

80.40.003 STUDENT COMPLAINTS POLICY

Student Complaints Policy**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to define and describe the process for students to report complaints at the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences ("Graduate School").

SCOPE

This policy applies to all graduate students who are enrolled, have previously been enrolled, and/or who have completed a degree program of the Graduate School.

STAKEHOLDERS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

Stakeholders affected by this policy include any Graduate School stakeholder, including any individual, student, faculty member, administrator, staff member, group, or committee that participates in a Graduate School activity.

POLICY

1.1 The Graduate School will use reasonable methods to respond to all Complaints in a timely manner. Retaliation against graduate students for raising or filing Complaints in good faith will not be tolerated.

PROCEDURE

2.1 When appropriate, a graduate student should speak directly to the source of their concern. When possible and appropriate, students should attempt to resolve the problem with the other person or persons who are the alleged cause of the Complaint. The parties involved should make every effort to resolve the issue fairly and promptly. If a graduate student is uncomfortable or unable to speak directly with the source of the concern, the student should promptly (within 6 [six] months from the date of the event or incident leading to the Complaint) file a formal written Complaint through EthicsPoint - St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Complaints can also be filed through EthicsPoint by calling 1-800-433-1847. EthicsPoint is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and students may submit a report confidentially and anonymously.

2.2 Unless named in the Complaint, all submitted complaints that originate from the Graduate School are routed to the Senior Associate Dean of Student and Faculty Affairs, Dr. Stacey Schultz-Cherry (D2006F Danny Thomas Research Center, 901-595-6629 or cell 901-216-2627) for triage and assignment. The Complaint is triaged and assigned by the Senior Associate Dean of Student and Faculty Affairs to the appropriate reviewer (see Table 1). Based on the nature of the Complaint, and if it is not governed by other policies noted in Table 1, the Senior Associate Dean of Student and Faculty Affairs may decide that the Complaint warrants a review by the Student Affairs Committee. If the Senior Associate Dean of Student and Faculty Affairs is named in the Complaint, the Dean or their Designee will triage the Complaint. If a Complaint alleges a willful violation of a policy or procedure by Graduate School leadership, the Graduate School Board of Trustees will select appropriate individuals to fulfill appropriate functions under this policy, including, but not limited to, the reviewer.

80.40.003 STUDENT COMPLAINTS POLICY

Table 1: Triage and Assignment of Graduate School Student Complaints		
Type of Complaint (by subject)	Related Policy	Designated Reviewer (s)
Lapse in Professionalism by another student	Student Professionalism Policy	Senior Associate Dean of Student and Faculty Affairs or Designee
Lapse in Professionalism by a Graduate Faculty member	Graduate Faculty Professionalism Policy	Senior Associate Dean of Student and Faculty Affairs or Designee
Academic Issues/Concerns	Various (See Academic Catalog and Graduate School Student Handbook)	Dean or Designee
Sex Discrimination, including Sexual Misconduct	Sexual Harassment Policy	Title IX Coordinator
Research Misconduct	Research Misconduct Policy	Research Integrity Officer or Designee

2.3 The Student Affairs Committee consists of the Senior Associate Dean of Student and Faculty Affairs who will act as chair, the Assistant Deans for each of the degree-granting programs, an additional ad hoc faculty member at large appointed by the Dean, and one rotating student representative. A representative from Legal Services shall act as legal support to the Student Affairs Committee. If one or more of the members of the Student Affairs Committee is temporarily unavailable to serve, the Dean may appoint designees for this purpose. If the formal written Complaint is about one of the members of the Student Affairs Committee, that member will be recused, and the Dean will appoint a designee in their place. The Student Affairs Committee will typically meet within 30 [thirty] business days, but no more than 60 [sixty] business days upon receiving the report to:

- Discuss the Complaint
- Meet with the Reporter (if identified) to discuss the Complaint
- Meet with the Respondent(s) to discuss the Complaint
- Determine if a violation of a policy or multiple policies occurred
- Render a decision and possible sanction and/or corrective actions
- Issue a decision and recommendation for any sanction and/or corrective actions in writing to the Dean
- If, under extraordinary circumstances, this deadline cannot be met, the chair of the Student Affairs Committee or the appropriate reviewer(s) shall inform the Reporter and Respondent(s) of the delay

