

III 00 06 STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Purpose

All student complaints must be addressed. The purpose of this policy is to identify and define types of student complaints and outline the procedures a student must follow to file a complaint.

Types of Complaints

1. A student complaint of discrimination or harassment
2. A student complaint against a faculty member.
3. A student complaint against non-faculty employees.
4. A student complaint against another student.
5. All other complaints against the College.

Student Complaints Related to Discrimination or Harassment

Students may report complaints of discrimination and/or harassment to the Title IX/EEO Coordinator and/or the Vice President for Student Services or designee. Refer to VSCC Policies VIII:04:00 and VIII:05:00 for information and procedures concerning complaints involving discrimination and/or harassment.

Students with disabilities seeking to file a disability-based discrimination or harassment complaint should contact the College's Title IX/EEO Coordinator and/or the Vice President for Student Services, or designee. Students with disabilities should follow guidelines and procedures listed in the Disability Services Handbook concerning complaints about the instructional accommodations they are receiving.

Records of discrimination/harassment complaints shall be maintained in the Title IX/EEO Coordinator's office.

Student Complaint Procedures Not Related to Discrimination/Harassment

All complaints under this heading should be filed within seven (7) business days following the incident.

Student complaint against a faculty member:

1. In the case of a student complaint against a faculty member involving a classroom experience, the student will be directed to speak with the faculty member.
2. If the complaint is not resolved with the faculty member, then the student should speak with the Department Chair or Division Dean in absence of the Chair.

3. If further resolution is required, then a formal written complaint must be submitted to the Vice President for Student Services or designee. The Vice President for Student Services or designee will work with all parties to bring resolution to the complaint. Matters involving academic misconduct will be adjudicated utilizing processes found in VSCC Policy III:00:05.

Student complaint against non-faculty employees:

1. In the case of a student complaint against a non-faculty employee, the student will be directed to speak with the Vice President for Student Services or designee.
2. The Vice President for Student Services or designee will speak with the non-faculty employee's direct supervisor or appropriate Vice President. The direct supervisor or appropriate Vice President should work with the non-faculty employee to resolve the issue.
3. If further resolution is required then a formal written complaint must be submitted by the student to the Vice President for Student Services or designee.
4. If necessary, the Vice President for Student Services or designee may contact the Office of Human Resources and together investigate the complaint to resolve the issue.

Student complaint against another student:

1. In the case of a student complaint against another student the student will be directed to speak with the Vice President for Student Services or designee.
2. The Vice President for Student Services or designee with assistance, if applicable, from other College personnel, will investigate the complaint to resolve the issue.

All other complaints against the College:

1. In the case of a complaint against the College, the student will be directed to speak with the Vice President for Student Services or designee.
2. The Vice President for Student Services or designee with assistance, if applicable, from other College personnel, will speak with the student and all parties involved to bring resolution to the complaint.

If a resolution is reached to any of the complaints outlined above, no further action will be required. If a resolution is not reached through a preliminary investigation the institutional hearing procedures outlined in VSCC Policy III:00:05 must be followed.

Records of general student complaints will be kept on file in the Office of the Vice President for Student Services.

Complaints Related to Accreditation and Violation of Applicable State Laws

Under the Federal Program Integrity rules (34 CFR 600.9 (a)(1)(i)(A)), the Tennessee Board of regents system office has been designated as the authority to investigate complaints concerning Volunteer State Community College (VSCC) related to institutional accreditation or violations of State laws. Before a complaint is filed the student or prospective student must attempt to resolve the matter with VSCC. If the

matter cannot be resolved, a complaint may be filed with the Tennessee Board of Regents at 1 Bridgestone Park, Nashville, TN 37214.

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 Volunteer State Community College to seek resolution.

Complainants not satisfied with the outcome of Volunteer State Community College'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) (<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) (<http://www.nc-sara.org/content/sara-manual>) have been violated by the Volunteer State Community College operating under the terms of SARA.

For a list of SARA member States, please visit the [NC-SARA website](http://nc-sara.org/sara-states-institutions) (<http://nc-sara.org/sara-states-institutions>). Students residing in non-SARA states should consult their respective State of residence for further instruction for filing a complaint.

TBR Source: TBR Meetings, August 17, 1973; September 30, 1983

VSCC Source: December 15, 2008, President's Cabinet; June 27, 2011, President's Cabinet; September 18, 2017, President's Cabinet; June 12, 2019, President's Cabinet