

## Student Complaint Policy

DePauw University has policies and protocols for reporting and resolving several types of incidents and complaints. This policy includes the policies and/or reporting steps for:

- University Harassment Policy
- ADA Grievance
- Classroom Complaints
- University Bias Incident Reporting Protocol
- Reporting an Incident of Sexual Misconduct
- Filing a Complaint Outside of DePauw

In some cases, it may be difficult for a person with a concern to categorize the nature of the incident. In addition, some incidents may span categories. Such difficulties should not dissuade individuals from reporting a concern or filing a complaint using any of the university policies and protocols.

*Retaliation, or attempts to retaliate, against any individual who files a grievance or complaint is strictly prohibited.*

### University Harassment Policy

#### Harassment Reporting Procedure

Any employee, student, or guest who believes that they either witnessed or have been subjected to behavior that violates the University's harassment policy is encouraged to and has a responsibility to immediately report the suspected policy violation. The University cannot investigate and take appropriate action if the behavior is not reported.

Students should immediately report suspected policy violations to the Office of Student Affairs by email at [studentaffairs@depauw.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@depauw.edu). If the Vice President for Student Affairs is unavailable or the student is uncomfortable reporting the suspected policy violation to the Vice President, the student may report the suspected violation directly to the Director of Human Resources at [hr@depauw.edu](mailto:hr@depauw.edu) or the Vice President for Academic Affairs at [VPAA@depauw.edu](mailto:VPAA@depauw.edu). Students should report suspected policy violations involving sexual harassment or discrimination based on sex to the Title IX Coordinator at [titleixcoordinator@depauw.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@depauw.edu).

Complaints of inappropriate behavior by a Vice President of the University should be directed to the President of the University, [president@depauw.edu](mailto:president@depauw.edu), and/or the Director of Human Resources. For cases of sexual harassment, reports may be made directly to the Title IX Coordinator.

The following chart delineates the process for Harassment complaints that are not subject to the University's Title IX or Sexual Misconduct and Interpersonal Violence Policies:

<b>Complainant</b>	<b>Accused</b>	<b>Investigating Responsibility</b>	<b>Disciplinary Responsibility</b>	<b>Guidance</b>
<b>Student</b>	Student	Office of Student Affairs	Office of Student Affairs	Student Handbook; Community Standards Process
<b>Staff or Guest</b>	Student	Office of Human Resources; Office of Student Affairs	Office of Student Affairs	Student Handbook; Community Standards Process
<b>Faculty</b>	Student	Academic Affairs; Office of Student Affairs; Office of Human Resources	Office of Student Affairs	Student Handbook; Community Standards Process
<b>Student</b>	Staff or Guest	Office of Student Affairs; Office of Human Resources	Human Resources	Employee Guide
<b>Student</b>	Faculty Member	Office of Student Affairs; Academic Affairs; Office of Human Resources	Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty	Academic Handbook

Complaints of harassment against any Vice President should be directed to the President of the University and/or the Director of Human Resources. Harassment complaints against a Vice President of the University will be investigated by the Director of Human Resources. The Director of Human Resources and President will determine the need and degree of administrative action for Harassment complaints against a Vice President of the University.

Formal Complaint Procedure for Students

If a student wishes to file a Harassment complaint (other than sexual harassment) against another student, a formal complaint should be filed with the Dean of Students or Director of DePauw Police. Once a formal complaint is filed, the process will proceed as follows:

1. Review of Complaint: Initial reports will be reviewed by the Vice President of Student Affairs to determine whether the complaint, if substantiated, would support a

Harassment charge. If so, the Vice President of Student Affairs will cause an investigation to be conducted.

2. Investigation: Investigation will be conducted by a designee of the Vice President of Student Affairs and/or the DePauw Police. If the investigation does not eliminate the possibility of violations of this Policy, the Vice President of Student Affairs will refer the matter to Community Standards and/or the Putnam County Prosecutor's Office. Notwithstanding the outcome of the investigation, the matter may be referred to other Student Affairs Departments for resources, support, and education.
3. Community Standards: Charges of Harassment referred to Community Standards will be processed as outline in the Community Standards Process in the Student Handbook.

