

# **Records & Publications**

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## **Complaints Against the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)**

**Type of Policy:** Administrative

**Effective Date:** Jul 2014

**Last Revised:** Feb 2015

**Review Date:** Jul 2019

**Policy Owner:** Library Learning Excellence

**Contact Name:** Loraine Phillips

**Contact Title:** Assc Provost-Academic Effectiveness

**Contact Email:** loraine.phillips@gatech.edu

**Reason for Policy:**

Adherence to SACSCOC Policy: Complaint Procedures Against SACSCOC Or ITS Accredited Institutions

### **Policy Statement:**

The primary purpose of the SACSCOC complaint procedure is to acquire valuable information regarding an accredited institution's possible non-compliance with accreditation standards, policies and procedures rather than to resolve individual disputes.

### **Scope:**

The SACSCOC complaint procedures are for the purpose of addressing any significant non-compliance with the Commission's standards, policies or procedures. The procedures are not intended to be used to involve the Commission in disputes between individuals and member institutions, or cause the Commission to interpose itself as a reviewing authority in individual matters of admission, grades, granting or transferability of credits, application of academic policies, fees or other financial matters, disciplinary matters or other contractual rights and obligations. Nor does the Commission seek redress on an individual's behalf. Further, the Commission will not serve as a grievance panel when the outcome of institutional grievance or appeal processes is unsatisfactory to the complainant.

### **Procedures:**

<b>Procedures for Filing a Complaint Against an Institution</b>	
Complete the Commission's Complaint Form	<a href="http://sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/complaintpolicy.pdf">http://sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/complaintpolicy.pdf</a>
Sign and Send to the President of SACSCOC	<p>President Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges 1866 Southern Lane Decatur, GA 30033</p> <p>The Commission will neither entertain complaints that are not in writing or which are anonymous, nor will it consider complaints sent electronically or through facsimile transmission. If a complainant has a demonstrated disability that prevents submission of a formal complaint in accord with these guidelines, he or she should contact SACSCOC's Coordinator of Communications and External Affairs for assistance.</p>
<b>Procedures for Filing a Complaint against SACSCOC Board of Trustees or its Staff</b>	
Complaint against a Commission staff member or an	Submit a written complaint to the President of SACSCOC

Procedures for Filing a Complaint against SACSCOC Board of Trustees or its Staff	
agency representative, such as an off-site or on-site visiting team member	that includes a description of the specific complaint accompanied by documentation supporting the allegation.
Complaint against the President of SACSCOC	Submit a written complaint to the Chair of SACSCOC Board of Trustees that includes a description of the specific complaint. It should be addressed to "SACSCOC Chair of the Board of Trustees" at the SACSCOC Atlanta address
Complaint against SACSCOC or a member of its Board of Trustees	Submit a written complaint to the Chair of SACSCOC Board of Trustees that includes a description of the specific complaint. It should be addressed to "SACSCOC Chair of the Board of Trustees" at the SACSCOC Atlanta address

**Form Links:** [Complaint Form](#)

**Responsibilities:**

**Complaints against an Institution**

- The Commission will acknowledge a formal written complaint within 15 business days of its receipt
- Within 60 calendar days after acknowledging receipt of the complaint, Commission staff will review the complaint and its documentation and determine 1. Whether it is within the scope of Commission policies and is accreditation related, 2. If there is adequate documentation in support of the allegations, and 3. Whether the complaint raises significant questions about the institution's compliance with Commission standards.
- If there appears to be sufficient evidence of significant non-compliance or if Commission staff are unable to determine compliance, then one of the following actions may be taken by the President of SACSCOC
  - Authorize a Special Committee to visit the institution
  - Forward the case directly to the Board of Trustees and its standing committees for review and action
  - Include the case in an upcoming scheduled visit to the institution
  - Request additional information
- Individual complaints will be retained in the Commission files. Should a number of individual complains suggest a pattern of concern which may evidence a significant lack of compliance with the Principle that was not evident from any one individual complaint, the Commission may renew its considerations of the matter for whatever action may be appropriate.

**Complaints against SACSCOC Board of Trustees or its Staff**

- The SACSCOC President will acknowledge the complaint within 10 working days of its receipt
- Following review, the SACSCOC President will inform the complainant of action within 30 days of receipt of the complaint

**Complaints against the President of SACSCOS**

- The Chair of the Board of Trustees will acknowledge the complaint within 20 working days of its receipt and will designate a committee composed of members of the Executive Council to investigate the complaint and recommend action to the Chair.
- The Chair of the Board of Trustees will review the Council's action and inform the complainant and SACSCOC President of action within 45 days of receipt of the complaint.

**Complaints against SACSCOS or a member of its Board of Trustees**

- The Chair of the Board of Trustees will acknowledge the complaint within 20 working days of its receipt and will designate a committee composed of members of the Executive Council to investigate the complaint and recommend action to the Chair.
- The Chair of the Board of Trustees will review the Council’s action and inform the complainant and SACSCOC President of action within 45 days of receipt of the complaint.

