gov](mailto:hotline@highered.ohio.gov)

***Complaints to the Ohio Attorney General***

The Ohio Attorney General reviews general consumer complaints about business, non-profit and public entities. More information is available via the Attorney General's office and website.

Ohio Attorney General  
30 E. Broad St., 14th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215  
Phone: (800) 282-0515  
<http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/about-ag/file-a-complaint.aspx>

***Complaints to the Higher Learning Commission***

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) has established a clear distinction between individual grievances and complaints that appear to involve broad institutional practices. Where a complaint does raise issues regarding the institution's ongoing ability to meet the Criteria of Accreditation, the Commission forwards the complaint to the institution and requests a formal response.

HLC Contact information:

The Higher Learning Commission, Member of the North Central Association  
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500  
Chicago, Illinois 60604-1411  
Phone: (312) 263-0456 or 800-621-7440  
Fax: (312) 263-7462  
[info@hicommission.org](mailto:info@hicommission.org)

HLC complaints webpage: <https://www.ncahlc.org/HLC-Institutions/complaints.html>.

**REFERENCING FORMS**

***Electronic Form*** Concern and Complaint Form 511/519-A

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Board Approved: March 14, 2017  
Board Committee Approved: February 28, 2017  
Revised: February 2017  
Board Approved: September 8, 2015  
Board Committee Approved: August 25, 2015  
Originated: May 11, 2015