*The full Harassment Policy can be found in the Student Handbook at <https://www.depauw.edu/handbooks/student/>.*

## **ADA Grievance**

DePauw University upholds the rights of enrolled students with documented disabilities to secure reasonable academic accommodations and access to campus programs and services in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Student Accessibility Services assists students in negotiating disability-related barriers and strives to improve access to University programs, activities, and facilities. Students who wish to voice concerns or discuss university access, policies, and procedures are encouraged to contact the Director of Student Accessibility Services.

The following policy has been developed to protect the rights of students with documented disabilities and to assure university compliance with The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This policy protects persons with disabilities from discrimination associated with access to, or participation in, university programs and services.

Student Accessibility Services has been designated by the University to coordinate ADA compliance efforts. To ensure that complaints are addressed promptly, students should contact the Director of Student Accessibility Services within thirty (30) calendar days of the event giving rise to the complaint. Students should initiate a complaint by contacting Student Accessibility Services, a unit within Student Affairs:

Meggan Herralld Johnston  
Director, Student Accessibility Services  
studentaccessibility@depauw.edu  
Union Building, Suite 208

765-658-6267  
765-658-4154

Student Accessibility Services, at the request of the student, will review the issue(s) and seek to resolve the matter informally. If the complaint remains unresolved, the student will be provided with the ADA Student Grievance Form. Students should complete the grievance form and file it with the Vice President for Student Affairs within fifteen (15) days of receiving the form. After receiving the completed Grievance Form, the Vice President for Student Affairs or his/her designee will conduct a formal review.

The university's internal procedures are designed to ensure a timely and effective resolution to student grievances. Although students have the right to pursue appeals through external channels, they are encouraged to use the university's internal procedures prior to lodging complaints with agencies outside the university.

For additional information regarding the ADA, you may visit the ADA Web site: [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov).

*The full ADA Grievance Policy can be found online within Student Accessibility Services at <https://www.depauw.edu/academics/academic-resources/student-accessibility/>.*

## **Classroom Complaint**

### Options for Students

1. Get advice from resources including faculty advisors, department chairs, or staff members in a variety of offices including Academic Affairs, Multicultural Student Services, International Student Services, and the Women's Center. Based on their judgment, these staff members may consult with, or encourage students to consult with, the Dean of the Faculty or the Dean of Academic Programs, Assessment, and Policies. Students may also consult informally with either of these Deans as a first step.
2. Provide their input using the student opinion form that is administered at the end of the semester in almost all DePauw courses. When students feel comfortable doing so, they are also encouraged to talk with faculty members in person, either during the semester or after the course ends.
3. DePauw has a formal grade grievance policy that may be applicable depending on the nature of the student's concern.
4. Students may file a formal complaint by submitting a signed letter to the Dean of the Faculty during the semester at deanoffaculty@depauw.edu, or at any time after the course concludes.

When concerns are raised, Academic Affairs Administration will be responsible for follow-up, if warranted, which could include informal mentoring; formal improvement plans; faculty development opportunities; documentation placed in personnel files with a copy to the faculty member; and/or consideration during the annual re-appointment, renewal and compensation processes, which could have employment ramifications. Any necessary follow-up will be

undertaken in accordance with DePauw' personnel procedures (see: Academic Handbook). Actions taken through these procedures are typically confidential.

### Assessment of Teaching

Most often if students have a concern and/or complaint about a course or teaching, they should first talk with the instructor. If they are uncomfortable doing so or feel they need further advice or assistance, they should consult with the appropriate department chair or an academic dean. Students may also consult with their academic advisor, who can help them identify appropriate resources. For matters involving a possible grievance, see the section of this handbook on grievances.

### Grade Grievances

The student must first attempt to meet with the faculty member involved, thus permitting an opportunity for an informal resolution of the case.

If the situation is not settled, then either the student or the faculty member may ask the chair of the department (or director of program) in which the course is taught to try to resolve the issue. If the course is cross-listed, both chairs/program directors will be asked. The student, faculty member, and department chairs may consult with the Dean of Academic Programs, Assessment and Policies ([deanacademicprograms@depauw.edu](mailto:deanacademicprograms@depauw.edu)) to ask questions about procedure and to discuss the issues involved.

At the request of the student or faculty member, or on the chair's initiative, the chair(s) may appoint and preside over a special departmental committee, which will recommend a resolution to the grievance. If the faculty member involved is also the chair or program director, the Dean of Faculty will take the role of appointing and presiding over the special departmental committee.

Either the student or the faculty member may decide to appeal the departmental recommendation to the University Review Committee (URC). Such appeals must be made within two weeks after the departmental recommendation has been given. Arrangements for a hearing before the URC are made through the Dean of Academic Programs, Assessment and Policies.

