

Bethel Physician Assistant Program

A6.0 Student Complaints	Review Date: 03Oct2025
Source: ARC-PA Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education 6th Edition	Author:
Initiated Date:	Authorized by: September 20, 2024
Standards Addressed: 6th Ed. A1.02a-h, A3.01, A3.14a-i	Reviewed and Revised by Trent
Associated Forms: Student Grievance Complaint Form	

Rationale for the Policy:

The ongoing planning and implementation for the PA Program is guided by the ARC-PA standards for accreditation. This policy is written to provide demonstration of compliance with the standards related to policies and procedures for processing student grievances and faculty grievances.

Standard(s): 6th Ed:

A1.02 The sponsoring institution is responsible for:

- a) complying with ARC-PA accreditation Standards and policies
 - b) supporting the program faculty in effective program self-assessment
 - c) ensuring effective leadership by the program director
 - d) supporting the program faculty in curriculum design
 - e) documenting security and personal safety measures for PA students, faculty, and staff in all locations where instruction occurs
 - f) defining, publishing, making readily available, and consistently applying to faculty and staff its policies and procedures for processing faculty and staff grievances and allegations of harassment
 - g) defining, publishing, making readily available, and consistently applying to students its policies and procedures for processing student allegations of harassment and mistreatment
 - h) defining, publishing, making readily available, and consistently applying to students its policies and procedures for refunds of tuition and fees
- A3.01** Program policies must apply to all students and program faculty regardless of location unless a signed clinical affiliation agreement or memorandum of understanding specifies that certain program policies will be superseded by those at the clinical site.

A3.01 Program policies are published, readily available and consistently applied to all students, principal faculty, staff, and the program director regardless of their location.

A3.14 The program publishes, consistently applies, and makes readily available to enrolled and prospective students:

- a) any required academic standards to maintain enrollment and progress in the curriculum
- b) requirements and deadlines for completion of the program
- c) policies and procedures for remediation
- d) policies and procedures for deceleration
- e) policies and procedures for withdrawal
- f) policies and procedures for dismissal

- g) policies and procedures for student grievances
- h) policies and procedures for student appeals
- i) policy for student employment while enrolled in the program
- j) policy for student travel to required rotation sites

It is the policy of BUPAP to follow the policies and procedures of Bethel University regarding student mistreatment and student grievances and appeals. Below are procedures for both non-academic and academic grievances.

Non-Academic Grievance: Student Complaint

This policy and procedure for non-academic grievances does not apply to student academic grade appeals (see below for academic grievances) or complaints regarding discrimination/sexual assault (see Policy A2.8 Sexual Misconduct and Relationship Violence).

Bethel University and the PA Program are committed to fair treatment of its students. It is the policy of BUPAP to follow Bethel University's Policy 3.850 Student Complaint for non-academic grievances. If a student believes that Bethel University or its personnel have acted in an unfair manner, the student shall have the right to a review of the situation within six (6) months of the event(s). For the purposes of this policy, a student is defined as a person who is currently enrolled at the institution or has been enrolled during the six-month period prior to the complaint. Applicants for admission are excluded from this policy as they are persons not currently enrolled or enrolled during the prior six (6) month period.

Procedure

- a) The student shall file a written complaint with the chief academic and compliance officer (see grievance form below). If the complaint involves the chief academic and compliance officer, the student may appeal to the president, who may defer the matter to the University's legal counsel.
- b) The chief academic and compliance officer shall conduct an investigation, if appropriate, with the university's legal counsel into the matter. The chief academic and compliance officer shall have access to any information in the possession of the university and may request additional information of the complainant.
- c) The chief academic and compliance officer shall notify the president and the complainant of the outcome of the investigation. The complainant shall not have the right to review the specific evidence gathered in the investigation. A response to the complaint will be made within 30 days. The university reserves the right to continue the investigation beyond that time; however, the complainant shall receive notification of continuation and an estimate of the timeline for final disposition of the complaint.
- d) The president may elect to review the complaint and confirm or reverse the decision. The president shall have 30 days to consider the matter. The president's decision is final.

If the student is still dissatisfied, the student may complain to the appropriate external body.

- Complaints relating to quality of education or accreditation requirements shall be referred to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) (www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/complaintpolicy.pdf); or
- Complaints related to the application of state laws or rules related to approval to operate or

licensure of a particular professional program within a postsecondary institution shall be referred to the appropriate State Board (i.e., State Boards of Health, State Board of Education, etc.) within the Tennessee State Government and shall be reviewed and handled by that licensing board (<http://www.tn.gov>, and then search for the appropriate division); or

- For students attending programs in Tennessee, complaints related to state consumer protection laws (e.g., laws related to fraud or false advertising) shall be referred to the Tennessee Division of Consumer Affairs and shall be reviewed and handled by that unit (<http://www.tn.gov/consumer>). For out-of-state students using distance learning programs, complaints related to consumer protection laws shall be filed using the Tennessee NC- SARA Portal form (<http://tn.gov/assets/entities/thec/attachments/ComplaintForm.pdf>).

Academic Grievances: Grade Appeals Procedure

Any student who wishes to appeal for a course grade must follow the process of appeal to the faculty member/instructor, program director, or dean of the college of health sciences. The appeal to the course grade must be in writing (see Grievance Form below) and given to the appropriate person no later than five days after the decision being appealed is made. The appeal must state on what grounds the appeal is being made and why the student believes an appeal is warranted. Between the time the decision being appealed is made and the time of the appeal hearing the decision being appealed stands and must be obeyed by the student.

Procedure

1. Appeal of a course grade is forwarded to the faculty member/instructor, program director, or dean of the college of health sciences within five (5) days.
2. A committee is formed, directed by the dean of the college of health sciences, to investigate the appeal.
3. The committee has the right to interview both the complainant and the course faculty member/instructor.
4. Once the committee renders its decision, the decision stands and must be obeyed by the student.