

Student Formal Complaint Process

LIM College is committed to providing quality education and support services for students attending the College. In support of our students, LIM has established a formal student complaint process as an avenue of communication with students and to identify any problems so they may be appropriately addressed. Additionally, these complaints are tracked per federal regulations to assist the College in identifying patterns of concern and to comply with our obligations. The following *Student Formal Complaint Process* is defined.

Documented student complaints of significance are those that meet the below definition and that come to the attention of the Vice President of Student Affairs for follow-up and resolution. The College employee receiving the complaint determines whether a concern meets the definitions offered below and is of sufficient substance to be tracked.

How the Process Works:

- Initial complaint process- Student files formal complaint via LIM's Guardian Software on the Student Portal. Student will be contacted to schedule a meeting with a Student Affairs staff member to discuss the matter and sign the complaint. Document has to be identified by student (not anonymous). All supporting documents should be included in the submission.
- The complaint will be reviewed by the Vice President of Student Affairs and a decision will be issued within 7 business days. Depending on the nature of the complaint, additional time for a formal investigation may be needed. Please note: Human Resources may be involved if the complaint involves a staff or faculty member.
- Students reserve the right to appeal the decision in writing to the Provost. Appeals must be in writing and include the grounds for the appeal. Appeals must be made within 10 (ten) calendar days, not to include days LIM College is closed, of the date of the outcome letter. The party filing the appeal will be notified in writing as to the outcome of the appeal.

Please note: Formal complaints are not intended for routine decisions (e.g., grade change, requirement waiver, etc.) or a grievance for which a defined process already exists.

COMPLAINT INFO THAT IS TRACKED:

- *Date complaint received*
- *Student(s) identified with complaint*
- *Nature of the complaint*
- *Office assigned to address the complaint*
- *Steps taken to resolve the complaint and final decision or College action taken*
- *External actions by complainant (e.g., lawsuit, EEOC, OCR)*

In accordance with our federal regulatory and accreditation standard requirements in this area, the College will annually review student complaints tracked in accordance with this

process and will look to identify patterns in types of complaints and their resolution. The review will also include an assessment of what, if any, modifications or improvements the College needs to make as a result of information identified in handling student complaints and a process for implementing appropriate institutional enhancements accordingly.

National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) Student Complaints

NC-SARA significantly impacts out-of-state distance education (online) students by providing a structured process for handling consumer protection complaints. *Please note: NC-SARA policies do not cover complaints related to grades or student conduct violations.*

Distance education students who have followed the process detailed above may appeal an institutional decision regarding a complaint to the SARA State Portal Entity in New York State within two years of the incident about which the complaint is made. For more information on NC-SARA complaints for online students, please see the [NC-SARA complaint process](#).

New York State Education Department (NYSED) Complaint Procedures

As the SARA State Portal Entity, the NYSED Office of College and University Evaluation reviews and evaluates student complaints regarding distance learning programs offered by New York State institutions that are members of SARA. For more information on their complaint procedures, please visit their [website](#).

REGULATORY REFERENCES

- Federal Regulations 34 CFR 602.16(a)(1)(ix)
- [Federal Regulations 34 CFR § 668](#)
- The Middle State Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), *Verification of Compliance with Accreditation Relevant Federal Regulations*
- NC-SARA complaint process: <https://www.nc-sara.org/sara-student-complaints-0>
- New York State Education Department's complaint procedures: <https://www.nysed.gov/college-university-evaluation/sara-student-complaint-process>