

In compliance with federal regulations and with the guidelines established by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), Lake Superior State University has adopted the following policy to ensure student complaints are appropriately processed, reviewed, and redressed as needed. HLC’s revised 2019 Policy on Institutional Records of Student Complaints (Number FDCR.A.10.030) states:

An institution shall be able to demonstrate that it keeps an account of the student complaints it has received, including its processing of those complaints, and how that processing comports with the institution’s policies and procedures on the handling of grievances or complaints. Upon request, an institution shall make available to the Commission evidence that, at regular intervals, it analyzes data related to student complaints received and identifies opportunities for institutional improvement.

LSSU POLICY:

Lake Superior State University will maintain records of formal, written student complaints filed with the offices of the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Dean of Student Affairs. The records will include information about the disposition of the complaints, including those referred to external agencies for final resolution. These records will be available to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) comprehensive evaluation teams for review.

EXPLANATION:

The University understands that thorough review and processing of student grievances or complaints is a requirement that also affords opportunities for evaluative reflection at the institutional level. In compliance with federally mandated expectations, record keeping will be limited to complaints made formally in writing, signed by a student, and addressed to and submitted to an institutional officer with the responsibility to handle the complaint. The assumption underlying this policy is that involvement of the two primary institutional officers named above results only when a complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved at any other institutional level or by other institutional personnel.

The records will be maintained in the Provost's Office, and will contain the following information:

1. the date the complaint was first formally submitted to an appropriate officer;
2. the nature of the complaint (e.g. dispute about a grade, allegation of sexual harassment, etc.);
3. the steps taken by the institution to resolve the complaint;
4. the institution's final decision regarding the complaint, including referral to outside agencies; any other external actions initiated by the student to resolve the complaint, if known to the institution (e.g. lawsuit, EEOC investigation, etc.)

Lake Superior State University will only track complaints from students. Complaints from parents, employers, etc. need not be tracked for the purposes of this policy even where those complaints might relate to a student(s). Only written complaints mailed or delivered by a student to an appropriate officer are considered formal complaints. The University will, of course, continue to respond to informal communications from students made through various means without including these exchanges within the tracking system. Records will be maintained for at least 10 years.

Students and institutional personnel will be informed of the requirement to share information with its accreditor, but individual identities will be protected. This process ensures that any record provided to any external team will remain anonymous, and Lake Superior State University will avoid mentioning by name any other individuals involved in the facts of complaint.

Revision Date	Revision Summary	Revision Made By	Title / Dept.
11/07/2011	Corrections to titles and to reference to HLC	M. Walworth	Provost
01/25/2012	Minor title correction; addition of retention statement	M. Walworth	Provost
08/07/2020	Revisions to align with HLC’s 2019 revision Number FDCR.A.10.030	L. Gillette	Provost