

STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Youngstown State University is committed to the continuous improvement of the services it provides to its students. On occasion, a student may have a complaint regarding the fairness or quality of service they received. Students are encouraged to share their concerns pursuant to this policy so that the university may address issues in a timely and professional manner.

If students experience a problem on campus, they are encouraged, but not required, to try resolving it by speaking directly with the staff, faculty member, or administrator with whom they have had an issue. If the problem still exists, the following resources are provided to aid a student in coming to a resolution.

Academic-Related Complaints (Excluding Grade Appeals)

Academic-related complaints are student complaints related to fulfillment of responsibilities or to services provided by departments within Academic Affairs, including but not limited to academic colleges, academic departments, Student Success, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Distance Education, Maag Library, Mathematics Achievement Center, Reading and Study Skills, and Writing Center.

Students can submit a complaint here. (https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?YoungstownStateUniv&layout_id=2)

YSU will keep student information confidential to the fullest extent of the law. Students who desire to make an anonymous complaint are encouraged to use YSU's [ethics reporting process](https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/49559/) (<https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/49559/>), which is hosted by a third party and can maintain students' anonymity.

Academic-Related Complaints with Grade Appeals

Student complaints concerning academic matters related to the following must follow procedures outlined in the Student Academic Grievance Procedure (<http://sga.yzu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Grievance-Panel-Procedure-072917.pdf>).

- Material deviation from the instructor's policy on sanctions for academic dishonesty, as indicated on the course syllabus, to the detriment of the individual student, or in disputed cases of academic dishonesty.
- Material deviation of faculty contractual obligations as specified in the article on Teaching Rights and Responsibilities in the Faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement, to the detriment of the individual student or the entire class.
- Material deviation from the grading scale or weight distribution indicated on the course syllabus by the faculty member, to the detriment of the individual student or the entire class.

Tuition Appeals

Any withdrawal or reduction in academic hours **after** the posted schedule will not be entitled to a reduction of charges and/or refund unless an Application for Involuntary Withdrawal is submitted and approved by the Fees and Charges Appeal Board. All decisions made by this board are final and binding.

If a student withdraws for reasons beyond their control (e.g., illness, military service, job transfer, or shift change imposed by the employer that creates a direct conflict with the class schedule), the fee charges may be reduced in proportion to the number of weeks enrolled, upon submission and approval of an application for involuntary withdrawal.

An application for involuntary withdrawal can be processed only for courses in which the student has already received a grade of "W" (withdrawn). Applications for involuntary withdrawal will be considered only for terms falling within the immediately preceding **one-year time-period** (three semesters). Appeals pertaining to terms beyond this one-year time limit will not be accepted. All applications for involuntary withdrawal must be documented, and applications are processed only by mail on forms provided by Office of University Bursar. Please address such correspondence to:

Fees and Charges Appeals Board
c/o University Bursar
Youngstown State University
One University Plaza
Youngstown, OH 44555

More information can be found in the Tuition, Fees, and Charges Portion of the Catalog (<https://catalog.yzu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/tuition-fees-charges/>).

Discrimination, Harassment, or Retaliation

Faculty, staff, students, or others who experience discrimination, harassment or retaliation have several options for reporting such concerns. Inappropriate student behavior may be reported to either the Office of Community Standards & Student Conduct (any such behavior), or the Title IX office (behavior based on sex or gender, such as sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, etc.). Inappropriate behavior by faculty, staff, or others should be reported to the Office of Equal Opportunity, Policy Development, and Title IX or Human Resources. If the reporting party feels they are in danger, they should also contact YSU Police Dept (<https://ysu.edu/ysu-police/>).

Non-Academic Complaints

A non-academic complaint is a student complaint related to the services and responsibilities provided by the departments and divisions of Budget and Finance, Enrollment Management and Planning, Equal Opportunity and Diversity, Policy Development, and Title IX, Facilities, Environmental Health and Occupational Safety, Human Resources, and Student Affairs.

These, as well as concerns not listed here, can be reported using the electronic Student Complaint Form (https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?YoungstownStateUniv&layout_id=2). The university will keep student information confidential to the fullest extent of the law. Students who would like to make an anonymous complaint are encouraged to use YSU's [ethics reporting process](https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/49559/) (<https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/49559/>), which is hosted by a third party and can maintain student anonymity.

Complaints to External Agencies

Student Complaints to the Ohio Department of Higher Education

The Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) is responsible for responding to formal complaints against public, independent non-profit and proprietary institutions of higher education in Ohio. Although the ODHE has limited authority over colleges and universities and cannot offer legal advice or initiate civil court cases, the Chancellor's staff will review submitted complaints and work with student complainants and institutions.

Complaints not under the Chancellor's jurisdiction:

- Complaints filed more than two years after the incident
- Grade disputes
- Student conduct violations
- Criminal misconduct
- Violations of federal law

If a student is unable to resolve a complaint through YSU's established complaint process, and they would like to elevate their concern, an online complaint form (<https://www.ohiohighered.org/students/complaints/>) is available on the ODHE website.

Student Complaints to the Pennsylvania Department of Education

For additional information, contact:

**Pennsylvania Department of
Education**
**Bureau of Postsecondary and Adult
Education**
333 Market Street, 12th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

If a student is unable to resolve a complaint through YSU's established complaint process, and they would like to elevate their concern, a complaint form is available on the Pennsylvania Department of Education. (Higher Education Complaint Form (<http://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/Postsecondary-Adult/College%20and%20Career%20Education/Colleges%20and%20Universities/Higher%20Education%20Complaint%20Form.pdf>).

Student Resources:

Office of the Dean of Students (<https://ysu.edu/student-affairs/dean-of-students/>)

In support of YSU's commitment to "place students at its center" the Office of the Dean of Students provides support, education, guidance, and advocacy to students by addressing extenuating situations and concerns that may impede their success, all while maintaining campus safety and fostering a culture of civility, character, and respect.

Student Government Association (<http://sga.ysu.edu/>)

The Student Government Association (SGA) serves as a sounding board for students' concerns and complaints regarding the university experience.

Additionally, SGA assists students the proper procedures regarding filing academic grievances and participating in grievance-related hearings. For more information, visit SGA website (<http://sga.ysu.edu/>).

Contact for Questions/Concerns

Office: Dean of Students

Location: Cushwa Hall

Website: <https://ysu.edu/student-affairs/dean-of-students> (<https://ysu.edu/student-affairs/dean-of-students/>)