

Iowa Wesleyan University Student Complaint Process

The U.S. Department of Education instituted the Program Integrity Rule (HEA Title IV programs), effective July 1, 2011. A significant component of the Program Integrity Rule is the requirement of all colleges and universities to ensure access to a complaint / grievance process. That process is expected to allow students to address the following:

1. Alleged violations of state consumer protection laws that include, but are not limited to, fraud and false advertising;
2. Alleged violations of state laws or rules relating to the licensure of postsecondary institutions; and
3. Complaints regarding the quality of education or other State or accreditation requirements.

As an accredited member institution of the Higher Learning Commission, Iowa Wesleyan University is committed to full compliance with the Program Integrity Rule.

In accordance with the Program Integrity Rule, Iowa Wesleyan University informs students and publishes policy that allows them to file a grievance against Iowa Wesleyan University. In all matters of concern involving Iowa Wesleyan students, the University seeks to address and resolve issues in a timely, efficient and effective manner.

Grievance Resolution Process

The Student Grievance Procedure is available to any Iowa Wesleyan University student who seeks to resolve a grievance involving an alleged violation directly affecting that student, by any member of the University community while acting in an official capacity (e.g. faculty member, administrator, staff member, coach).

In an effort to empower students to develop skills and grow in their preparedness for life at school, students are expected to attempt resolution of a complaint or grievance through direct, informal resolution. Informal resolution involves a meeting between parties, communicating the grievance with a desired outcome of an agreed upon resolution.

A grievance is defined as an alleged misapplication or misinterpretation of institutional policies, accreditor policies, federal or state laws, or any other agreements joined by Iowa Wesleyan University. The University defines a grievance as an incident where a student has been dealt with arbitrarily, unfairly or in ways which violate established laws, rules, policies or procedures, or past practices by the University as a whole or any unit or agency or function thereof and in a manner that has caused actual harm to the student. Grievances fall outside of standard institutional processes (e.g., grade dispute process, conduct appeals, etc.), as outlined in the IWU Academic Catalogue, Student Handbook, the Faculty Handbook, or the Personnel Manual, and require that students have already first exhausted informal and direct resolutions to address their concern.

Students can begin the grievance resolution process by contacting one of three offices on IWU's campus or by completing the on-line Student Grievance Form. The offices to contact regarding grievances include:

- Academic Affairs Office
 - Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. DeWayne Frazier
 - Dewayne.Frazier@iw.edu, 319-385-6202.
- Student Development Office
 - Vice President for Student Development, Dr. Wesley Brooks
 - Wesley.Brooks@iw.edu, 319-385-6256
- Business Affairs
 - Vice President for Finance, Ms. Chris Plunkett
 - Chris.Plunkett@iw.edu, 319-385-6206.

These offices and specific individuals have the ability to address and resolve the vast majority of concerns students have.

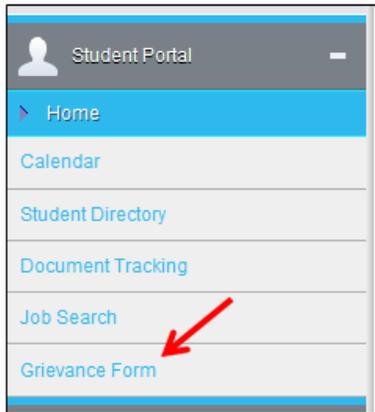
Student On-Line Portal Submission Form

If a student prefers submitting the on-line grievance form rather than contacting the aforementioned directly, the steps to do so are as follows:

1. Login to the student portal
2. Select the term that you want to file a complaint



3. Click Grievance Form on the left column



4. Fill out the form and click the Submit button.

A screenshot of a "Student Complaint Form". The form contains several fields: "Student ID:" with the value "190099"; "Student Name:" with a redacted name; "Student Term:" with the value "FA-15"; "Student Residence Status:" with a dropdown menu; "Student Email:" with a redacted email address followed by "@iw.edu"; "Student Phone:" with a redacted phone number; "Area of Grievance:" with a dropdown menu; "Name of individual or department against whom complaint is filed:" with a text input field; "Please explain this grievance in detail:" with a large text area; "Have you attempted to resolve this issue with the individual or department named above?" with radio buttons for "Yes" and "No" (the "No" button is selected); and "What is your desired solution to this issue?" with a large text area. At the bottom of the form is a "Submit" button, which is highlighted by a red arrow.

Grievances are not confidential but will be treated as sensitive information and kept within the appropriate channels as a resolution is sought. To that end, the University will conduct an investigation in order to best understand and address the stated grievance. In order to complete a thorough investigation, students must be willing to release information to enable the University to investigate.

Timeline

1. The entirety of the grievance process generally takes no more than 30 business days.

2. In most instances, a filed grievance will receive a written response from the designated personnel relevant to their grievance within 10 business days of the grievance being filed.

- The written response will explain the determination whether the filed complaint constitutes a grievance.
- If the filed matter does meet the standard of a grievance, the written response will include “next steps” in the process.
- If the complaint doesn’t meet the grievance standard according to Iowa Wesleyan’s definition, the University will consider the matter closed.

3. If the issue/incident submitted does meet Iowa Wesleyan’s definition and standards of a grievance, an investigation will occur. While each grievance is unique, which require individual attention and processing of the matter, typical investigative steps include:

- Individual interviews of parties involved.
- Group meetings, when appropriate and necessary.
- The review of any pertinent information beyond what can be solidified and confirmed during the interview process.
- The University wants to be timely in its response. Generally, all components of the investigation will conclude within 10 business days of the delivery of the written response outlined in step 2.

4. The appropriate Vice President, from the list mentioned in this policy, in collaboration with their designated personnel assigned to the grievance, will identify appropriate resolutions. Those appropriate resolutions will be communicated to the student in writing, generally within 10 business days of the conclusion of the investigation. Grievance decisions are final and are not able to be appealed within the institution.

5. Students have the right to have an advisor of their choosing present during this process. Students do have the right to obtain legal counsel.

Grievances Addressed to External Agencies

Students do have the right to file grievances with external agencies, both state and federal. It is typical for an external agency to require students to exhaust all institutional grievance policies prior to filing an external grievance. Examples of external agencies include but are not limited to the Higher Learning Commission, the Department of Education, the Iowa College Student Aid Commission, and the Office of Civil Rights.

We recommend that students refer to the individual agency’s policies to familiarize themselves with relevant requirements including filing deadlines and whether they must first pursue the College’s grievance process.

Contact information for some of the relevant external agencies follows:

Higher Learning Commission

230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500, Chicago, Illinois 60604-1411

Phone: 800.621.7440 / 312.263.0456 | Fax: 312.263.7462 |

info@hlcommission.org

<https://www.hlcommission.org/HLC-Institutions/complaints.html>

Iowa Department of Justice

Office of the Attorney General

Consumer Protection Division

Hoover State Office Building

1305 E. Walnut Street

Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0106

Phone: (515) 281-5926

Toll Free: 888-777-4590

Email: consumer@iowa.gov

Iowa College Student Aid Commission

430 East Grand Ave, FL 3

Des Moines, IA 50309-1920

Phone: (515) 725-3400

Toll-Free: (877) 272-4456 (Information Service Center)

Fax: (515) 725-3401

<https://www.iowacollegeaid.gov/content/constituent-request-review>

United States Department of Education

Office for Civil Rights

Regional Office #5

3500 West Madison St., Ste. 1475

Chicago, IL 60661 Phone: 312-730-1560