

## **BETHEL COLLEGE**

### **Consumer Complaint Policy**

Students should be aware that, should they have complaints about their academic program or their financial aid, Bethel College has implemented the following complaint procedure. To the extent possible, students should seek a resolution of such matters through this complaint procedure before involving others.

#### **Formal Complaint Definition**

A complaint directed to the Bethel College President or a member of the Bethel College Administrative Cabinet (“Cabinet”) about the institution and/or its operation that a student wishes to have formally resolved.

A formal student complaint is...

- a written and signed complaint;
- is initiated by a student or a family member on behalf of a student (and confirmed by the student);
- any non-trivial, non-routine complaint, either academic or non-academic.

Petitions for waiver of Bethel College policy or community standards, appeals of student conduct resolutions, and grade appeals are not formal student complaints.

Complaints related to discrimination, harassment, and retaliation are handled via the Title IX Coordinator (titleixcoordinator@bethelks.edu). Discrimination, harassment, and retaliation complaint resolution procedures are available at <https://www.bethelks.edu/about/consumer-information/equal-opportunity-harassment-non-discrimination>.

Incidents of non-sexual harassment or discrimination should be submitted to the Office of Student Life and may be investigated via the Student Conduct process.

Formal student complaints and their resolution are logged by the Cabinet member receiving the complaint, are regularly reviewed by the Cabinet, and submitted to the Office of the President.

#### **Initiating a Formal Complaint**

A written complaint signed by a current Bethel College student addressed to the President and/or a Cabinet member.

A complaint sent electronically from a current student’s Bethel College email address sent to the President and/or a Cabinet member.

A complaint initiated through the Student Life Concern form may be considered a formal complaint if the resolution of the complaint rises to the cabinet level. The link to the Student Concern form is here.

<https://www.bethelks.edu/form/student-life-concern>

*Adapted from St. Mary’s College and North Central College*

#### **Recipients of Formal Complaints**

- Academic complaints may be filed with the vice president for academic affairs
- Alumni relations complaints may be filed with the vice president for development
- Athletic department complaints may be filed with the athletic director
- College relations or communication complaints may be filed with the vice president for marketing and communications

- Financial Aid complaints may be filed with the vice president for enrollment management
- Student account complaints may be filed with the vice president for business affairs
- Student life complaints may be filed with the vice president for student life

### **Processing and Resolution of Complaints**

Each complaint will be reviewed by the appropriate unit of the college and students will be notified in writing of the institution's response to their complaint. All formal complaints received by the President and/or a Cabinet Member will be kept on file in the President's Office and will be officially recorded in the College's records. Elements related to the complaint that are recorded include (1) the date the complaint was received, (2) a description of the complaint, (3) steps taken to resolve the complaint, (4) any final decision reached by the College on the complaint and, (5) any changes made to College process based on what was learned from the complaint. This tracking and record keeping will allow for the College to regularly review complaints it receives in a systematic and thorough manner. This enables the College to integrate what it has learned from the complaint process into improvements in services or in teaching and learning.

### **Other Bethel College Policies and Procedures**

This complaint policy will be reviewed to work in compliance with all other Bethel College policies, protocols, and procedures. Depending on the incident and President and/or Cabinet discretion the investigation and/or resolution of a formal complaint may supersede another Bethel College policy, procedure or protocol.

### **State of Kansas Complaint Procedures**

Should Bethel College be unable to resolve the student complaint, the student has the right to contact the state of Kansas and its appropriate agency to determine the course of action. Complaints can be filed with the following agencies in Kansas:

- Complaints related to state consumer protection laws (e.g., laws related to fraud or false advertising) shall be referred to the Consumer Protection Division in the office of the Kansas Attorney General and shall be reviewed and handled by that Unit (<http://ag.ks.gov/consumer-protection>).  
*Adapted from St. Mary's College and North Central College*
- Complaints related to the application of state laws or rules related to approval to operate or licensure of a particular professional program within a postsecondary institution shall be referred to the appropriate State Board (i.e., State Boards of Health, State Board of Education, and so on) within the Kansas State Government and shall be reviewed and handled by that licensing board ([www.kansas.gov/agencies/](http://www.kansas.gov/agencies/)) and then search for the appropriate division);

### **NC Sara**

NC-Sara requires that institutions provide current and prospective students with contact information with the member states portal agency and process to file consumer complaints that cannot be resolved with the institution. Complaints only related to distance education are covered under this policy.

Examples of consumer complaints, taken from NC-Sara's manual, against an institution could include:

- Veracity of recruitment and marketing materials
- Accuracy of job placement data
- Accuracy of information about tuition, fees, and financial aid
- Complete and correct admission requirements for courses and programs
- Accuracy of information about the Institution's accreditation and/or any programmatic/specialized

accreditation held by the institution's programs

- Accuracy of information about whether course work meets any relevant Professional Licensing requirements or the requirements of specialized Accrediting Agencies
- Accuracy of information about whether the Institution's course work will transfer to other Institutions
- Operation of Distance Education programs consistent with practices expected by institutional accreditors (and, if applicable, programmatic/specialized accreditors) and/or the C-RAC Guidelines for Distance Education

Bethel College makes every effort to resolve student complaints internally. If you have a complaint about any of the above, please contact the Vice President for Academic Affairs Office. 316-284-5239

### **Student Concerns Regarding Kansas Sara Institutions**

Issues not resolved at the institution level may be directed to the home state SARA portal agency of the institution against which the complaint has been logged. For institutions based in Kansas, the portal agency is the Kansas Board of Regents. Students with issues regarding approved Kansas institutions refer to this link.

[https://www.kansasregents.org/academic\\_affairs/sara](https://www.kansasregents.org/academic_affairs/sara)

If your complaint is not resolved, you may file a complaint with NC-SARA at <https://www.nc-sara.org/student-complaints>.

### **Higher Learning Commission (HLC)**

Allegations regarding noncompliance with accreditation standards, policies, and procedures may be made to HLC, 230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500, Chicago, IL 60604. (The Commission's complaint policy, procedure and the complaint form may be found on their website, <https://www.hlcommission.org/Students-Communities/complaints.html>.)