

GRIEVANCE/APPEAL PROCEDURES

Southeastern Technical College is committed to maintaining a campus environment where its diverse population can learn and work in an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and mutual respect for the rights of each individual, and that is free from illegal or inappropriate conduct.

Members of the College community inevitably will have disagreements. In an instance of perceived violation of College policies, standards of professional conduct or state or federal law, a complaint may be filed, which shall be resolved as addressed in College policies and procedures. Southeastern Technical College provides numerous methods to help members of the College resolve disagreements. This web page provides members of the College community with some of the resources necessary to resolve disputes informally and pursue mediation of disagreements.

Prohibition of Retaliation

Any attempt to intimidate or retaliate against a person for raising an issue or participating in dispute resolution under this Policy is strictly forbidden. Any person who makes such an attempt will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. An individual who initiates a fraudulent or bad faith claim or charge shall also be subject to disciplinary action.

Grievance Process

Individuals may follow an informal and/or formal process to reach resolution of a grievance. At no time will College policy contradict any policy and procedure of the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG). The TCSG Policy and Procedures Manual is located at www.tcsg.edu. If a conflicting policy is discovered, the TCSG Policy will prevail.

Informal Process

Complainants are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their grievances or concerns. This procedure is intended to encourage communication between the parties involved, either directly or through an intermediary, in order to facilitate a mutual understanding of different perspectives regarding the complaint. An individual is not required to seek resolution nor does the seeking of an informal resolution prohibit the individual from filing a formal grievance or complaint.

Formal Process

If resolution is not satisfactory at the informal levels, or if a complainant does not wish to follow the informal process, an individual may submit a formal complaint. A formal complaint must be in writing and must specifically state the basis for the complaint and the remedy that is requested. A formal complaint must follow the policy and procedures of the issue being grieved.

The procedures for filing a formal complaint will be different based on the type of formal complaint. Additional information for several types of grievances is provided:

Type of Grievance/Complaint	Location of Additional Information and Procedures
Academic Grade Appeals	Catalog and Student Handbook/Academic Regulations/Course Grade Grievance
Equal Opportunity Complaint or Appeal	Catalog and Student Handbook/Code of Conduct/Equal Opportunity Statement of Compliance
Student Grievances (Non Academic Complaint or Appeal)	Catalog and Student Handbook/Code of Conduct/Student Grievances
Student Grievances (Unlawful Harassment and/or Discrimination of Students)	Catalog and Student Handbook/Code of Conduct/Unlawful Harassment and Discrimination of Students
Code of Conduct Disciplinary Grievance Procedures	Catalog and Student Handbook/Code of Conduct/Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
Financial Aid Appeal	Catalog and Student Handbook/Financial Aid Information/Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirements

Additional Complaint Processes

Program Integrity Complaints

The United States Department of Education has issued regulations titled “Program Integrity Rule” which are intended to address concerns relating to the integrity of programs offered by postsecondary educational institutions and authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA), as amended. The applicable section of the regulations, 34 CFR Part 600.9, requires the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) to establish a complaint process in order to receive, review and respond to complaints against its technical colleges offering postsecondary education that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Complaints that allege a violation of state consumer protection laws that include but are not limited to fraud and false advertising;
- Complaints that allege a violation of state law or rule relating to the licensure of postsecondary institutions; and/or
- Complaints relating to the quality of education or other State or accreditation requirements.

Southeastern Technical College desires to resolve student grievances, complaints, or concerns in an expeditious, fair, and amicable manner. Please contact the College first to resolve any issue. If a resolution is not reached at the institutional level, or if you believe that the nature of the complaint or its impact on the system as a whole warrants an immediate review by the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) administration, please contact TCSG Student Affairs at studentaffairs@tcsge.edu or

complete the following complaint form which can be found at <https://tcsge.edu/about-tcsge/system-office-services/office-of-technical-education/program-integrity-complaint-form/>

Students residing outside of the State of Georgia who are taking an online course may also file a complaint with an agency located in their State. See information in the **Online Student Complaints/Grievances/GA-SARA Complaint Process** section.

Public Complaint Policy

It is the policy of Southeastern Technical College to provide clear and accurate information, provide accessible services, and offer excellent educational programs and quality services. The College recognizes that disagreements with the general public may sometimes arise and encourages the parties involved to resolve the conflict informally whenever possible. If a resolution cannot be reached, a formal process provides an impartial and equitable way to resolve those conflicts.

The intent of this process is to provide a systematic way in which to express and resolve misunderstandings, complaints, or grievances about dissatisfaction with College services. Members of the general public wishing to file a grievance using this process should obtain the complaint form from the Office of Student Affairs.

SACSCOC Student Complaint Process

Southeastern Technical College is accredited by the Southeastern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). If, for some reason, a complaint is not satisfactorily resolved, a student may file a complaint with Southeastern Technical College's accrediting agency.

NOTE: SACSCOC will not investigate a complaint unless the student has exhausted all available grievance procedures outlined by the institution.

The contact information for SACSCOC is:

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097
Telephone: [404-679-4500](tel:404-679-4500)
Website: <https://sacscoc.org/>

Online Student Complaints/Grievances/GA-SARA Complaint Process

Students residing outside the state of Georgia while taking online courses from Southeastern Technical College who desire to resolve an academic grievance or complaint should first follow the College's student complaint process. As required by federal regulations, Southeastern Tech provides students with the contact information for filing complaints with the appropriate agency in the state where the student resides.

For grievances involving any aspect of your online educational experience, begin by following the STC Grievance Procedures.

If the STC Grievance Procedure resolution is not satisfactory, a student may then appeal to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges OR the Georgia State Authority Portal (GA-SARA).

GA-SARA Complaint Process

STC is a member of the Georgia State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (GA-SARA). Students may follow the [GA-SARA Student Complaint Rules](#) and use the [GA-SARA Online Student Complaint Form](#).

NOTE: GA-SARA does not resolve complaints about student grades and student conduct violations. These complaints fall under the jurisdiction of institutional policy.

Complaints needing further investigation beyond the college level may be submitted to TCSG using the [Program Integrity Complaint Form](#). Before submitting to TCSG, students need to ensure they have followed the institution's process.

A student may appeal to the [Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission \(GNPEC\)](#) if the institution's and TCSG's resolution is not satisfactory; however, please note that the Commission will not investigate a complaint unless the student has exhausted all available grievance procedures outlined by the institution. GNPEC does not resolve complaints about student grades and student conduct violations. These complaints fall under the jurisdiction of institutional policy

The contact information for GA-SARA is:

[State SARA Website](#)

Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission (GNPEC)
2082 E Exchange Pl, Suite 220
Tucker, GA 30084

Additional Information

Additional information about grievance and complaint procedures can be found on the STC Website in the Consumer Information and Disclosures section.