



Student Complaint Packet

It is the policy and practice of Chattanooga State Community College to provide a fair and efficient process for students to present complaints related to conflict with students or employees of the College, as well as objections to an action or condition of the College. When filing a complaint, the burden of proof rests upon the student, and the standard shall be by preponderance of the evidence. Retaliatory behavior is taken seriously by the College, and no retaliation should be taken against a student for lodging a complaint or for participating in a complaint's investigative process.

Definitions:

- Complainant – the individual or group who is the initiator of the complaint
- Respondent – the individual, group, or unit of the college against whom the complaint is filed
- Multilevel administrative review – a process involving the Respondent and the supervisors and/or administrators to whom the Respondent reports

Procedures:

- 1) The student should first attempt to address the issue informally by contacting the individual against whom the complaint exists (Respondent) and work to resolve the issue if possible *before* filing a formal complaint with the College. At this step, refer to the **Informal Student Grievance Matrix** which is on page 4 of this complaint packet and also posted on the College's website.
- 2) If a resolution cannot be achieved, the next step is to contact the Office of Student Conduct for consultation and/or to submit a formal complaint. A formal complaint should be submitted **in writing** to the Office of Student Conduct. The written complaint should contain a summary of the complaint and/or reason for filing the complaint and the resolution or outcome the Complainant is seeking. Supporting documentation or images may be included with the written complaint, as well as a list of other persons who may provide supporting details. The written complaint should be submitted within ten (10) days of the alleged conflict or action. Formal complaints may be submitted through the College's website, and the Office of Student Conduct will also accept handwritten or typed complaints (see guidelines on page 6 of this complaint packet).

Online form: https://www.chattanoogastate.edu/report_conduct_or_complaint

- 3) An acknowledgment of receipt will be sent to the Complainant within three (3) business days and to the Assistant Vice President of Student Engagement & Support Services or his/her designee will request a preliminary meeting with the Complainant for clarification and to inform Complainant of these procedures.

- 4) Upon receipt of the complaint, the Assistant Vice President of Student Engagement & Support Services or his/her designee will notify appropriate persons and make requests for information and documentation. Pertinent information must be submitted to the Office of Student Conduct within ten (10) business days.
- 5) The Assistant Vice President of Student Engagement or his/her designee may attempt to resolve the complaint by facilitating discussion and suggesting action(s).
- 6) A multilevel supervisory or administrative review of the complaint and information gathered will be used when deemed appropriate and beneficial to expediting the resolution process.
- 7) The Assistant Vice President of Student Engagement or his/her designee will review all information provided and when appropriate will make recommendations to the appropriate Vice President or designee regarding the complaint.
- 8) The final resolution or finding of “no resolution” will be filed in the Office of Student Conduct within 30-45 days of the date the complaint is filed. The summer semester and holiday breaks may affect this timeframe. If there are circumstances requiring an extension of the time, documentation will be made and the involved parties will be notified.
- 9) If at any time during the investigative process a student feels the need for support to be provided, a counselor from the Student Support Center will be recommended to the student, or the student may choose a faculty or staff member from the college. Students who wish to involve someone other than a campus member must make the request, with supporting reasons, to the Assistant Vice President of Student Engagement & Support Services.
- 10) A meeting will be held with the complainant to discuss findings and recommendations.
- 11) The student may sign accepting the resolution or if the Complainant is not satisfied with the recommended resolution or no resolution has been reached, the Complainant may elect to have a committee appointed to review the information and render a final decision. The committee will consist of representatives appointed by the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Vice President of Student Affairs, the Executive Vice President of Business and Finance, and two members appointed by the Student Government Association’s president. The committee’s decision will be final.

For questions or concerns about student complaints, please contact one of the following offices:

Assistant Vice President of Student Engagement and Support Services
(423) 697-4475
Student Center, Room 214

Office of Student Conduct
(423) 697-3276 or (423) 697-3390
Health & Physical Fitness (HPF/gym) building, Room 106 or 107

INFORMAL STUDENT GRIEVANCE MATRIX

The Informal Student Grievance Matrix was created to assist students in finding the correct people and procedures for having their questions answered and their concerns resolved.

Students are encouraged to pursue *informal resolution* to grievances whenever possible. In most cases (unless otherwise defined by college policy), this entails bringing the issue to the attention of the person or office where the concern arises. If dissatisfied with the response, the student may contact the appropriate area supervisor, director, department head, dean, or vice president for resolution.

This matrix outlines the procedures for student complaints and explains where the **initial** complaint or appeal should be made, along with each subsequent step in the process.

A student may decide to forgo resolving the issue(s) at the lowest level and instead initiate a formal grievance at any time.

Please see the [Campus Directory](#) to obtain contact information for faculty/staff members, campus offices, departments, deans' and vice presidents' offices, etc.

