



*Commission on Colleges  
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools*

## **COMPLAINT AGAINST INSTITUTIONS: INFORMATION SHEET AND FORM**

The following is intended to provide information to persons wishing to file a complaint about an institution accredited by the Commission on Colleges. **Before filing a complaint, please read the Commission policy "Complaint Procedures for the Commission or Its Accredited Institutions"**—see [www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org). The Commission reviews complaints submitted by students, faculty, and other members of the public about its member institutions. This information helps the Commission assure that an institution continues to meet the standards of accreditation set by the membership. Procedures have been established, therefore, to provide a mechanism for the Commission to consider complaints that address significant violations of the Commission's standards.

All institutions accredited by the Commission on Colleges are required to have in place adequate procedures for addressing complaints by students, employees, and others. As outlined in the complaint policy, it is the responsibility of the complainant first to attempt to resolve the matter with the institution. The complainant is responsible for providing evidence that all remedies available at the institution have been exhausted. In order to file a complaint with the Commission on Colleges, the complainant must describe these efforts on the complaint form.

### **How to File a Complaint Against an Institution Accredited by the Commission On Colleges**

Please use the attached complaint form to submit a formal complaint. You must complete all applicable sections of this form before the complaint will be reviewed. **It must be submitted in hard copy, not electronically nor through facsimile transmission.** Precisely state the complaint using three sentences or less. Provide the details that support your complaint. Give a description of the steps that were taken to exhaust the institution's grievance or complaint process. For both responses, you may attach additional sheets of paper if you need more space. Include with the form copies of any documents that pertain to your complaint. Please submit two copies of the form and the attachments.

Please refer to the attached Commission policy for a description of the process for reviewing complaints.

# COMPLAINT FORM

## I. COMPLAINANT INFORMATION

A. First Name:

M.I.

Last Name:

B. Street Address:

C. City:

State:

Zip Code:

Country: (If outside of USA)

D. Telephone Number:

Fax Number:

E. Email Address:

F. Name of College or University Named in the Complaint

G. Status in Relation to the College or University:

STUDENT    PARENT    FACULTY    OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

H. Current Student Status (If applicable):

\_\_\_\_\_ ENROLLED   \_\_\_\_\_ GRADUATED   \_\_\_\_\_ PROBATION   \_\_\_\_\_ WITHDRAWN   \_\_\_\_\_ TERMINATED

## II. COMPLAINT INFORMATION

- A. State the nature of the complaint (in five sentences or less).
- B. Briefly describe the details of the complaint in the clearest possible language and indicate how the institution has violated specific sections of the *Principles of Accreditation*. (List sections of the *Principles* and, if necessary, attach additional sheets for the description. Materials and documentation used to support a complainant's allegations should be limited to and directly related to the reported case. The evidence should state relevant facts and document and support the allegation that the institution is in significant violation of the standard(s) referenced in the complaint. Indicate the time frame in which the violations referenced in the complaint occurred.
- C. Describe the steps taken to exhaust the institution's grievance process, describe the action taken by the institution to date, and provide a copy of the institution's response to the complainant as a result of prescribed procedures. (Indicate any channels external to the institution that the complainant is pursuing, including legal action.)

This complaint will not be processed unless all the boxes below are checked and you have signed and dated the complaint.

- I have read the "Complaint Procedures for the Commission or Its Accredited Institutions" and agree this form constitutes my formal complaint.
- As stated in the Commission on Colleges' Complaint Policy, I understand that the Commission: (1) does not intervene in the internal procedures of institutions or perform as a regulatory body, (2) is not a formal adjudicatory or grievance-resolving body, and (3) will not serve as a grievance panel when the outcome of an institutional grievance or process is unsatisfactory to the complainant.
- I authorize the Commission on Colleges to submit my complaint and/or any documents concerning my complaint to the involved institution(s).
- I hereby certify that all of the information I have given above is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

**YOUR SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE SECTIONS OF THIS FORM**