**Enforcement:**

SACSCOC is interested in ensuring that member institutions maintain ongoing compliance with Commission standards and policies outside the institution’s scheduled formal review. Therefore, if an individual has evidence of an institution’s significant non-compliance with Commission standards, policies or procedures, the individual should inform the Commission using these procedures.

Optional: To report suspected instances of noncompliance with this policy, please visit Georgia Tech’s EthicsPoint, a secure and confidential reporting system, at:

[https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/en/report\\_custom.asp?clientid=7508](https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/en/report_custom.asp?clientid=7508)

**Related Information:**

[SACSCOC Website](#)

[Resource Manual For The Principles of Accreditation:](#)

[SACSCOC Complaint Procedures Against SACSCOC or Its Accredited Institutions:](#)

**Policy History:**

Revision Date	Author	Description
March 2015	Library Learning and Excellence	Update to Procedures Section
August 2014	Library Learning Excellence	New Policy

**External Review Reason:** Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)

**Compliance Reporting Reason:**

SACSCOC Complaint Procedures Against SACSCOC or Its Accredited Institutions

**Copyright**

Please see [Copyright](#) for more information.

**Georgia Tech Library Policy Manual**

The Georgia Tech Library is governed by policies of the Institute, the Board of Regents, and laws of Georgia and the United States. Library policies apply to the Library and are not intended to replace broader policies governing the Institute as a whole. Where no specific library policy exists, policies of the Institute or the Board of Regents are in effect. Policies of the Institute or Board of Regents serve as the authority in cases where there is any apparent conflict.

Please see the [Library Policy Manual](#) for more information about Library Policies.

## Graduate Thesis and Dissertation Publication

Please see Graduate Student Policies on "[Publication of Theses](#)" and "[Policy on Advisement and Appointment of Thesis Advisory Committees](#)" for more information about Thesis Publication and Submission.

## Information Services

For general information on Information Systems and Services at Georgia Tech: See [www.oit.gatech.edu](http://www.oit.gatech.edu)

For Information Technology Policies see <http://www.oit.gatech.edu/service/information-security/security-policies-standards-and-procedures>

## Library Services

For information on the Georgia Tech Library services and resources, please see:

### About Library

<https://www.library.gatech.edu/about>

### Information, Reference, and Research Services

<https://www.library.gatech.edu/research-help-support>

### Faculty: Guide to Library Resources

<https://www.library.gatech.edu/faculty>

### Document Delivery / LENDS

<https://www.library.gatech.edu/lends>

### Interlibrary Loan

<https://illiad.library.gatech.edu/>

### Library Privileges and Policies

<https://www.library.gatech.edu/checkout-renew-return>

<https://www.library.gatech.edu/privacy-policy>

### Course Reserves

<https://ereserves.library.gatech.edu/ares/>

### Library Facilities

<https://www.library.gatech.edu/spaces-technology>

### Gifts and Donations

<https://www.library.gatech.edu/give>

### Emerging Initiatives / SMARTech

<https://smartech.gatech.edu/>

## Open Access Policy

For information on the Open Access Policy, please see:

- [Open Access Policy](#)

## Policy on Institute Policies

**Type of Policy:** Administrative

**Effective Date:** Sep 2012

**Last Revised:** Jan 2015

**Review Date:** Dec 2018

**Policy Owner:** Legal Affairs and Risk Management

**Contact Title:** Policy Specialist

**Contact Email:** [policylibrary@gatech.edu](mailto:policylibrary@gatech.edu)

**Reason for Policy:**

Recognizing the need for a common, consistent, and transparent process for Institute policies to be thoroughly reviewed, maintained, and made available to the campus community, Georgia Tech has adopted this Policy on Institute Policies (also known as the Institute Policy Development and Life Cycle Process) to promote policy awareness, compliance, and accountability.

**Policy Statement:**

Institute policies at Georgia Tech must have Institute level approval. In order to do this, Institute policies need to be reviewed and approved by the appropriate committees and authorizing bodies. All Institute policies will be reviewed and approved as described below (Procedures: Institute Policy Development & Life Cycle Process).

As part of this process, each Institute policy will be made available in the appropriate forum for comment from the campus community. The Policy Steering Committee will ensure that Institute policies that affect both academic and administrative constituents receive cross-comment from those constituents.

Once an Institute policy has been approved, it will be published and made publically available on the Policy Library. Campus-wide announcements will be made for new policies or changes to policy, when appropriate.

All Institute policies will be subject to review by the Policy Owner every three years after adoption or substantial revision, or when there is a change in applicable law, regulation, or Board of Regents policy, whichever comes first.

**Scope:**

This policy applies to all Georgia Tech faculty and staff members.