The URC consists of three teaching faculty members, with the chair being a member who has served on prior hearings, and two students. Faculty and student members are chosen by the convenor from a pool of volunteers identified by the Student Academic Life Committee. The dean observes and records the hearing, but does not participate in committee deliberations.

The membership of this committee is made known to parties involved prior to a hearing. Student, faculty and administrative alternates are also designated for the committee. Either party can ask the dean to replace a committee member because of bias or conflict of interest.

The dean shall decide if there are sufficient grounds to honor this request. If a committee member is unable to attend the hearing, or if a member is excluded because of potential bias or conflict of interest, an alternate will be asked to serve.

The decision reached by the URC is final. Appeals of the committee's decision, on procedural grounds only, may be made to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

If the faculty member involved in the grade grievance is also the Dean of Academic Programs, Assessment and Policies, the Dean of the Faculty will stand in as the procedure advisor and URC convener. If the Dean of Academic Programs, Assessment, and Policies is also the chair of the affected department, the Dean of Academic Services will stand in as the procedure advisor and URC convener. Further information, including the details about the hearing procedures, is available in the office of Academic Affairs. Hearing procedures are established and periodically reviewed by the Student Life Committee in consultation with the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

*The full Classroom Complaint Policy can be found in the Student Handbook at <https://www.depauw.edu/handbooks/student/>.*

### **University Bias Incident Reporting Protocol**

DePauw University strives to be an inclusive environment that is free from bias incidents. Through its Bias Incident Response Team (BIRT), the University's mission is to help students who experience bias in our community by offering support and resources.

Incidents of bias involving students or employees may be reported through the following link - <https://www.depauw.edu/studentaffairs/campus-safety/bias-incident-resources/bias-incident-response-team/>

As required by law and University Policy there are situations where the BIRT team will also refer the report to another office to address through their policies and processes.

Reports of possible criminal conduct will be referred to DePauw Police. Potential Title IX violations will be referred to Title IX administrators. Conduct which could violate the Student Handbook will be referred to Community Standards. Possible violations of the Employee Handbook will be referred to the Office of Human Resources. Potential violations of the Academic Handbook will be referred to Academic Affairs.

If it is determined that the report is a bias incident, it is added to the log which you can find [here](#).

*The full University Bias Incident Reporting Protocol can be found online within the Bias Incident Response Team (BIRT) at <https://www.depauw.edu/studentaffairs/campus-safety/bias-incident-resources/bias-incident-response-team/>.*

## **Reporting an Incident of Sexual Misconduct**

As an institution, DePauw University is committed to honoring our obligations under Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX). In accordance with the provision of Title IX, the University does not discriminate on the basis of sex or gender in any of its education or employment programs and activities.

The Title IX Administrators are available 8:00 am - 5:00 pm Monday-Friday.

Please contact the Title IX office at [titleixcoordinator@depauw.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@depauw.edu) or 765-658-4155 if you need assistance or to schedule a meeting. Students can report an incident of Sexual Misconduct at <https://www.depauw.edu/studentaffairs/title-ix/report-an-incident-of-sexual-misconduct/>.

*The full Sexual Misconduct and Interpersonal Violence Policy and Process can be found in the Student Handbook at <https://www.depauw.edu/handbooks/student/>.*

## **Filing a Complaint Outside of DePauw**

### Higher Learning Commission

DePauw University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission. The public is invited to submit comments about the University. Comments regarding the conduct of the University may be addressed to:

Public Comment on DePauw University  
The Higher Learning Commission  
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500  
Chicago, IL 60604-1411

### Indiana Commission for Higher Education

The Commission for Higher Education is responsible for responding to formal complaints against public, independent non-profit and proprietary institutions of higher education in Indiana.

For detailed information, options, and to file a complaint, navigate to <https://www.in.gov/che/student-complaints/>.

### U.S. Department of Education - Office for Civil Rights

OCR's mission is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence through vigorous enforcement of civil rights in our nation's schools.

For detailed information and to file a complaint, navigate to <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>.

### Federal Student Aid Ombudsman Group

If you have a complaint about your federal student aid, contact the Federal Student Aid Ombudsman Group as a last resort.

For detailed information, options, and to file a complaint, navigate to <https://studentaid.gov/feedback-ombudsman/disputes/prepare>.