

## **Agnes Scott College Student Complaint Policy**

Agnes Scott College strives to address student concerns in a responsive and prompt manner. Students are encouraged to resolve concerns themselves by first talking directly with the college representative involved. The vice president for student life and dean of students is available as a resource for students who have complaints.

Student complaints are defined as grievances or general dissatisfaction with the college and/or its employees.

Agnes Scott distinguishes between student complaints and student appeals of college policies and decisions. A student's appeal, whether for an exception to a policy, a decision made by a judicial body, or a financial aid award, is not considered a student complaint. There are specific procedures in place for students who wish to make an appeal; these procedures vary according to the type of appeal. Information about appeal procedures can be found in the relevant sections of the *Student Handbook* and/or the *Agnes Scott College Catalog*.

Specific procedures for disputing final grades and reporting violations of the college's sexual harassment and consensual relationship policies are also found in the *Student Handbook*.

In addition, there are multiple processes in place for students who have a complaint about another student. These include Honor Court, Judicial Board and mediation and conflict resolution processes available through the Office of Residence Life. Students seeking guidance on resolving a complaint against another student should contact the vice president for student life and dean of students.

The following procedures are to be followed for all other types of complaints.

**I. Informal Complaint:** A student who has a complaint about Agnes Scott College and has not been able to resolve it by speaking with the individual(s) involved should discuss the issue with the college official responsible for that area of the college. The student should attempt to resolve the issue informally within 30 days of the occurrence. If the matter still cannot be resolved, then the student may file a formal written complaint.

**II. Formal Complaint:** A student who has attempted to resolve the issue through the informal complaint process and is still not satisfied may file a formal written complaint with the vice president for academic affairs and dean of the college or the vice president for student life and dean of students. This should be done as soon as possible after the informal process is completed but within six months of the occurrence. The student must complete the **Student Complaint Form**, which is available in the Office of the Vice President for Student Life, in the Office of Academic Advising and on the college's website. If the complaint is about a vice president of the college, the student should file the complaint with the Office of the President. If the complaint is about the president of the college, the student is advised to speak with the vice president for

student life or the student may file a formal written complaint by submitting the complaint form to the secretary of the board in a sealed envelope addressed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

### **III. Procedures for resolution of formal written complaints:**

- a. Depending on the nature of the formal complaint, the Office of the Vice President for Student Life, the Office of Academic Advising or the Office of the President will log the formal complaint and send it to the appropriate officer of the college for resolution.
- b. The officer (or her or his designee) will review the written complaint and respond to the student within 10 business days while the college is in session.
- c. If the complaint involves a specific staff or faculty member's action, the officer should consult with the director of human resources for guidance. The officer will also inform any named staff or faculty member upon receipt of a formal complaint, which names that person. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the officer may call together all involved parties, mediate the situation and find a reasonable solution. If no resolution is found or the resolution is unsatisfactory to any party, the student or an individual directly involved in the dispute may petition in writing to the Judicial Review Committee within 72 hours of the attempt to mediate and settle the matter. An officer can also send the complaint directly to the Judicial Review Committee, if she or he chooses in lieu of mediation.

The Judicial Review Committee has 30 days to hear each side of the dispute and render a decision. If a specific staff or faculty member's action is in question, the director of human resources will be an ex officio member of the Judicial Review Committee. Additionally, if a faculty member's action is in question, the president of the Faculty Executive Committee will also be an ex officio member. The committee will announce its findings and recommendations in writing to all parties involved. Deliberations of the Judicial Review Committee are confidential. Current procedures of Judicial Review Committee will be followed; no legal representation or recording devices will be permitted at committee meetings. The committee's decision is final. All parties are expected to respect the confidentiality of the committee's decision.