**Definitions: Procedures:**

Step 1. Determine Policy Scope and Type	
<i>Policy Scope and Type</i>	<p><b>Scope:</b> The <a href="#">Policy Steering Committee</a> can help a Policy Owner or Champion determine if a policy is an Institute or a department policy. Only Institute policies are approved using the Institute Policy Development and Life Cycle Process. Departments have their own procedures for approving their department policies.</p> <p><b>Type:</b> The <a href="#">Policy Steering Committee</a> determines whether</p>

Step 1. Determine Policy Scope and Type	
	an Institute policy is Academic or Administrative.

Step 2. Initiate Policy Development	
<i>For new or substantial revision to Institute Policy only</i>	<p>If the proposed policy is either a new Institute policy or a substantial revision to an existing Institute policy then:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy Owner or Champion completes a <a href="#">policy development and communication tracking sheet</a>.</li> <li>• Policy Owner or Champion submits <a href="#">policy development and communication tracking sheet</a> to the <a href="#">Secretary of the Faculty</a> (Academic Policy) or <a href="#">Institute Policy Specialist</a> (Administrative Policy).</li> <li>• <a href="#">Policy Steering Committee</a> reviews <a href="#">policy development and communication tracking sheet</a> to confirm: (i) Institute policy type (Academic or Administrative); (ii) substantial v. editorial revision; (iii) whether policy/revision is needed; and (iv) whether expedited review is needed.</li> </ul>

Step 3. Policy Process Tracks	
<i>Academic Policy Tracks</i>	<p>The policy review process for Academic Policies is established and administered by the Faculty of Georgia Tech. There are two standard policy approval tracks for Academic Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Faculty Handbook</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Student Regulations</a></li> </ul>
<i>Administrative Policy Track</i>	<p>The policy review process for Administrative Policies is established and administered by the Institute Policy Steering Committee. There is one standard policy approval track for Administrative Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Administrative Policies</a></li> </ul>
<i>Flow Chart</i>	<p>For information on how all three of these Institute policy approval tracks interact with one another, please see the complete Institute Policy Development and Life Cycle Process <a href="#">flowchart</a>.</p>

Step 4. Policy Publication and Communication	
<i>Policy Publication</i>	<p>Once adopted, Institute policies are published in the relevant section of the Policy Library, as well as highlighted in the Policy Library's <a href="#">Recently Updated Policies</a> section.</p>



<b>Step 4. Policy Publication and Communication</b>	
<i>Policy Communication</i>	<p>All new or substantial revisions to Institute policies are communicated to the campus community through a standard <a href="#">policy communication plan</a> that includes various print and electronic publications.</p> <p>While it is primarily the responsibility of the Faculty Statutes Committee, the Student Policy Owner, or the Administrative Policy Owner to identify if more targeted policy communications are needed, Institute Communications and the <a href="#">Institute Policy Specialist</a> will work closely with these groups to develop more targeted communications strategies, if needed.</p>

<b>Step 5. Policy Review</b>	
<i>Review Cycle</i>	<p>All Institute policies should be reviewed by the Policy Owner every three years after adoption or substantial revision, or when there is a change in applicable law, regulation, or Board of Regents policy, whichever comes first.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Policy Steering Committee</a> will coordinate three year policy reviews to be conducted by the Faculty Statutes Committee, Student Policy Owner, or the Administrative Policy Owner. This does not prevent more frequent review of policy by the above individuals, if desired.</p> <p>After review, if a substantial revision must be made to a policy, begin again at Step 2.</p>

**Forms:** [Policy Deveopment and Communication Tracking Sheet.docx](#)

**Form Links:**

[Policy Development and Communication Tracking Sheet](#)

[Policy Template](#)

**Frequently Asked Questions:** [Policy FAQs](#)

**Responsibilities:**

**Legal Affairs and Risk Management**

Legal Affairs and Risk Management is responsible for maintaining the Policy Library.

**Policy Steering Committee**

The Policy Steering Committee is responsible for:

- Overseeing the Institute Policy Development and Life Cycle Process.
- Determining Institute policy need and type (Academic or Administrative) and whether revisions are editorial or

substantive.

- Reviewing and approving new Administrative Policies and changes to current Administrative Policies, as described in the Institute Policy Development and Life Cycle Process.
- Facilitating communication between Academic and Administrative Policy stakeholders during policy review.
- Ensuring that there is an effective and appropriate communication plan in place to make the affected campus constituents aware of Institute policy changes.

**Enforcement:**

All faculty and staff members must abide by this policy in the development of Institute policy. If a faculty or staff member violates this policy, the member must begin work with the Institute’s Policy Specialist to correct the policy violation within three months of awareness or notice of violation.

**Related Information:**

[Policy Steering Committee](#)

[Institute Policy Development and Lifecycle Process Flowchart](#)

**Related Documents:** [Institute Policy Tracks Flowchart 1-7-15.pdf](#)

**Policy History:**

Revision Date	Author	Description
01-07-2015	Legal Affairs and Risk Management	Revisions
10-01-2012	Legal Affairs and Risk Management	New Institute Policy

**Trademark Management**

For information about Trademarks and Licensing, please see:

- [Student Licensing Guide](#)