

## **Student Complaint Procedure Otis College of Art and Design**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about a situation that the person making the complaint wants to see rectified. The Student Complaint Procedure is intended to resolve students' complaints related to College policies, programs, and services. The goal of the procedure is to allow students to exercise their due process rights with a simple and easily understood process. Any Otis College student, or person acting on a student's behalf, may express or file a complaint. All Otis College faculty and staff will refrain from any reprisal or threat of reprisal against any student registering a complaint.

The Student Complaint Procedure consists of two parts: making internal complaints (within Otis College) and making external complaints (to agencies outside of Otis College). When making an internal complaint regarding the handling of student education records, academic or behavioral conduct, harassment, sexual harassment, or grade appeals, the student complainant should consult *The Hoot* for specific procedures.

### **Internal Complaint Procedure**

#### *Step 1: Informal Complaint*

Students should first attempt to resolve concerns or complaints informally. To make an informal complaint, the student expresses their concerns or complaints to the faculty or staff member most directly involved. A student may make an informal complaint verbally or in writing. Students may request that the person's supervisor be involved in this informal resolution process. Any student needing advice on how to begin an informal complaint should consult the Dean, Associate, or Assistant Dean of Student Affairs.

#### *Step 2: Formal Complaint*

If the student is not satisfied with the conclusions of the informal process, the student may make a formal complaint. Such complaints are made with an expectation that the College will formally investigate and provide a written summary of findings and action steps, if any. Students are normally required to go through the informal process before initiating the formal process.

To make a formal complaint, the student, or person acting on the student's behalf, submits the complaint using the online Student Complaint Form, available at [https://otiscollege.formstack.com/forms/student\\_complaint](https://otiscollege.formstack.com/forms/student_complaint). Using the form helps to ensure that full information is provided and makes it easier for the College to respond to the student's concerns. However, students can also use their own format for writing their complaint and then e-mail, mail, or deliver it to the Office of Student Affairs.

Otis College will conduct an investigation into the complaint, including interviews with relevant persons, a record review, or other efforts that are necessary to form an accurate and factual basis for the resolution of the complaint. Once the investigation is concluded, Otis College will prepare a brief written report that summarizes the complaint and a finding (either “founded,” meaning a violation has occurred, or “unfounded,” meaning the complaint is without merit). The written report will normally be provided to the student complainant and any relevant persons within 20 business days.

### **External Complaint Procedure**

If the student believes that his or her complaint warrants further attention and is related to the College’s compliance with academic program quality and accrediting standards, the student is directed to contact the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) at <http://www.wascsenior.org/comments>. WASC is the primary academic accrediting body for Otis College of Art and Design.

Complaints that a student believes warrant further consideration after exhausting the reviews of Otis and WASC may be submitted to the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education for review of a complaint.

The student may file a complaint with the Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education ("Bureau") using the [Bureau's complaint form](#). The Bureau may review and, as appropriate, act on the complaint, or may refer the complaint to an appropriate state agency or entity for resolution (e.g. to WASC, ACPE, California Student Aid Commission, Attorney General's office, various state licensing bodies) or request reconsideration by Otis College of Art and Design. The Bureau retains the responsibility to determine whether a referred complaint remains pending or is resolved.

The bureau may be contacted at:

2535 Capital Oaks Drive, Suite 400  
Sacramento, CA 95833  
Telephone: (916) 431-6924  
FAX: (916) 263-1897  
<http://www.bppe.ca.gov>

If the student believes that his or her complaint warrants further attention and is related to the handling of the student’s education records, a complaint may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605.

Most complaints made to media outlets or public figures, including members of the California legislature, Congress, the Governor, or individual trustees of Otis College of Art and Design are referred to the College President’s Office.

Nothing in this disclosure limits any right that you may have to seek civil or criminal legal action to resolve your complaints.

Otis College of Art and Design has provided this disclosure to you in compliance with the requirements of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, as regulated in CFR 34, Sections 600.9 (b) (3) and 668.43(b). If anything in this disclosure is out of date, please notify the Vice President for Student Success / Dean of Student Affairs at:

9045Lincoln Blvd.

Los Angeles, CA 90045

310-665-6961

[studentaffairs@otis.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@otis.edu)