

## A Guide to Student Complaints at WKU

*This Guide is intended for students, is for informational purposes only, and does not supersede or modify any official University policy or procedure. Students (and employees and third parties associated with the university) are responsible for ensuring they are informed and have knowledge of University policies in official University publications.*

**Discrimination:** an action or behavior that results in negative or different treatment of an individual based upon race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, marital status, age, uniform service, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, or physical or mental disability.

**Harassment:** Harassment: any physical, behavioral or verbal abuse of a person based upon race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, marital status, age, uniform service, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, or physical or mental disability, where:

- (a) Tolerance of or participation in the offensive conduct explicitly or implicitly becomes a condition of employment or participation in a university course, program or activity; or
  - (b) The conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent to interfere with an individual's work, academic or program participation; or
  - (c) The conduct creates an environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or offensive.
- Student-to-Student allegations of discrimination and/or harassment should be reported to the Office of Student Conduct; Mr. Michael Crowe (Director, Title IX Deputy/Investigator, and Co-Chief Diversity Officer) can be reached via email at [michael.crowe@wku.edu](mailto:michael.crowe@wku.edu) or by phone at (270) 745-5429;
  - Student-to-Employee allegations of discrimination and/or harassment should be reported to the office of Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action/University ADA Services (EEO); Mr. Joshua Hayes (Director, Title IX Deputy/Investigator, University ADA Coordinator) can be reached via email at [joshua.hayes@wku.edu](mailto:joshua.hayes@wku.edu) or by phone at (270) 745-5121;
  - The University's Discrimination and Harassment Policy (#0.2040) is located via the following <https://www.wku.edu/policies/docs/251.pdf> link.

### Sex and Gender-Based Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

According to the Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, effective August 14, 2020 (Friday), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) defines sexual harassment as unwelcome conduct a reasonable person would determine is so severe and pervasive and objectively offensive it effectively denies a person equal access to education or employment in the United States; sexual harassment includes sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act). Based on this definition, allegations that do not meet the aforementioned standard will be assessed through the severe or pervasive and objectively offensive standard (e.g., Title VII, non-Title IX).

- The University's Title IX website is located via the following <https://www.wku.edu/titleix/> link;

- The University's Interim Sex and Gender-Based Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy is located via the following <https://www.wku.edu/policies/docs/index.php?policy=182> link;
- The University's Title IX Coordinator and Senior Advisor to the President is Ms. Deborah Wilkins; she can be reached via email at [deborah.wilkins@wku.edu](mailto:deborah.wilkins@wku.edu) or by phone at (270) 745-5396.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students requesting a disability accommodation must register with the Student Accessibility Resource Center (SARC) via the following <https://www.wku.edu/sarc/> link. If/When a SARC recommended accommodation is not provided to a student, or a student experiences related issues or problems, the student should notify the SARC immediately.

- The SARC is located in the Downing Student Union (First Floor, Room 1074);
- The SARC can be contacted via the [sarc.connect@wku.edu](mailto:sarc.connect@wku.edu) email address; by phone at (270) 745-5004; via fax at (270) 745-6289; through TTY by using (270) 745-3030; or by phone video at (270) 288-0597.
- The SARC Student Disability Accommodations/Section 504 and ADA Compliance Policy is located via the following <https://www.wku.edu/policies/docs/72.pdf> link.

**Dismissal from an Academic Program:** A student who has been dismissed from their academic program should contact the departmental office, or Dean of the College where the program is housed, to determine the dismissal appeal procedure. Procedures for program dismissals vary and are often specific to each program and/or college. Contact information is available from the Student Ombudsman via the [student.ombudsman@wku.edu](mailto:student.ombudsman@wku.edu) email address.

**Change of Grade Complaint:** A student seeking to change a grade should work with the instructor to complete a "Change of Grade" card for the Office of the Registrar. If the student and instructor cannot agree upon the change of grade, the following steps should be followed: [https://www.wku.edu/academicaffairs/documents/student\\_complaint\\_procedure.pdf](https://www.wku.edu/academicaffairs/documents/student_complaint_procedure.pdf).

**Instructor Teaching/Behavior:** Student concerns about an instructor's teaching or behavior should be discussed with the individual instructor first, if possible. If the student determines this is not possible, or is not comfortable doing so, the student should communicate with the instructor's Department Head or Dean of the College. Contact information and advice about these issues are available from the Student Ombudsman. Please visit the following link for more information: [https://www.wku.edu/academicaffairs/student\\_ombuds.php](https://www.wku.edu/academicaffairs/student_ombuds.php).

### **All Other Issues**

Student concerns about all other issues should be reported to the Office of Enrollment and Student Experience. The ESE office is located in Potter Hall (Fourth Floor, Room 442); staff can be reached via the following <https://www.wku.edu/ese/staff/> link; via the [vpese@wku.edu](mailto:vpese@wku.edu) email address; or by phone at (270) 745-2791. In addition, students may also send questions to the student ombudsperson via the [student.ombudsman@wku.edu](mailto:student.ombudsman@wku.edu) email address.