2013-2014 University Policies and Procedures

1.18 Student Grievance (Non-academic)

I. Introduction
The following grievance procedure is available to students if a student believes he or she has not received fair treatment with respect to services provided by the University, outside of the classroom.

II. Purpose
In support of Saint Louis University’s commitment to cura personalis or “care for the whole person,” the Office of the Ombuds is committed to serve as a fair and impartial intermediary to connect undergraduate and graduate students to resources, explore solutions, and provide appropriate conflict resolution to address non-academic student grievances. Located within the Dean of Students Office, the Office of the Ombuds is a safe environment for students to share their concerns. The role of the Ombuds is to listen to concerns, help identify options for navigating through difficult matters, provide information on university policies and procedures, make appropriate referrals, and work to facilitate a fair resolution of issues.

In alignment with Saint Louis University’s Standards of Conduct, the Office of the Ombuds is committed to serving undergraduate and graduate students by demonstrating the University’s shared values:

- **Competence:** The Ombuds researches and presents all possible options to a student with a grievance.
- **Conscience:** The Ombuds strives to help a student with a grievance reach a state of resolution or lesser conflict within ten (10) University business days.
- **Compassion:** The Ombuds is transparent with a student about the role of the Ombuds and what can be done, and clearly states that the Ombuds role is that of a guide and not someone who finds a solution for the student.
- **Commitment:** The Ombuds helps facilitate positive change for a student with a grievance normally within ten (10) University business days after initial contact. Upon the completion of the ten (10) business days, the Ombuds will check in with the student and they will collectively determine whether there is need to continue to work together.
- **Community:** The Ombuds will work to promote fairness and justice for all students.

III. Definitions
For purposes of this policy, the following terms are defined as follows:

1. The term “Conflict Coaching” refers to the conflict resolution process whereby Students get advice or “coaching” from the Ombuds to guide them in engaging in resolving the grievance more effectively.

2. The term “Facilitated Dialogue” refers to the conflict resolution process whereby the Ombuds facilitates a conversation between the student and a representative from the department involved in the grievance in order for the parties to gain an understanding of the others point of view. In this conflict resolution process, parties maintain ownership of the outcome.

3. The term “Grievance” refers to situations where a student believes he or she has not received fair treatment with respect to services or programs provided by the University, outside of the classroom. For purposes of this policy, the Ombuds only has authority to engage with a Student regarding a non-academic Grievance.
4. The term “Mediation” refers to a voluntary, semi-structured process where the Ombuds assists the student and a representative from the department involved in the grievance in identifying, and hopefully satisfying, their individual and mutual interests relative to the dispute. The Ombuds or his/her designee serves as the mediator in the process and provides a written outcome to which both parties agree.

5. The term “Non-Academic” refers to concerns not related to academic processes, academic departments, Colleges or Schools. Examples of non-academic concerns include but are not limited to services (e.g. financial services, housing services, etc.) and resources for students provided by the University.

6. The terms “Ombuds” and “Ombudsperson” refers to a representative committed to serve in a fair and impartial manner to help undergraduate and graduate students connect with appropriate resources, explore solutions, and facilitate mediation of grievances.

7. The term “Student” refers to any and all persons enrolled at or taking courses through the University in any capacity.

8. The term “University” refers to Saint Louis University and all of its affiliated schools, divisions, departments and related entities, campuses and controlled properties.

IV. Overview and Application of Policy
This policy applies to all undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at Saint Louis University. The role of the Ombuds is limited to non-academic grievances. Academic grievances should be addressed with the academic College or School in which the student is enrolled. The Office of the Ombuds will help guide a student to appropriate resources and support that are outside the scope of this policy, if necessary.

V. Procedures
The objective of the Ombuds is to facilitate resolution to the student grievance within ten (10) University business days after initial contact. Upon the completion of the ten (10) University business days, the Ombuds will follow-up with the student to mutually determine if further communication is needed.

Grievance Report Process:
1. A Student who believes that he/she has a grievance may complete an Incident Report form available at: grievance.slu.edu
   Other forms of communication will be accepted upon request.

2. The Student will receive an e-mail confirmation that the report was submitted and routed to the Ombuds for review.

3. The Ombuds will contact the Student via e-mail within five (5) University business days of receipt of the Incident Report to schedule a meeting.

4. The Ombuds will then conduct an initial review to confirm the grievance is non-academic and that the student has tried to resolve the grievance within the appropriate department where the services are provided. The Ombuds will then investigate the grievance by interviewing all related parties and reviewing available and relevant information.

5. Upon completion of the investigation and full review, the Ombuds will contact the Student to discuss the investigation findings.
6. The Ombuds will make a recommendation for a proposed resolution of the grievance to the Student and appropriate parties. Recommendations may require the student and a representative from the involved department to participate in a conflict resolution process which may include (1) Conflict Coaching, (2) Facilitated Dialogue, and/or (3) Mediation.

7. If the matter has not been resolved within ten (10) University business days, the Ombuds will communicate to the Student an appropriate revised timeframe for resolution.

8. If the Student is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken, the Student may submit an appeal. It must be submitted within two (2) University business days after a determination has been made. The appeal must be typed, directed to “To Whom It May Concern”, signed, and delivered to the Dean of Students Office (see contact information below).

9. The Dean of Students will have five (5) University business days to respond in writing to the appeal.

10. If the student is not satisfied with the Dean of Students’ determination, the student may submit the appeal to the Vice President who oversees the department in which the grievance is directed. It must be submitted within two (2) University business days after the Dean of Students determination.

11. The Vice President or designee will notify the Student of the final decision within ten (10) University business days of receipt of the appeal.

VI. Responsibilities of the Office of the Ombuds

The Office of the Ombuds shall:
- Facilitate a reasonable, fair and equitable process for all parties.
- Uphold University policies and guidelines.
- Work diligently to respond to Student Grievances within ten (10) University business days.
- Be knowledgeable of all University governance structures.
- Be knowledgeable of mediation and emergency response protocols.

The Office of the Ombuds shall not:
- Advocate for any individual point(s) of view.
- Make University policies and guidelines.
- Respond to an academic grievance or directly engage in the academic grievance appeal processes.
- Address parental and family grievances.
- Respond to any Title IX reporting regarding sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual assault.
- Respond to complaints regarding harassment or bias incidents.

VII. Contact information
Ombudsperson
Office: Busch Student Center, Suite 313
Email: cura@slu.edu
Incident Report: grievance.slu.edu
VIII. Relevant University Policies and Other References
Saint Louis University Policies - Code of Student Responsibility and Community Standards

Approved by PCC: 8.22.13