

Appendix C

Disability Services and Grievance Policy

Southwestern Christian University does not discriminate against qualified individuals with a disability in either admission or access to its programs or activities. Prospective and admitted students who need information about programs, services, and accommodations should contact the Office of Student Services at 405-789-7661 ex 3424. The Vice President for Student Services or his/her designee is the Disability Officer for Southwestern Christian University.

The purpose of these procedures is to ensure that all complaints of discrimination based on disability are thoroughly and fairly investigated by the authorized units of the university. Southwestern Christian University will conduct a fair and impartial investigation of all allegations of discrimination with due regard for the rights of all parties. Any retaliation against any individual who has filed a complaint of discrimination or who has cooperated in the investigation of such a complaint is unlawful and in violation of Southwestern Christian University policy.

When a student believes that he or she has been discriminated against on the basis of disability, he or she may file a formal grievance with the Office of Student Life in writing. A designee will be assigned, who is the University's Disability Officer for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The statement should be as specific as possible regarding the actions(s) or inaction(s) that precipitated the grievance: date, place, persons involved, efforts made to settle the matter informally, and the remedy sought.

- If a student with a grievance alleging disability discrimination is also employed by the university and the grievance arises out of the student's employment, the grievance may be filed under the university's complaint procedures in cases of alleged unlawful discrimination or harassment with Human Resources.

- If the Disability Officer receives a grievance which appears to allege disability discrimination arising out of a student's employment, the grievance may be referred to the appropriate office to be handled under the policy applicable to employees.

Where the grievance arises out of a decision made by the designee of the Office of Student Services regarding a student's eligibility for academic or other accommodations, the grievance will be forwarded for investigation to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Grievances otherwise involving academic matters (for example, cases in which grades are disputed) will also be forwarded to the Vice President of Academic Affairs who will determine which office(s) should conduct the investigation.

Otherwise, the designee of the Office of Student Services shall investigate the matters set forth in the written grievance. In conducting this investigation, the investigator may forward a copy of the grievance statement to the person/s whose actions (or inactions) are the subject of the

grievance and may request a written response from appropriate individuals at the university. The investigator may also choose to interview witnesses, meet with concerned parties, receive oral or written statements, and make other appropriate inquiries.

After completing the investigation, the investigator will forward a copy of a report and recommendation to the appropriate university official.

- If the complaint arises out of an academic unit, the report will be forwarded to the Academic Dean unless he/she is the subject of the grievance. In such cases, the report will be sent to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
- If the complaint arises from a nonacademic unit, the report will be forwarded to the administrative head of the unit unless he/she is the subject of the grievance.

Within forty-five (45) days of the filing of the grievance, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dean of Students, or an administrative head will render a decision on the merits of the student's complaint. If resolution is not possible within forty-five (45) days, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dean of Students, or administrative head shall inform the student of the status of the investigation.

Copies of the decision by the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dean of Students, or administrative head will be sent to the student, the Vice President of Academic Affairs (when not issued by him/her), and the VPSS. A copy may also be sent to the department and/or the person/s whose actions (or inactions) are the subject of the grievance as appropriate.

In the event that the student is not satisfied with the resolution of the grievance, an appeal may be made. The appeal should be filed with the VPSS who will direct the appeal and all appropriate records to the appropriate office of the university for review and disposition. Copies of the decision will be maintained in the offices of the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the VPSS. These procedures shall constitute the grievance procedure mandated by regulations implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Questions about the university's Student Grievance Procedures in cases of alleged disability discrimination should be addressed to the VP of Student Services. Exceptions to these procedures may be granted by the President or Vice President of Academic Affairs.

The Office of Student Services, with the designee, arranges academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Accommodations may include academic tutorial assistance, possible examination related accommodations (such as extended time or a distraction-reduced environment), or possible extended time with assignments. Students seeking academic accommodations will first need to fill out the Request for Accommodations Form (RAF). The form is available online at swcu.edu or in the Office of Student Services.