

PROCEDURE 2.36.1: ADDRESSING DISTANCE-LEARNING CONCERNS — STATE AUTHORIZATION RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT [SARA]

Should a student have a concern or a complaint — an issue believed to have an adverse effect upon the student — arising from solely from distance-learning courses, activities or operations provided under SARA to a student located in another SARA member state, the college will support the student and follow the reporting process as outlined below:

1. INFORMAL RESOLUTION

When appropriate, the student should first raise concern with the faculty member, staff member, office or administrator most directly responsible as promptly as possible.

2. FORMAL COLLEGE COMPLAINT

If the concern is not resolved through the informal process, the student submits a formal written complaint to the proper vice president. For matters concerning academic services, the vice president of academic services is the appropriate contact; for matters concerning student support or auxiliary services, the vice president of student development is the appropriate contact.

A written complaint is defined as a concern documented via an email or signed letter delivered via official college communication channels (e.g., postmarked to the college's main campus address or delivered electronically to official Sandburg email addresses). A written complaint is considered formal only when the complainant states the complaint is formal and can demonstrate the informal process has been attempted without resolution. To demonstrate the informal process has been attempted without resolution, the formal complaint should identify the issue, relevant dates, actions already taken, the requested resolution and supporting documentation.

3. ROUTING AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The receiving office records the date received, safeguards the information, and routes the matter to the appropriate administrator. Matters governed by another college policy are referred to that process. The college acknowledges receipt and identifies the responsible office or contact.

4. REVIEW AND INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

The administrator responsible reviews the submission, gathers information as needed, provides a reasonable opportunity for relevant parties to respond and issues a written institutional response. The response identifies the disposition and any available internal appeal or next step. Decisions will be

provided in writing to the relevant parties within 30 working days of receipt of the formal written complaint.

5. COMPLETION OF INSTITUTIONAL REMEDIES

Before using the SARA external complaint process, the student must complete the applicable college complaint and appeal procedures and receive the college's final institutional response.

6. EXTERNAL SARA COMPLAINT

If an eligible SARA complaint remains unresolved, the student may submit it to Illinois's SARA State Portal Entity within two years of the incident. The student should include the written complaint, supporting documentation and the college's final response. The State Portal Entity determines whether the matter is within its authority, and administers the external review.

7. INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION AND CLOSURE

The college will cooperate with the State Portal Entity, provide requested records consistent with law and college policy, implement required corrective action or resolution and retain the complaint record under the college's records-retention requirements.

This procedure does not apply to complaints filed on the basis of discrimination and/or sexual harassment. Complaints also can be filed simultaneously with the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education or pursue both avenues of complaint resolution.

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