

# The Seattle School of Theology & Psychology

## Student Complaint Policy and Procedure

### Policy

The Seattle School makes every effort to resolve student concerns using policies and procedures outlined in the current *Academic Catalog* or *Student Handbook*. It is expected that students will fully utilize any and all of such administrative procedures to address concerns and/or complaints in as timely a manner as possible. Official processes are in place for the following types of student academic concerns, in the locations referenced below.

- **Academic and Financial Appeals** - see *Academic Catalog*.
- **Academic integrity violations** - see *Student Handbook*. Refer to the [Ethical Code of Conduct](#)
- **Grade Appeals** - see *Academic Catalog*.

### Procedure

#### Informal Student Concerns

If the student concern falls outside of the areas above, which each have a specific process to follow, we encourage students to, when possible, attempt to resolve interpersonal concerns or frustrations by working directly with the student(s), staff, and/or faculty whose actions or inactions have caused the concern or frustration. If such a pattern should persist, the next step is to initiate a conversation with one of the people listed below. That person will hear the student's concern and work with the student and, if necessary, other parties to try to come to a satisfactory resolution through an informal and collaborative process. As a part of that conversation, the student will have the opportunity to file a Formal Written Complaint.

- Dean of Teaching & Learning - Dr. Misty Anne Winzenried (mwinzenreid@theseattleschool.edu)
- Director of Listening Lab - Dr. Doug Shirley ([dshirley@theseattleschool.edu](mailto:dshirley@theseattleschool.edu))
- Manager of Student Life Programs - Becca Shirley ([rshirley@theseattleschool.edu](mailto:rshirley@theseattleschool.edu))
- Manager of Accessibility & Vocational Programming - Daniel Tidwell-Davis (dtidwell@theseattleschool.edu)

#### Filing a Formal Written Complaint

A Formal Written Complaint may be filed through the Academic Services Office or the Office of Students & Alumni. A written complaint must contain the following information:

- a. Name, date, and signature of the student filing the complaint;
- b. Description and date of the problem or concern;
- c. Names of persons, department or policy responsible for the complaint (if known);
- d. Description of any actions taken informally to resolve the problem or concern;
- e. Recommendation as to what could be possible resolution(s) of the complaint;

f. Any background information believed to be relevant;

Student complaint records are held confidentially in the Office of Students & Alumni. Information on all student complaints may be made available for outside review by the Department of Education, The Seattle School's accrediting agencies, and any other official legally entitled to such review. However, steps will be taken to insure the anonymity of any student who files a complaint. The purpose of an outside review can include but is not limited to:

1. Establish that The Seattle School processes complaints in a timely manner
2. Demonstrate fairness and attention to student concerns, and
3. Identify any pattern in the complaints that suggests problems with institutional quality.

### **Complaint resolution**

The student filing the complaint will be informed of the action taken or progress accomplished within 15 working days, unless extenuating circumstances necessitate additional time. If extra time is needed the student will be informed of this, along with the nature of the extenuating circumstance.

When applicable, resolution of formal written complaints may follow procedures within the following categories:

- **Student Conduct Committee (SCC) - for more information about the student code of conduct and the SCC see *Student Handbook*.**
- **Title IX violations - see *Academic Catalog* and *Student Handbook*. Refer to the Nondiscrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Violence Policy.**
- **Americans with Disabilities Act: *Academic Catalog* and *Student Handbook*. Refer to the Nondiscrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Violence Policy.**
- **Other Incidents of Harassment or Discrimination: *Academic Catalog* and *Student Handbook*. Refer to the Nondiscrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Violence Policy.**

**Criminal Activity:** Complaints involving matters of a criminal nature, such as assault, battery, and theft should be directed to the appropriate local law enforcement jurisdiction.

Any retaliatory action taken by any member of The Seattle School (student or employee) against any student or employee of the school as a result of a student seeking a resolution of a written complaint under this policy, or cooperating in an investigation, is prohibited.

In the unlikely event that an issue cannot be resolved by The Seattle School, students may file a complaint with the following. These agencies should be contacted only after the student has

registered a complaint with the school and has not received a response to the request for resolution.

Washington Student Achievement Council  
PO Box 43430, Olympia WA 98504-3430  
(360) 753-7866  
<https://wsac.wa.gov/student-complaints>

The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) has authority to investigate student complaints against specific schools. WSAC may not be able to investigate every student complaint. Visit <https://www.wsac.wa.gov/student-complaints> for information regarding the WSAC complaint process.

Commission on Accrediting, Association of Theological Schools  
10 Summit Park Drive, Pittsburgh PA 15275-1110  
(412) 788-6505  
[www.ats.edu/uploads/accrediting/documents/commission-policies-and-procedures.pdf](http://www.ats.edu/uploads/accrediting/documents/commission-policies-and-procedures.pdf)

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities  
The Commission Office  
8060 165th Ave NE, Suite 100  
Redmond, WA 98052  
(425) 558-4224  
<http://www.nwccu.org/accreditation/standards-policies/policies/record-of-student-complaints-policy/>