



Policy and Procedure for Formal Student Complaint

Complaint Policy

A student may submit a formal complaint if he or she believes Spring Hill College has failed to follow its policies as set forth in this Bulletin of Information or in the Spring Hill College Student Handbook. A formal complaint is one that is

1. Submitted by the student,
2. Submitted in writing using the College's "[Formal Complaint Form](#),"
3. Signed, and
4. Delivered or sent to the attention of the Vice President for Culture and Community by the student.

The College will not entertain formal complaints that are not in writing or are anonymous.

Procedure for Formal Student Complaints

The College's "Formal Complaint Form" is available upon request on the Spring Hill College website or from the Office of Culture and Community. A student may contact the Vice President for Culture & Community, Dean of Students, or the Director of Human Resources to inquire informally regarding the complaint procedure or about issues and concerns that could be considered complaints. However, the College's obligation to follow its complaint procedure will only begin when the student submits a formal written complaint to the Vice President for Culture and Community.

By means of the College's "Formal Complaint Form," the student must provide the following:

- A. A statement describing the complaint in the clearest possible terms.
- B. The College policy or procedure—as set forth in the Bulletin of Information or the Student Handbook—that the student alleges has been violated and the time frame in which the alleged violation occurred.
- C. A concise description of the evidence upon which the complaint is based. The evidence should be directly related to the alleged violation, should state relevant facts, and should document or support the complaint.
- D. A description of the efforts the student has made to resolve the complaint, including both informal efforts and efforts to seek resolution through the appropriate appeal or grievance process.
- E. Full disclosure of any external channels the student is pursuing, including legal action.

Upon receipt of a formal written complaint by the Vice President of Culture and Community, Spring Hill College is responsible for the following:

1. Spring Hill College will acknowledge the receipt of a formal written complaint within five (5) business days of its receipt.



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2. Within sixty (60) business days after acknowledging receipt of the complaint, the Vice President of Culture and Community or an officer of the College s/he designates will review the complaint and its documentation to determine whether the complaint represents a significant lapse or violation of the College's policies. If reviewed by an officer of the College other than the Vice President, the officer who completes the review will report the results to the Vice President.
3. Within sixty (60) business days after acknowledging receipt of the complaint, Spring Hill College will inform the student regarding the disposition of the complaint, which will include one of the following:
 - a. The complaint will not be processed further because:
 - i. The student has not sought to resolve the complaint through appropriate informal efforts or an established appeal or grievance procedure. In this case, the student will be advised concerning the appropriate procedure for seeking resolution of the complaint.
 - ii. The complaint does not represent a significant lapse or violation in the application of a College policy.
 - iii. The complaint does not present adequate documentation in support of the student's allegation.
 - b. The complaint is valid and a resolution is suggested to the student.
 - c. A request for further information or documentation in order to complete the College's review of the complaint. In this case, the College will suspend consideration of the complaint until the student responds to the request for further information or documentation. Within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the requested information or documentation, the College will inform the student of the disposition of complaint.

The decision of the Vice President of Culture and Community at Spring Hill College with regard to the disposition of the complaint is final.

4. Online Students: Any online student who feels his or her complaint was not satisfactorily resolved through this process has the right to take their grievance to the Alabama State Portal Entity (<https://psl.asc.edu/External/Complaints.aspx>) with the Alabama Commission on Higher Education and initiate the Student Complaint Process published on the website.

Spring Hill College maintains a record of all the written student complaints it receives. This record includes documentation of the manner in which each complaint was received, reviewed, and decided. The record is available for review by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools upon request.

*Adopted by Spring Hill College President's Cabinet February 28, 2012
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