Abbreviations:

CDC = Child Development Center

Dean SESS = Dean of Student Engagement and Support Services

EVP = Executive Vice President for Business and Finance

SGA = Student Government Association

VPAA = Vice President of Academic Affairs

VPSA = Vice President of Student Affairs

Area of Concern	First Attempt to Resolve at Lowest Level	Second Attempt to Resolve at Lowest Level	Last Attempt before Official Written Grievance
Academic Integrity Violations	Course Instructor	Department Head or Academic Dean; Academic Appeals Committee	VPAA
Bookstore	Staff Manager	Business Office	EVP Bus & Fin or SGA
Cafeteria	Cafeteria Staff	Director Food Services	EVP Bus & Fin or SGA
Campus Safety	Campus Police Staff	Campus Police Chief	EVP Bus & Fin
Childcare	CDC Staff	CDC Director	EVP Bus & Fin
Discrimination, Harassment, Retaliation	Office of Student Conduct	Assistant Vice President of Student Engagement and Support Services;	VPSA

		Affirmative Action Officer	
Disruptive Behavior in Classroom	Instructor	Department Head or Academic Dean	Office of Student Conduct
Area of Concern	First Attempt to Resolve at Lowest Level	Second Attempt to Resolve at Lowest Level	Last Attempt before Official Written Grievance
Facilities	Facilities Office Staff	Director of Facilities	EVP Bus & Fin
Financial Aid	Financial Aid Staff	Director of Financial Aid	EVP Bus & Fin
General Student Concerns	SGA Office	SGA Cabinet Meeting	Dean SESS
Grade Appeals	Faculty member	Academic Appeals Committee	VPAA
Issues with a course and/or instructor	Professor/Instructor	Department Head or Academic Dean	VPAA
Library	Library Staff	Director of Library Services	VPAA or SGA
Parking Tickets	SGA Office (appeal form)	SGA Appeals Committee	Dean SESS
Records, Transcripts	Director of Records	AVP Student Affairs	VPSA
Registration	Registrar	AVP Student Affairs	VPSA
Sexual Discrimination, Harassment	Office of Student Conduct; Campus Police	Assistant Vice President of Student Engagement and Support Services, Title IX Coordinator	VPSA
Sexual Misconduct (includes assault, stalking, dating or domestic violence)	Office of Student Conduct; Campus Police	Assistant Vice President of Student Engagement and Student Support Services; Title IX Coordinator	VPSA
Student Account/Billing	Business Office Staff	Bursar	EVP Bus & Fin
Student Activities (includes clubs & orgs)	Director of Student Activities	Assistant Vice President of Student Engagement and Student Support Services	VPSA
Students with Disabilities	Director of Disabilities Support Services	Assistant Vice President of Student Engagement and Student Support Services	VPSA or HR Executive Director
Violation of Student Rights	Office of Student Conduct	Assistant Vice President of Student Engagement and Student Support Services	VPSA

Other Resources:

- Campus Traffic Violation Appeal forms are available in the Student Life office, HPF-180
- [Grade Appeal Form](#) (hard copies are also available in each academic division office)

**Chattanooga State Community College
Student Complaint Form**

(if student chooses to submit a hard copy rather than the online form)

Complainant's Name: _____

Student ID # (A#): _____ Phone #: _____

Email address: _____

Date of Issue: _____ Approximate Time: _____ a.m. / p.m.

Department/Office or Area of Campus: _____

Name(s) of Involved Person(s) or Organization this complaint is against:

Describe the issue/complaint *(use an additional sheet of paper if necessary)*:

Describe any efforts you have already made to try to resolve this issue:

What resolution/outcome would you like to see in this matter?

*** Please attach any documents, photos, etc. you would like reviewed in conjunction with this complaint.**

I hereby acknowledge that the information provided in this complaint form is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Complainant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Affairs Policy 03:36:00 – Student Complaints

- A. The exercise and preservation of student freedoms and rights require a respect for the rights of all in the campus community. The objective of the Student Complaint Policy is to ensure that the concerns and complaints of Chattanooga State students are given fair and prompt consideration in accordance with the procedures available. Every attempt will be made to resolve the issue(s) at the lowest possible level.
- B. Chattanooga State uses a variety of methods to inform students on how to file a complaint such as; New Student Orientation, Student Handbook, SGA events, Organizational and clubs meetings, emails, and classroom presentations. Online reporting is available through the College's website at <https://www.chattanoogaastate.edu/how-do-i-report>. Faculty and staff are informed about how students may submit a complaint through division/department meetings.
- C. Complaints may be submitted through the online reporting feature of the College's Maxient database (link is available on the College's website) or through a written statement submitted to the Office of Student Conduct. Complaints pertaining to an academic issue (i.e. dispute about a grade, attendance/clock hours, etc.) may be referred to the corresponding academic division for appropriate resolution, and complaints involving a faculty or staff member will be shared with the College's Human Resources office.
- D. Chattanooga State Community College follows the Complaint & Investigation Procedure outlined in the P-080 Guideline set forth by the Tennessee Board of Regents regarding the orderly resolution of complaints of discrimination or harassment on the basis of protected statuses such as race, color, religion, creed, ethnic or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, disability, age (as applicable), status as a covered veteran, genetic information, and any other category protected by federal or state civil rights law related to the institutions and office of the Tennessee Board of Regents.

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Complaint Resolution Policies and Procedures for Non-Tennessee Resident Students in State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement States (commonly known as SARA)

Student complaints relating to consumer protection laws that involve distance learning education offered under the terms and conditions of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) must first be filed with the institution to seek resolution. Complainants not satisfied with the outcome of the institution's internal process may appeal, within two years of the incident about which the complaint is made, to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (<https://www.tn.gov/thec/bureaus/student-aid-and-compliance/postsecondary-state-authorization/request-for-complaint-review.html>). For purposes of this process, a complaint shall be defined as a formal assertion in writing that the terms of SARA or the laws, standards or regulations incorporated by the SARA Policies and Standards (<http://www.nc-sara.org/content/sara-manual>) have been violated by the institution operating under the terms of SARA. For a list of SARA member states, please visit the NC-SARA website (<https://www.nc-sara.org/directory>). Students residing in non-SARA states should consult their respective state of residence for further instruction for filing a complaint.