# 32.01.01.C0.01 Complaint and Appeal Process for Faculty Members

Revised: November 17, 2025
Next Scheduled Review: November 17, 2030
Revision History

## Procedure Summary

This procedure addresses concerns and complaints from faculty members of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi not specifically stated elsewhere. It outlines the concern/complaint resolution process for faculty members and promotes prompt and efficient investigation and resolution of these concerns/complaints. Other system policies and regulations and university rules and procedures exist to cover complaints including, but not limited to, the areas of civil rights, tenure, promotion, dismissal, reduction in force, and violations of academic freedom. This procedure should be read along with system regulation *32.01.01, Complaint and Appeal Procedures for Faculty Members*. Refer to the Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements section below for guidance on other types of complaints.

## Procedure

1. GENERAL

    1.1. It is intended that all concerns be resolved, whenever possible, before the filing of a formal complaint. Faculty members who are considering filing a formal complaint are encouraged first to seek alternative mechanisms, such as discussing the matter with their department chair/supervisor or meeting with the faculty ombuds as outlined in section 2.2 of this procedure. Open communication between faculty members and administrators and fair decisions are important so that resorting to the formal complaint process described in section 3 of this procedure will not be necessary.

    1.2. Faculty complaints against the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Provost), vice presidents, the President, or any positions that report directly to the President will be handled by the Texas A&M University System in accordance with system regulation *32.01.02, Complaint and Appeal Process for Nonfaculty Employees*.

2. INFORMAL PROCESS FOR HANDLING A CONCERN

2.1. This informal process described below applies to resolving a concern (a cause for a complaint) prior to the filing of a formal complaint.

2.1.1. Department Chair/Supervisor Meeting

2.1.1.1. The discussion between the faculty member and the department chair/supervisor will be informal for the purpose of addressing differences in the simplest and most direct manner.

2.1.1.2. The department chair/supervisor is responsible for listening to and discussing the concern with the faculty member in an effort to resolve the concern.

2.1.1.3. If the concern is not resolved through this informal discussion with the department chair/supervisor, or the department chair/supervisor is the object of the concern, the faculty member may request a meeting with the dean/director of the academic unit (e.g., college, school, library) or contact the faculty ombuds.

2.1.2. Academic Unit Dean/Director Meeting

2.1.2.1. The discussion between the faculty member and the academic unit dean/director will be informal for the purpose of addressing differences in the simplest and most direct manner.

2.1.2.2. The academic unit dean/director is responsible for listening to and discussing the concern with the faculty member in an effort to resolve the concern.

2.1.2.3. If the concern is not resolved through this informal discussion with the academic unit dean/director or the dean/director is the object of the concern, the faculty member may contact the faculty ombuds or pursue the formal complaint process outlined below.

2.2. Faculty Ombuds

2.2.1. The role of the faculty ombuds is to listen to and discuss the concerns with the faculty member; help address faculty concerns by providing relevant information; and engaging in informal efforts to resolve conflicts. In that role, the faculty ombuds remains neutral, rather than advocating or appearing to advocate for any individual.

2.2.2. The faculty ombuds will keep all communications with those seeking assistance private and will not disclose private communications unless given written permission to do so. The only exceptions to this privacy are where there are allegations of civil rights discrimination, sexual harassment, related retaliation, sexual violence, fraud, waste, abuse, imminent risk of serious harm, and/or where required by state or federal law.

2.2.3. The faculty ombuds does not have any formal decision-making authority and does not participate in any formal complaint or grievance processes.

2.2.4. Additional information on the faculty ombuds can be found in university procedure *32.01.01.C0.02, Faculty Ombuds*.

3. FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

3.1. If the informal process discussed in section 2 of this procedure does not resolve the concern, the faculty member may elect to pursue the formal complaint process by sending a written complaint and a proposed solution to the academic unit dean/director.

3.2. Complaint proceedings will be kept private, subject only to the need of the complainant and the university to comply with the processes specified below and to present evidence concerning the complaint in other administrative or judicial proceedings.

3.3. The formal complaint process is described below.

3.3.1. Academic Unit Dean/Director Review

3.3.1.1. The academic unit dean/director will meet with the faculty member within ten (10) working days to resolve the complaint. If the complaint is not addressed within ten (10) working days or the academic unit dean/director is the subject of the complaint, the complaint can be submitted directly to the Provost.

3.3.1.2. The academic unit dean/director will notify the complaining faculty member of their decision, in writing, within ten (10) working days following the date of the meeting.

3.3.2. Provost Review

3.3.2.1. If the faculty member believes that the matter is still not resolved after the dean/director's decision and the matter

does not involve routine academic administration activities (e.g., performance evaluations, course/committee assignments, or interpersonal conflicts), they may forward a written complaint to the Provost within fifteen (15) working days after the academic unit dean/director issues a written decision.

3.3.2.2. The President has delegated to the Provost the responsibility to appoint a Designated Administrator (senior campus administrator or investigation committee) to review complaints and/or appeals and make recommendations to the Provost. Normally, the Provost will appoint an investigation committee as the Designated Administrator to handle faculty complaints and appeals. A senior campus administrator may be appointed as the Designated Administrator if all involved parties were administrators at the time of the incident in question or the focus of the complaint/appeal falls outside of the traditional areas of faculty experience (e.g., administrative matters).

3.3.2.2.1. If an investigation committee is designated to review the faculty complaint, it will be chosen from the Faculty Hearing Committee/Advisory Committee pool and follow the selection process outlined in section 4.1 of university procedure *12.01.99.C0.05, Faculty Dismissal, Administrative Leave, Non-Reappointments and Terminal Appointments*.

3.3.2.2.2. If a senior campus administrator is designated to review the faculty complaint, they will be selected by the Provost in consultation with relevant campus and system administrators.

3.3.3. Designated Administrator (Investigation Committee/Senior Campus Administrator) Review

3.3.3.1. The Designated Administrator should begin their investigation in a timely manner, normally commencing within fifteen (15) working days after the complaint has been forwarded by the Provost.

3.3.3.2. The Designated Administrator will provide the aggrieved faculty member with an opportunity to present their complaint and provide witnesses.

3.3.3.3. The individual/department to which the complaint is directed will be provided with an opportunity to respond to the complaint and provide witnesses.

3.3.3.4. The Designated Administrator may also seek information from other persons related to the case, excluding private information from the faculty ombuds.

3.3.3.5. The Designated Administrator will provide their written conclusion to the Provost within fifteen (15) working days after commencing the investigation.

3.3.4. Final Decision

The Provost will issue a written decision to the faculty member originating the complaint, the department chair/supervisor, and the academic unit dean/director normally within five (5) working days after receiving the recommendation of the Designated Administrator. The decision of the Provost will be final.

## Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

System Regulation *32.01.01, Complaint and Appeal Procedures for Faculty Members*
System Regulation *32.01.02, Complaint and Appeal Process for Nonfaculty Employees*
University Rule *08.01.01.C1, Civil Rights Compliance*
University Rule *12.01.01.C1, Tenure*
University Procedure *12.01.99.C0.05, Faculty Dismissals, Administrative Leave, Non-Reappointments, and Terminal Appointments*
University Procedure *32.01.01.C0.02, Faculty Ombuds*
University Procedure *33.99.04.C0.02, Promotion of Full-Time Faculty Members*

## Contact Office

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| Contact for interpretation and clarification: | Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs<br>361.825.2722 |