Student Complaints Guidelines
Sam Houston State University

Sam Houston State University (SHSU) is committed to fostering an educational environment that promotes the highest level of learning and personal development of its students. To support this commitment, SHSU strives to ensure all students are treated equitably and in accordance with university policies. Should an instance arise in which a student believes that SHSU has not acted in accordance with the goal stated above, the student should first seek to resolve the issue informally with the respective individuals. If these informal procedures prove unsatisfactory, the student may file a formal complaint to seek resolution.

**Definition**
A formal student complaint at SHSU may be filed when a student can demonstrate that SHSU has not followed university policies. Many policies at SHSU contain formal appeal and/or grievance procedures. As such, formal complaint procedures are not intended to circumvent these established, official appeal processes (e.g., admission decisions, grade appeals, conduct sanctions). Formal complaints should be used as the final option when Stage I Informal Resolution strategies have been unsuccessful. Formal complaints must be filed in a timely manner, submitted in writing, through designated communication channels, and in accordance with university policies and procedures.

For a student complaint, grievance, or appeal to be considered a formal student complaint, it must meet the following thresholds:
- The complaint, grievance, or appeal alleges a violation of official SHSU policy OR
- The complaint, grievance, or appeal is governed by an official SHSU policy AND
- The complaint, grievance, or appeal has been unsuccessfully resolved through informal resolution strategies AND
- The complaint, grievance, or appeal has been communicated in writing and asserts a formal complaint is being filed (e.g., letter, memo, email).

The following outlines complaint procedures at SHSU.

**Procedures**

**Complaints Based on an Official SHSU Policy**
Most student complaints are governed by official University policies. Students filing a complaint related to an official University policy should refer to the procedures and expectations as outlined within the relevant policy statement for appeal and/or grievance procedures.

For complaints relating to SHSU policies in which appeal and/or grievance procedures are not prescribed, the following guidelines must be followed.

**Stage I – Informal Resolution**
Any student who can demonstrate that he or she has been subject to adverse treatment due to a lack of adherence to University policy or procedure by university personnel may express dissatisfaction and seek resolution. As a first step, the student must seek to resolve the issue directly with the aggrieving University representative (e.g., staff member, faculty member, administrator).
Departments/Offices Responsible for Maintaining Records of Formal Student Complaints

Division of Academic Affairs
- Provost’s Office
- Office of Graduate Studies
- Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
- Honor’s College
- College of Business Administration
- College of Criminal Justice
- College of Education
- College of Fine Arts and Mass Communication
- College of Health Sciences
- College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- College of Sciences

Division of Enrollment Management
- Vice President for Enrollment Management
- Office of Undergraduate Admissions
- Office of Graduate Admissions
- Office of Financial Aid
- Office of the Registrar

Division of Finance and Operations
- Office of the Controller
- Human Resources & Risk Management
- University Police Department/Parking

Division of Student Services
- Dean of Students Office
- Bearkat OneCard Services
- Counseling Center
- Health Center
- Recreational Sports
- Residence Life