

Student Conflict Resolution and Complaints Policy

CHSU is committed to fostering a supportive environment where students are listened to, understood and appreciated. It is important to CHSU that all members of the CHSU community are treated fairly and that they receive prompt responses to problems and concerns. CHSU understands that concerns may arise in the educational environment and encourages students and employees to communicate these concerns to CHSU so that it can continue to foster a supportive environment for all. CHSU desires a fair resolution of all such concerns. Whenever possible, the concerns should be resolved informally; however, CHSU recognizes that this may not be possible or appropriate in all cases. For this reason, CHSU provides a complaint and grievance procedure to promote prompt and responsible resolution of issues covered by this policy. The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent and consistent process for resolving such complaints.

This policy applies to general complaints regarding the learning environment made by students or made regarding students except for: (a) complaints regarding student misconduct governed by the CHSU Student Professionalism and Conduct Policy; (b) complaints governed by the CHSU Unlawful Discrimination, Harassment or Sexual Violence Policy; or (c) complaints governed by the CHSU Complaints Concerning Approval to Operate or Accreditation Policy.

This policy also does not apply to workplace complaints made by employees of CHSU, which are governed by the CHSU Employee Conflict Resolution and Complaints Policy.

CHSU, in its sole discretion, determines which process or policy applies to each complaint.

Definitions

Complaint: Any unresolved grievance, dissatisfaction, wrong, concern or hardship regarding the learning environment, except as described above. This may include any issue regarding the application of a CHSU policy, practice or procedure. This list is not exhaustive.

Complainant: The person with a Complaint.

Respondent: The person or entity against whom a Complaint has been made. The Respondent may be a student or employee of CHSU, CHSU itself, or one of its component colleges.

Anti-Retaliation Statement

CHSU will not tolerate any retaliation against a Complainant or other CHSU employee or student for filing a Complaint under this policy or for participating in any investigation or other process as a result of a Complaint filed under this policy. Any such retaliation should be reported according to the same procedures outlined below for filing a complaint.

Complaint Filing and Resolution Process

Step 1:

Initial Verbal Discussion: A Complainant is generally expected to raise any Complaint verbally with the Respondent in an attempt to resolve the conflict as informally as possible. This should be done as soon as possible following any alleged incident. If the Complainant feels it would be inappropriate to raise the matter with the Respondent, the Complainant may proceed directly to Step 2.

Step 2:

Written Complaint: If a Complainant feels the matter has not been resolved satisfactorily through informal means or is not appropriate for informal resolution under Step 1 in light of the facts alleged, the Complainant may file a written complaint by completing the appropriate forms with the Office of the Provost. If a written complaint is received by another CHSU department, it shall be forwarded to the Provost (or designee). The Provost (or designee) shall be responsible for overseeing the processing of written complaints under this policy; however, the Provost (or designee) may determine that a complaint is more appropriately handled by college-level administration and, if so, may forward the complaint to the appropriate college. Complaints will be treated with the greatest degree of confidentiality possible. However, limitations on confidentiality may include CHSU's obligation to investigate Complaint allegations or fulfill other duties required by law or policy. Not all complaints will require an investigation. If CHSU conducts an investigation, the Provost (or designee) shall select an appropriate CHSU administrator or external party to conduct the investigation ("Investigator"). The Investigator may, in some cases, be from the Office of the Provost and/or subsequently serve as Mediator, as described in Step 3 below. However, in all cases, the Investigator must be a neutral party.

Step 3:

Optional Mediation: Mediation is a problem-solving approach which requires a willingness of all those involved with the Complaint to work together to resolve the issues raised by the Complaint. CHSU encourages, but does not require, mediation of Complaints under this policy. CHSU acknowledges that some situations will not be appropriate to be handled through mediation. If the Complaint is appropriate for mediation and all those involved elect to participate in mediation, then a neutral party will be selected to facilitate mediation of the dispute ("Mediator"). The Mediator shall be a member of the CHSU administration, faculty, staff or student body, or an external party free from bias regarding the parties or matters addressed in the Complaint. The Mediator will set ground rules for the mediation and will help facilitate the discussions but ultimately it will be up to the parties to agree to a resolution of the Complaint. If agreement cannot be reached, the Complaint will move on to Step 4.

Step 4:

Formal Decision: If mediation of a written Complaint does not resolve the Complaint or the Complaint has not been mediated, a determination will be made regarding what the next steps will be based on the type and severity of allegations made in the Complaint. Generally, a CHSU administrator designated by the Office of the Provost will communicate a written resolution to the Complainant and other parties, as appropriate, within thirty (30) business days of receipt of the Complaint by the Provost's Office or the end of mediation, whichever is later. In making a determination, the CHSU administrator may consult the Investigator or Mediator, if applicable, as well as the Complainant and/or Respondent.

Step 5:

Appeal: Either the Complainant or Respondent may appeal the formal decision to the Provost or, if the Provost directly handled processing of the complaint then the appeal shall be to the President. Any such appeal must be filed in writing within five (5) business days following the date of the formal decision. The appropriate administrator shall review the formal decision and shall provide a response to the appeal within ten (10) business days following the receipt of the appeal. The appeal decision shall be final.

Records of Complaints

Records of Complaints under this policy shall be maintained by the Office of the Provost in accordance with CHSU's Secure Student Recordkeeping Policy.