

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Grievance Procedure

The office of Student Accessibility Services (SAS) provides assistance to students with varying degrees and types of disabilities in order to maximize educational opportunity and academic potential. Kent State University affirms this principle of equal access in its equal opportunity policies found in 3342-5-16 and 3342-5-16.1. SAS supports students in their right to file a grievance when he or she believes they have been denied equal access either in the form of eligibility, appropriate and reasonable accommodations, and/or auxiliary aids, or believe they have experienced discriminatory harassment as defined in the University's nondiscrimination policies, Ohio Revised Code 4112, Sections 501 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

SAS encourages students to present their complaints by following the four-step process outlined below. Note that students are permitted to directly file a complaint with the University's Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EO/AA), the State of Ohio Civil Rights Commission, or the United States Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, although the steps outlined below are encouraged as an initial response. Students also are encouraged to review the University's Policy Register regarding academic and non-academic grievance policies. Students may also contact the Student Ombuds Office to discuss their academic rights under relevant University policies.

Complaints related to a student's disability should be immediately brought to the attention of SAS staff. The SAS office will serve as the University's primary point of contact in initially reviewing student disability related matters. It is expected that University offices, such as the Assistant Dean, SAS, EO/AA and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), will consult as appropriate and as necessary. It is expected that student complaints are addressed in as expeditious manner as possible, understanding that each case requires additional time as set forth in University policies and procedures.

Four Steps to Addressing and Resolving a Complaint

1. SAS Office – Students should present and discuss the complaint with his or her Accessibility Specialist in the SAS office, located in the Library/Theatre Building. The SAS office recommends that the student bring their complaint to the SAS coordinator's attention as soon as possible so that measures can be taken. The SAS office may consult with the appropriate University personnel depending on the nature and scope of the complaint. The student and the SAS office will engage in an interactive process in order to attempt to resolve the issue. Resolution of the presented issue may be reached at this level. However, if a resolution is not reached, students should proceed to the following step.

2. Assistant Dean – The student must file a written appeal to the Assistant Dean’s office or his or her designee within 15 business days following the undesired outcome of step one. The Assistant Dean will review the student’s written appeal, which may include consulting with the student, and will respond within 15 business days* following receipt of the written appeal. The following information must be included in the written appeal:

- A detailed description of the complaint
- Any supporting documentation for the complaint and/or appeal
- Outcome summary from step one
- Resolution sought by student

Resolution of the presented issue may be reached at this level. However, if a resolution is not reached, students should proceed to the following step.

3. The Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action – The student should submit a written appeal within 15 business days* following the unsatisfactory outcome of step two to the Office of EO/AA. The EO/AA will consult with the student to determine whether informal resolution should be attempted or whether the EO/AA will implement a Level Two Formal Investigation and respond within 30 business days* per policy 3342-5-16.1. The following information must be included in the written appeal:

- A detailed description of the original complaint and appeal
- Any supporting documentation for the complaint and/or appeal
- Resolution sought by student
- The written response from the Assistant Dean from step two

Resolution of the presented issue may be reached at this level. However, if a resolution is not reached, the complainant has exhausted the internal University complaint procedures.

4. Offices for Civil Rights – If resolution was not met by step three, the student may choose to file a complaint with the State of Ohio’s Civil Rights Commission. Additionally, a student may contact the Ohio Legal Rights Services. The preceding agencies will accept complaints and investigate according to their policies and procedures.

**Summer session, holidays, and inter-semester breaks, including Spring Break and Winter Break, are not included in the time frame of 15 or 45 business days.*

SAS Grievance Procedure Contact Information

Student Accessibility Services (SAS), Trumbull Campus

182A, Library/Theatre Building

4314 Mahoning Avenue, NW

Warren, OH 44483

Elaine M. Shively, Academic Services Coordinator: 330-675-8932

eshively@kent.edu

Assistant Dean, Kent State University at Trumbull

Classroom/Administration Building

4314 Mahoning Avenue, NW

Warren, OH 44483

Phone: 330-675-8822

awadia@kent.edu

The Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Human Resources

Terrace Hall Annex

P.O. Box 5190

Kent, OH 44242

Phone: 330-672-2901

<http://www.kent.edu/hr/aa/index.cfm>

The Division of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Executive Office, Rm. 252 Library

P.O. Box 5190

Kent, OH 44242

Phone: 330-672-2442

<http://www.kent.edu/diversity/index.cfm>

U.S. Department of Education,

Office for Civil Rights

Phone: (312) 886-8434

TDD: (312) 353-2540

Fax: (312) 353-4888

<http://www.ed.gov/>

Ohio Civil Rights Commission

The Cleveland Regional Office

Phone: (216) 787-3150

TDD: (216) 787-3549

http://crc.ohio.gov/cleveland_office.htm