

STUDENT COMPLAINT INFORMATION

General Student Complaint Information

The following guidelines describe how a student at Hiram College should file a complaint against another member of the College community. Complaints should be filed as soon as possible, but no more than 90 days after the incident occurs.

The process is designed to be a student initiated one. The steps are below:

Process for Filing a Complaint

Informal Complaint

Hiram College requires a concerned or aggrieved student to make a concerted effort to resolve the complaint informally. As part of this informal stage, the student should talk directly with the staff person, faculty member, or administrator with whom the problem or question exists. During this step, the student should share their concern directly so that the other person has an opportunity to hear the concern verbatim and attempt to resolve the specific issue at hand. In this situation, the presenting student should consider these tips:

- Contact the College employee by phone or email to schedule an appointment
- Briefly state the purpose of the requested meeting
- During the meeting, clearly explain the concern and suggest a remedy that would help to resolve it.

If the complaint or concern has not been resolved satisfactorily during this informal process, the student should then move into the formal complaint process. If the nature of the issue is such that the student does not feel comfortable addressing the person directly, they have the right to move directly to the formal stage.

Formal Complaint

If the informal complaint process described above is unsuccessful, the concerned student may submit a formal complaint in writing using the Student Formal Complaint Form (<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=i5TpHRtzMUKXBQTzSRNcyeQJLlcSxttLrhRk1rT64u9UMEVNQ0RKREdHUJGSczREDrWE0ZUDRBS14u>).

This form must be submitted no more than five (5) business days after informal process has concluded.

Within five business days the student will receive notification via Hiram email that the form has been received. Within that same five days, the complaint will be forwarded to the supervisor of the faculty or staff member against whom the complaint has been filed. The supervisor will contact the concerned student and discuss a remedy or solution.

If the proposed remedy is not satisfactory to the student, they have five days to appeal the decision made by the faculty or staff member's immediate supervisor. The appealing student should follow the steps outlined below.

- Draft an email to appeal the remedy and/or decision offered by the faculty or staff member's immediate supervisor. The email should summarize—clearly and succinctly—the following:
- The initial complaint and the person(s) it involved

- The steps taken toward resolving the issue
- The decision presented by the faculty or staff member's immediate supervisor
- The reason for appealing this decision
- Possible solution(s) deemed feasible at this point
- Contact information (phone, email, etc.)
- Once all of the aforementioned points have been addressed, the concerned student should submit their appeal, within five days of the supervisor's decision, to studentcomplaints@hiram.edu.

If the presenting student has any questions during this phase, they should send them to that same email address (studentcomplaints@hiram.edu) and the appropriate College official will respond.

At this juncture of the complaint process, the appropriate College official will be charged with reviewing the appeal. If the original complaint was primarily an academic-related one, the issue will be reviewed by an associate dean of academic affairs. Complaints related to student life are referred to the appropriate designee of the dean of students.

If the academic complaint or concern has not been resolved to the student's satisfaction, they may appeal the decision made by an associate dean by continuing the complaint process by appealing to the dean of the college or dean of students.

To appeal a decision made by an associate dean the student needs to submit an email to studentcomplaints@hiram.edu stating their desire to appeal the current decision together with the information furnished in the initial appeal.

This information must be submitted within five (5) business days after the appeal process is completed.

Decisions following referral to the dean of the college or the dean of students are final and cannot be appealed.

If you have any questions or would like assistance with any portion of this process, please contact studentcomplaints@hiram.edu.

Additional Complaint Information - Program Integrity Rule

On July 1, 2011, the U.S. Department of Education regulations to improve the integrity of programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA), as amended (the "Program Integrity Rule"), took effect. The Program Integrity Rule requires, among other things, that each college or university authorized to offer postsecondary education in one or more states ensure access to a complaint process that will permit student consumers to address the following:

1. Alleged violations of state consumer protection laws that include but are not limited to fraud and false advertising;
2. Alleged violations of state laws or rules relating to the licensure of postsecondary institutions; and
3. Complaints relating to the quality of education or other state or accreditation requirements.

Hiram College, as an institution authorized to provide postsecondary education in the State of Ohio, is committed to full compliance with the Program Integrity Rule, and provides the following confirmation to all current and/or prospective students: The Higher Learning Commission

accredits Hiram College. You may review the Hiram's accreditation documents at <http://www.hiram.edu/about/accreditation/>

Process

Hiram College seeks to resolve all student concerns in a timely and effective manner. To that end, the process described in this document serves as an official means for students to discuss concerns or register formal complaints that pertain to alleged violations of state consumer protection laws. Such complaints may include, but are not limited to: fraud and false advertising; alleged violations of state laws or rules relating to the licensure of postsecondary institutions; and complaints relating to the quality of education or other state or accreditation requirements.

Other Hiram College resources that may be accessed include: Offices of the Dean of the College, Dean of Students, Admissions, Student Accounts, Registrar, Financial Aid. Staff in each of these offices are able to provide specific information on issues related to their area. These highly trained staff are able to address any relevant questions and concerns that a student may pose. The contact information for each of these offices is provided below:

- Office of the Dean of the College (academic programs, accreditation): 330.569.5125 or VPAA@hiram.edu
- Office of Student Life (student and campus life): 330.569.5233 or deanofstudents@hiram.edu (deanofstudents@hiram.edu)
- Admission (admission eligibility): 330.569.5169 or admission@hiram.edu
- Student Financial Services (tuition/fee payments, loans, scholarships, grants): 330.569.5107 or sfs@hiram.edu
- Registrar (academic records): 330.569.5210 or registrar@hiram.edu

It is expected that students will fully utilize any/all of the Hiram's administrative procedures to address concerns and/or complaints in as timely a manner as possible. On occasion, however, a student may believe that these administrative procedures have not adequately addressed concerns identified under the Program Integrity Rule. In those select cases, the following independent procedures are provided:

The Office of the Ohio Attorney General (<https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Individuals-and-Families/Consumers/File-A-Complaint.aspx>) receives and reviews consumer complaints.

The Ohio Department of Higher Education (<https://www.ohiohighered.org/contact-us/>) reviews academic programming offered in Ohio by independent institutions including Hiram College and makes recommendations regarding institutional authorization and program approval to the Chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education.

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is an independent body responsible for the accreditation of programs offered by Hiram College. Each year, the HLC receives a number of complaints from students or other parties. When a complaint raises issues regarding an institution's ability to meet accreditation criteria, the HLC will forward a copy of the complaint to the institution and request a formal response. Instructions for filing a complaint with the Commission are available on its website (<https://www.hlcommission.org/HLC-Institutions/complaints.html>).