



## TN-SARA Complaint Procedure

Nashville Film Institute Complaint Process for Distance Education Students:

### **1. Complaint**

If a student has a concern or disagreement with a faculty member, they must first address the issue with that faculty member verbally.

### **2. First Appeal**

If a student has been unable to resolve a concern or disagreement with a Nashville Film Institute faculty member, the student may appeal the matter orally and in writing to the Program Coordinator. If the student issue is with their Program Coordinator, who can also be their instructor, they will submit the appeal to another Program Coordinator in a different program.

When discussing the matter with the Program Coordinator, the student should be prepared to describe (a) the exact basis for the student's concern, (b) the evidence or facts available to support the student's appeal, and (c) the resolution or remedy that would satisfy the student.

If the initial discussion with the student does not resolve the matter, then the Program Coordinator will attempt to gather relevant information and discuss the matter with the individual involved (staff or faculty member) with whom the student has the complaint. The Program Coordinator will then respond verbally and in writing to the student with the additional information in an attempt to resolve the matter informally within ten business days.

### **3. Second Appeal**

If the student is dissatisfied with the response from the Program Coordinator, the student may file a formal appeal with the Campus Director. The student must submit the appeal in writing. The written appeal must describe (a) the problem as perceived by the student and (b) the outcome the student believes would be satisfactory.

The Campus Director will meet with the student and attempt to resolve the matter within ten business days after receipt of the written appeal. Following that meeting, the Campus Director will respond to the student in writing by issuing a decision on the matter.

### **4. Final Appeal**

If the student does not believe the matter has been resolved, they can file a complaint with-

Tennessee Higher Education Commission  
Division of Postsecondary School Authorization  
Parkway Towers, Suite 1900  
404 James Robertson Parkway Nashville, TN 37243-0830  
(615) 741-5293

- or -

Accrediting Council for Continuing Education & Training

(ACCET)  
1722 N Street NW Washington D.C. 20036  
(202) 955-1113

5. In order to comply with federal regulations, the college is required to maintain records of written student complaints filed with the Nashville Film Institute.

### Additional Complaint Procedures

- Complaint Resolution Policies and Procedures for Non-Tennessee Resident Students in State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement States, commonly known as SARA.
  - In some cases, students who are not satisfied with the Complaint Process for Distance Education Students (see above) may appeal the institution decision to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC). Additional information on the THEC complaint process is available [HERE](#). Students may also contact [THEC.SARA@tn.gov](mailto:THEC.SARA@tn.gov) with questions.
  - The appeal to THEC must be filed within two years of the incident about which the complaint is made.
  - Only those complaints resulting from distance education courses, activities, and operations provided by the Nashville Film Institute to students in non-Tennessee, SARA states are covered under SARA. See [State Portal Entity Contacts | NC-SARA](#) for a listing of SARA states and contacts.
  - This process is not applicable to complaints concerning student grades or student conduct violations. Rather the appealed complaint must allege violations of the [SARA Policy Manual](#), including misrepresentation or fraud.
  - Questions may also be directed to the student's home state higher education authority; although student may be referred to THEC. See [State Portal Entity Contacts | NC-SARA](#) for a listing of SARA states and contacts.
  - Students residing in non-SARA states should consult their respective State of residence for further instructions for filing a complaint.
- Should the college not be able to resolve a student complaint, the student has the right to contact agencies and authorities outside the college, including the State of Tennessee, to determine a proper course of action. Complaints can be filed with the following agencies:
  - Complaints relating to the quality of education or accreditation requirements should be referred to the Accrediting Council for Continuing Education & Training (ACCET) 1722 N Street NW Washington D.C. 20036 (202) 955-1113.
  - **For THEC authorized institutions:** Any person claiming damage or loss as a result of any act or practice by an authorized postsecondary educational institution or its agent that is a violation of Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 20 or Rule Chapters 1540-01-02 or 1540-01-10, may file a verified complaint on forms provided by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, Division of Postsecondary State Authorization after exhausting the grievance process at the institution. More information is available at [Request for Complaint Review](#), 312 Rosa Parks Ave., 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Nashville, TN, 37243, (615) 741-3605.