Student Grievance Complaint Process

Judson College is committed to the fair treatment of students in all matters. The College endeavors to maintain a positive and productive environment in which the dignity and worth of all members are respected. The fair treatment of students is important to this productive environment.

Judson College does not discriminate illegally on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. If the student believes that she or he has been the victim of illegal discrimination, or has witnessed illegal discrimination, the student is to report that belief to the officer of the College identified under "Reporting Channels" below, who is designated to receive complaints of illegal discrimination. A prompt, thorough, and fair investigation will ensue, and if the College concludes that discrimination has occurred, the College will take immediate and effective action. Furthermore, the College will make every effort to protect the complainant from retaliation for making a complaint. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent consistent with the College's need and intent to act vigorously to enforce its policy of nondiscrimination.

The following process should be followed for all other grievances.

Guidelines for Reporting Complaints

All administrators, faculty, and staff are available to give assistance to students who have experienced an alleged inequity as a result of the handling of a policy or an action by a group or individual. A student may consult any member of the administration, faculty or staff for assistance in determining an appropriate channel for reporting the complaint.

- Students with complaints relating to housing, student activities or programs, student organizations, personal counseling, or the actions or practices of a member of the staff, should contact the Vice President and Dean of Students.
- Students with complaints relating to student accounts, the employment of students, or financial aid should contact the Vice President for Business Affairs.
- Students with complaints related to placement testing, academic advising, course offerings, educational programs and practices of the faculty should contact the Vice President and Dean of the Faculty.
- Students with complaints related to admissions practices or recruitment should contact the Vice-President for Admissions and Financial Aid.

Responsibilities

Administrative officials who serve as reporting channels for complaints have several responsibilities. Complaints will be reviewed thoroughly and appropriate action will be taken promptly. When a complaint is received, the administrative official shall:

- listen to the complaint and assist the student in assessing her experiences and concerns;
- advise the student as to possible options, both formal and informal, for resolving the problem;
- assist the student to resolve the problem informally if an appropriate informal resolution satisfactory to the student can be identified; or
- assist the student in preparing a formal complaint if (a) formal procedures are indicated because of the nature of the alleged inequity, (b) the alleged offender is unwilling to participate in an informal resolution, or (c) the student wishes to file such a complaint.

Procedures for Informal or Formal Resolution of Complaints

When review of a complaint confirms inappropriate handling of a policy or actions by an individual or group, a resolution of the complaint may be achieved through informal or formal procedures. The nature, frequency and severity of the alleged inequity involved in the complaint are factors which may determine

appropriate procedures for resolution of complaints. Administrative officials involved in reporting channels for complaints are prepared to offer assistance and advice in determining appropriate procedures for resolution of complaints.

Informal Complaint Resolution
The primary purpose for informal resolution is to correct the alleged inequity as quickly as possible. A formal review and decision is not required in an informal resolution of a complaint.

Formal Complaint Procedures
When attempts at informal resolution of complaints are unsuccessful or inadvisable, a formal complaint may be necessary. Formal complaints require a written, signed statement from the student indicating the name of the individual or group involved in the alleged inequity; a description of the alleged inequity; the name of witnesses; actions taken by the student; and the resolution sought by the student. Administrative officials who serve as reporting channels for complaints may assist students in filing formal complaints.

All formal complaints will be reviewed thoroughly to determine if a reasonable basis exists for the allegations of inequity. The review will afford the respondent a full opportunity to address all allegations. Possible outcomes of the review are determination that the allegation is unwarranted, determination that available evidence in inconclusive, or a determination of action to resolve the inequity. Both the student and the respondent will be informed of the outcome.

Retaliation Prohibited
The policy and procedures for the resolution of complaints are designed for the purpose of encouraging students to express their concerns and complaints freely, responsibly, and in an orderly way. Any restraint, retaliation, harassment, or discrimination against a student for responsibly using the grievance policy and related procedures interferes with this purpose and is a violation of the policy.

Intentionally False or Frivolous Complaints
An intentionally false or frivolous complaint also interferes with the purpose of the grievance policy and shall be a basis for disciplinary action.

Confidentiality
The right to confidentiality of all parties involved will be respected insofar as it does not interfere with the College's reviewing of the allegations of inequity brought to its attention and taking appropriate corrective action.

Appeals Procedure
Decisions regarding the resolution of complaints may be appealed to the President of the College.