

SAP 32.01.01.T0.01 Complaint and Appeal Procedures for Faculty Members



Effective: June 13, 2012
Revised: NEW
Next Scheduled Review: June 13, 2017

Procedure Statement

Informal and formal complaint processes are available to all members of the faculty. Tarleton State University shall promptly investigate and resolve faculty complaints and appeals.

Reason for Procedure

This procedure is required by System Regulation 32.01.01, *Complaint and Appeal Procedures for Faculty Members*.

Procedures and Responsibilities

The faculty complaint and appeal procedure will be maintained as confidential, subject only to the need of the complainant and the university to comply with the processes specified below.

1. Informal Resolution of Complaints and Appeals

Faculty and administrators at all levels should strive to maintain open lines of communication with peers, supervisors and subordinates. In so doing, most problems can be resolved informally by mutual consent before they ever reach the formal complaint stage.

- 1.1 A faculty member initiates the informal process by presenting the complaint to his/her department head. The department head is responsible for listening and discussing the complaint with the faculty member and resolving the complaint. Discussions will be informal for the purpose of settling differences in the simplest and most direct manner.
- 1.2 The department head will reach a decision within 10 working days from the date the complaint was presented. If the complaint is not resolved through informal discussion with the department chair, the faculty member may request a meeting with the college dean. If the complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the faculty member, the faculty member may initiate a formal written complaint.

2. Formal Resolution of Complaints and Appeals

If informal discussions and procedures do not resolve the complaint, the faculty member may elect to pursue a resolution through the formal complaint and appeal process. The formal process may be initiated without first going through the informal process.

- 2.1 The faculty member begins the formal complaint and appeal process by filing a signed, written formal complaint form with the department head. A formal complaint form is available online from the Human Resources Forms webpage. If the department head has considered the complaint through the informal process, or the department head is party to the complaint, the formal complaint should be filed with the dean. The faculty member must describe the nature of the complaint and a resolution the faculty member hopes to achieve by filing the complaint. Copies of the completed form must also be provided to the director of human resources. The reviewer has ***ten working days*** from the receipt of the complaint to review the complaint and provide a written response back to the faculty member and the director of human resources.
- 2.2 If the department head's response is not satisfactory to the faculty member, the faculty member has ***five working days*** from the receipt of the response to appeal to the appropriate dean. If the dean has considered and responded to the formal complaint, the faculty member should proceed to the next step described in section 2.3 of this procedure. The faculty member must notify the dean in writing that she or he wishes to appeal and provides copies of the original complaint and successive responses. A copy must also be provided to the director of human resources. The dean has ***ten working days*** to review the complaint and provide a written response to the faculty member and director of human resources. If the dean is party to the complaint, the faculty member should file a formal complaint directly with the provost and executive vice president of academic affairs (provost) with a copy provided to the director of human resources.
- 2.3 If the dean's response is not satisfactory to the faculty member, the faculty member has ***five working days*** from the receipt of the response to appeal to the provost. The faculty member notifies the provost in writing that she or he wishes to appeal and provides copies of the original complaint and successive responses. A copy must also be provided to the director of human resources. The provost has ***ten working days*** to review the complaint and provide a written response to the faculty member and the director of human resources. If the provost is party to the complaint, the faculty member should file a formal complaint directly with the president and provide a copy to the director of human resources. The president will determine if the University Grievance Committee or an ad hoc committee will be formed to review the complaint. If the complaint is assigned to a committee, the requirements and timelines described in section 2.4 of this procedure will apply.

- 2.4 If the provost's response is not satisfactory to the faculty member, the faculty member has *five working days* from the receipt of the response to appeal to the University Grievance Committee. The faculty member notifies the chair of the University Grievance Committee in writing that she or he wishes to appeal and provides copies of the original complaint and successive responses. A copy must also be provided to the director of human resources. The chair will convene the committee, which will review the grievance and all subsequent responses, and will then forward a statement of its conclusions and recommendations to the president within *45 calendar days* of the receipt of the complaint. A copy will also be sent to the director of human resources.
- 2.5 The president may conduct further inquiry, may remand the complaint and appeal to the University Grievance committee for further consideration and/or may accept, reject, or modify the conclusion and recommendations of the University Grievance Committee Report. The president will forward a written decision to the faculty member within *ten working days* of the receipt of the University Grievance Committee report. A copy will also be provided to the director of human resources. The decision of the president is final and will be considered the last step in the university's formal complaint procedure for faculty.
- 2.6 Administrators are expected to promptly review and respond to complaints within the described timeframes. However, if an administrator requires additional time to effectively review a complaint or appeal; the administrator may extend their timeline up to 10 additional working days. This allowance is available to the University Grievance Committee as well. The administrator must communicate the extension in writing to the complainant and the director of human resources. Failure to communicate extensions or failure to respond by the expected timeframes may be cause for a separate complaint.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

Related to System Regulation [32.01.01 Complaint and Appeal Procedures for Faculty Members](#)

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