

GENERAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

In accordance with our mission as a Christian university, Carson-Newman has established a General Complaint and Grievance Policy as well as procedures to assist students in the resolution of student complaints and concerns which are of a general nature and which are not covered by other university policies and procedures. Complaints or grievances regarding academics/grade appeals, discrimination/harassment, sexual harassment, or student behavior/discipline are addressed by other institutional policies and procedures. For those types of complaints and grievances, please see the appropriate sections within the University Catalogue or the Eagle Student Handbook.

Regarding a general complaint or grievance, any student who believes that he or she has not received fair treatment by a University employee or who has a complaint about the action or inaction of a University employee or fellow student, may file a complaint with the Office of Student Services. The procedures adopted by the University have been established to assist students in the resolution of complaints or grievances in an expeditious, fair and impartial manner.

Informal complaint procedure: When minor concerns or situations arise, students should first seek resolution with the individual or office with whom the complaint exists. Before filing a formal written complaint, the student should seek resolution with the appropriate University employee who is most directly associated with the concern. The employee with whom a concern is raised is expected to handle the matter in a fair and professional manner and to take action to resolve it in discussion with the student.

Formal complaint procedure: In matters where informal discussions do not yield a satisfactory resolution, the student who wishes to have a complaint addressed by the university should follow the Formal Complaint Procedure outlined below.

1. To file a formal complaint the student must submit a written grievance by completing the General Complaint and Grievance Form with the Office of the Vice-President for Student Services. The Vice-President for Student Services will forward the form to the appropriate University officer responsible for the area in which the issue should be resolved. If the issue is resolved at this level, the University officer shall return the form and a written report to the Vice-President of Student Services stating the resolution of the grievance and any recommendation for corrective action that has been/will be taken. The Vice-President for Student Services will report the resolution in writing to the student filing the complaint or grievance.
2. If the issue is not resolved within thirty days by the appropriate University Officer, the student may request a formal investigation. The Vice-President for Student Services shall inform, in writing, both parties to the grievance that a preliminary investigation will commence. Investigation of the complaint will be conducted by The Vice-President for Student Services or a designated committee. The committee will be comprised of a minimum of two administrative staff members who shall seek to review and determine a resolution for the grievance. The investigation may involve asking for supporting information from the student, gathering information and statements from witnesses, and/or

interviewing campus departments or University employees. Every attempt will be made to determine an outcome of the grievance within 30 days of the request.

3. After the investigation, the committee or the Vice-President for Student Services will determine if the grievance warrants a formal hearing. If so, the hearing will include the opportunity for the student to present relevant evidence, to challenge adverse evidence, and to have the complaint heard by the General Grievance committee.

4. Following the hearing and the resolution of the grievance, the Vice-President for Student Services will report the finding in writing to the student filing the grievance. The report will include a statement of the committee's findings, the basis for the findings and any recommendation for corrective action that will be taken. The Vice-President for Student Services will maintain a log of all written student grievance forms, noting the resolution and outcome of each formal complaint/grievance.

Off Campus Authorities

Complaints may also be reported to any agency that offers accreditation to the University, including:

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA 30033
404-679-4500

Complaint Resolution Policies and Procedures for Non-Tennessee Resident Students in State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement States, commonly known as SARA

Student complaints relating to consumer protection laws that involve distance learning education offered under the terms and conditions of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) must first be filed with Carson-Newman to seek resolution.

Complainants not satisfied with the outcome of Carson-Newman's internal process may appeal, within two years of the incident about which the complaint is made, to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission at <https://www.tn.gov/thec/bureaus/student-aid-and-compliance/postsecondary-state-authorization/request-for-complaint-review.html>.

For purposes of this process, a complaint shall be defined as a formal assertion in writing that the terms of SARA or the laws, standards or regulations incorporated by the SARA Policies and Standards (<http://www.nc-sara.org/content/sara-manual>) have been violated by the institution operating under the terms of SARA.

For a list of SARA member States, please visit the NC-SARA website (<http://nc-sara.org/sara-states-institutions>). Students residing in non-SARA states should consult their respective State of residence for further instruction for filing a complaint.