

# Student Complaint Collection and Retention

Effective Date: 4/18/2017

## Purpose

This policy provides guidelines for the collection and record retention of written and signed student complaints submitted to an institutional officer of Northern Arizona University. The purpose of this policy is to provide a mechanism for tracking the timeliness of responses to complaints as well as the outcome of complaints. In addition, this policy provides a mechanism for identifying patterns or systemic problems with institutional quality or with factors related to the General Institutional Requirements or Criteria for Accreditation.

## Definitions

Complaint Log - a confidential record of student complaints which identifies the persons involved with individual complaints and the outcomes of the complaints.

Student complaint - focused principally on complaints made formally in writing, signed by a student, and addressed to and submitted to an institutional officer with the responsibility to handle the complaint.

Institutional Officer – a vice president, dean, department chair or anyone in an administrative role who has the responsibility to handle the complaint.

## Applicability

This policy applies to institutional officers with responsibility to handle student complaints. The following offices are responsible for record retention of student complaints for Northern Arizona University:

- The [Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs](#)
- The [Office of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs](#)

The Office of the President and Vice Presidents should route student complaints (as defined below) to one of the institutional officers listed above.

## Procedure

The [Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs](#) maintains records of student complaint logs which are collected from the colleges by the Office of the Provost beginning in May 2007 and continuing each year at the end of the spring semester.

The [Office of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs](#) maintains records of student complaint logs which are collected from the division at the end of the fiscal year beginning in 2016.

The Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (VPEMSA), or its designee, will annually collect information from complaints filed using the [Formal Complaint Process for NAU Students](#) and compile an Annual Institutional Summary of Student Complaints at the end of fiscal year beginning in 2017. The VPEMSA office will also conduct a review of the data to identify any trends/issues that warrant further investigation, revision to existing policies, etc. Information on these issues shall be shared with the appropriate university office(s) for action.

The information tracked will be made available to regulatory agencies and accrediting bodies, including the Higher Learning Commission as required in accordance with applicable laws, regulations and policies.

Units across campus are encouraged to use this process to maintain complaint logs for their area in an effort to be aware of major complaints or categories of student concerns.

- Complaints must be dealt with in a timely manner and in a way that demonstrates fairness to students. Complaint logs must be reviewed by the officers of the institution or their designees to assess patterns to the complaints that might suggest problems with institutional quality or with factors related to the General Institutional Requirements or Criteria for Accreditation.
- Complaint logs must be used to record receipt of a student complaint and at a minimum must contain the date of receipt, persons involved and the resolution of the complaint. The amount of detail provided may vary according to the complaint but should be sufficiently documented to provide the issues and resolutions.
- Complaints from parents, employers, community residents, or former students or alums do not need to be recorded although they may be tracked if a unit wishes to do so. Trivial or minor complaints do not need to be recorded on the complaint log. However, the complaint log should include complaints that are of a non-academic as well as an academic nature, provided these complaints are from current or recent students.
- The privacy of students as well as the privacy of other parties must be enforced. Do not share complaint logs with anyone if the logs contain student and/or other names on it. Electronic copies of student complaint logs must be password protected