2.4 Once the decision has been made by the Student Affairs Committee, the following notifications will be sent:

- The Reporter and the Respondent(s) will be notified of the decision and any required follow up actions in writing from the Dean
- The Reporter and the Respondent(s) will be notified of the appeal process, if applicable
- If necessary, additional notifications will be made to the appropriate St. Jude Children's Research Hospital department chair

2.5 If follow up corrective actions or sanctions are required, the Senior Associate Dean of Student and Faculty Affairs will ensure these requirements are met and documented. A copy of the Complaint, any investigatory documents, and a statement of the matter's disposition will be kept in the appropriate student file in the graduate school office for a minimum of three years.

80.40.003 *STUDENT COMPLAINTS POLICY*

2.6 Any questions about the student complaint process should be directed to the Senior Associate Dean of Student and Faculty Affairs.

2.7 As possible, the confidentiality of all students will be maintained.

2.8 It is prohibited to interfere with or obstruct the student complaint process, by any means and through any medium, including but not limited to the following:

- Knowingly filing a false report that a violation was committed
- Falsification, distortion, or misrepresentation of information relevant to the student complaint process
- Disruption or interference with the orderly conduct of any meeting as outlined in this policy
- Attempting to influence the impartiality of a Student Affairs Committee member prior to, or during, the student complaint process
- Harassment or intimidation of a Student Affairs Committee member, and/or participant, prior to, during or after any meeting as outlined in this policy
- Influencing or attempting to influence another person to commit an obstruction of the student complaint process
- Threatening or attempting to threaten a Student Affairs Committee member, a witness, or a participant
- Retaliating or attempting to retaliate against a Student Affairs Committee member, witness, or participant

2.9 Students are urged to exhaust all possible internal avenues for resolution before filing Complaints with external agencies. If an issue cannot be resolved by the Graduate School, the student has the right to contact the state of Tennessee and its appropriate agencies to determine the course of action. Any person claiming damage or loss because of any act or practice by this institution that may be a violation of Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 20 or Rule Chapter 1540-01-02 may file a Complaint with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, Division of Postsecondary State Authorization (DPSA). The THEC DPSA is located at 312 Rosa L. Parks Ave., 9th Floor, Nashville, TN 37243. The phone number is (615) 741-5293.

DEFINITIONS

- **Student Complaint:** Synonymous with a student grievance. These terms refer to a mechanism for a student to express dissatisfaction that is the result of a situation that adversely affects a member of the student body.
- **EthicsPoint:** A neutral third-party vendor that is a resource to report student complaints. EthicsPoint is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and allows reporter(s) to communicate complaints confidentially and anonymously.
- **Student Affairs Committee:** A Graduate School Committee that consists of the Senior Associate Dean of Student and Faculty Affairs, who acts as Chair, the Assistant Deans for each of the degree-granting programs, an additional ad hoc faculty member at large appointed by the Dean, and one rotating student representative.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- Research Misconduct Policy
- Sexual Harassment Policy

80.40.003 *STUDENT COMPLAINTS POLICY*

- Student Professionalism Policy
- Non-Retaliation Policy

FORMS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

N/A

POLICY DETAILS

Policy Type	Policy Revision
Policy Number	80.40.003
Policy Category	Student Policy
Policy Sponsor	Stacey Schultz-Cherry
Approval Authority	Dean of the Graduate School
Policy Effective Date	July 1, 2023
Policy Owner (Contact Info)	Stacey Schultz-Cherry (stacey.schultz-cherry@stjude.org)
Policy Alternate	Stacey Schultz-Cherry
Last Review Date	May 30, 2025
Next Scheduled Review Date	By June 1, 2026

REVISION HISTORY

V1.0 – May 23, 2023

V2.0 – August 19, 2024

APPROVALS

Dean of the Graduate School – Approved on May 23, 2023

Dean of the Graduate School – Approved on August 19, 2024