OVERVIEW OF STUDENT COMPLAINTS 2019-2020

Western Michigan University
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STUDENT COMPLAINT TRACKING AND REPORTING POLICY

The policy on Student Complaint Tracking and Reporting became effective July 2018 and establishes a quality improvement method for University complaint systems.

The policy outlines the University’s procedures for reporting, tracking and analyzing student complaints. It also establishes the framework for the documentation and review of student complaints across the University. The policy can be found at:

wmich.edu/policies/student-complaint-tracking-reporting.

END OF YEAR REPORTING PROCESS

In accordance with the policy on Student Complaint Tracking and Reporting, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness in the Division of Academic Affairs is responsible for the reporting of student complaints received. Annual end-of-year reports for student complaints are requested and collected by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at the end of the academic year from all vice-presidential areas.

The end-of-year reports collect information on the description of the process that University units/departments use to manage student complaints, history of complaints received and processes, average timeline for review, and resolution of complaints, along with how units are reviewing complaint information for quality improvement.
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN'S ROLE IN STUDENT COMPLAINT TRACKING AND REPORTING

The Office of the Ombudsman receives formal student complaints and is responsible for directing them to the appropriate office, if required. Students at WMU are able to file formal complaints through the Formal Student Complaint Form that is posted on the Ombudsman web page. Complaint filing procedures for other units and areas across the University are also listed on the website.

THE LIFE CYCLE OF A COMPLAINT AT WMU

[Diagram showing the life cycle of a complaint at WMU, including steps such as: Student reports a complaint to... The Office of the Ombudsman, The complaint is referred to the appropriate area, An individual unit, The complaint is tracked as a data point in a spreadsheet with relevant variables, Complaint data is compiled and reported back out to the institution for quality improvement, Institutional Effectiveness, At the end of the FY, complaint data is collected by..., The complaint is resolved by the unit, resolution details are tracked, and policy/procedure changes based on the complaint are considered.]
COMPLAINT PROCESS OVERVIEW 2017-2020

NUMBER OF UNITS SUBMITTING A COMPLAINT REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2017-18</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Units</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NUMBER OF LOGGED COMPLAINTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2017-18</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complaints</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>726</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS TO RESOLUTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2017-18</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Days</td>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>4.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overview of Student Complaints: 2019-20
TOTAL COMPLAINTS
BY CATEGORY

719 total complaints received

Overview of Student Complaints: 2019-20

Category Definitions

Academics - Other: Any complaint that arises in the academic sphere of the University not covered by "Graduation/Audit" or "Instruction/Classroom."

Advising: A student complaint that relates to advising inefficiencies, inadequacies, or instances of dissatisfaction.

Communication: When some vital information has failed to be disseminated correctly or viably.

Discrimination: A discriminatory complaint arises when a complainant feels that they have not been treated equitably due to a protected identity that they hold.

Facilities: A facility or housing complaint involves any issue that pertains to an on-campus building, residence hall, or other facility.

Financial: A complaint concerning fines, fees, bills, scholarships, or financial aid.
AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS TO RESOLUTION BY CATEGORY

- Academics - Other: 3 days
- Advising: 19.8 days
- Instruction/Classroom: 4.1 days
- Discrimination: 27.5 days
- Workplace/Employment: 5 days
- Interpersonal Conflict: 7 days
- Communication: 11 days
- Financial: 7 days
- Other: 7 days
- Facilities: 2 days
- Graduation/Audit: 2.25 days
- Policy: 1 day
- Health/Wellness: 7 days
- Legal: 1 day

Category Definitions (cont.)

- Graduation/Audit: A complaint that relates to graduation or the graduation audit.
- Health/Cleanliness: A complaint that pertains to hygiene, health, wellness, or cleanliness.
- Instruction/Classroom: Complaints about instructors, grades, syllabi, faculty, or other instructional issues.
- Interpersonal Conflict: A complaint of verbal, physical, or emotional abuse/disrespect between two individuals.
- Legal: A complaint that the institution has violated a local, state, federal, or other law.
- Policy: A complaint that the institution has violated or failed to meet a stated University policy.
- Workplace/Employment: A concern that involves a student's on-campus, part-time employment.
- Other: A complaint that does not fit into any of the previously listed categories.
UNITS MOST UTILIZED IN RESOLVING COMPLAINTS

As part of the student complaint tracking and reporting process, units reported on which other units they collaborated with or referred complaints to. The most frequently listed units are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNIT</th>
<th>MENTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An Academic College</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Individual Academic Department</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Finance</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment Management</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Ombudsman</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Institutional Equity</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Diversity &amp; Inclusion</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the General Counsel</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercollegiate Athletics</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and Strategic Communications</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the President</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Advancement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Relations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Complaint Data - 2019-20

AREAS OF CONCERN
*BASED ON NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS

Instruction/Classroom

183
Instruction/classroom complaints received

4.1
days to closure or referral (mean)

Financial

109
Financial complaints received

11
days to closure or referral (mean)

Facilities

83
Facilities complaints received

2
days to closure or referral (mean)
RESOLUTION AND IMPROVEMENTS

533 clarifications provided
61 resolutions provided
3 procedural changes recommended
2 policy changes recommended

We asked: "For complaints that led to procedural or policy changes, please briefly describe some of the changes made and why."