

DISPUTE RESOLUTION POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy governs complaints from students respecting Vancouver School of Theology (VST) and any aspect of its operations. The policy outlines the regulations and procedures related to student dispute resolution.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all individuals who enrolled in studies at VST.

POLICY

VST realizes there may be disputes and conflicts that arise from time to time. VST is committed to ensuring a safe, comfortable, equitable and responsive learning environment for everyone. VST is committed to the prompt and equitable resolution of student concerns.

Students are strongly encouraged to discuss any conflicts, disputes, or concerns via informal discussion at the earliest opportunity.

In cases where informal resolution is unsuccessful or unsafe, complaints should be filed within 90 calendar days of the occurrence of the incident or from the date upon which the student should reasonably have known about the matter(s) they are complaining about. Complaints submitted beyond one calendar year from the date of graduation or withdrawal will not be accepted.

- Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.
- Formal student complaints must be made in writing.
- An agent or lawyer may represent the student making a complaint.
- The dispute resolution process, including written reasons for the determination and any reconsideration (if any), must be completed no later than 30 calendar days from the date on which the student submitted the complaint.
- A student who makes or is otherwise involved in a complaint will not be subject to any form of retaliation by VST at any time for making the complaint.
- VST does not charge students a fee for handling complaints
- The submitted Complaint, related documentation and VST response(s) must be retained in the student file.

PROCEDURE

ACADEMIC DEAN RESOLUTION:

1. In the event that the attempt to resolve issues via informal discussion has not been successful, the student shall provide their concerns or complaints in writing (e-mail or

letter) to the Academic Dean. The student must provide their full name, set out the areas of concern or complaint, their suggested remedy, and what steps they have taken to date to address or resolve the issue.

2. The Academic Dean must investigate the student's concerns or complaints and, whenever necessary, meet with the student as soon as is practicable and normally within 5 days to seek resolution and/or seek additional information about the concerns or complaints from the student or any other parties involved.

- If the Academic Dean is not available, or named in the complaint, the dispute must be submitted to the Anti-Harassment Officer (Shari Coltart or Hyuk Cho).
- Students are provided with the contact information for the Academic Dean and Anti-Harassment Officers on the VST website.
- If a formal complaint is sent to a staff member other than the Academic Dean, that staff member must redirect the complaint within 1 business day of receipt to the Academic Dean.

3. After careful consideration, the Academic Dean will provide a written decision to the student, no later than 10 calendar days after the receipt of the concerns, or complaint.

PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL RESOLUTION:

1. If a resolution cannot be found through the Academic Dean, the student may pursue the matter further by sending an email to the President, addressed to the President's Council. The President's Contact information is available on the VST website.

- The email must include the student's concern, actions taken to date and the desired outcome or resolution.
- Must be sent within 5 calendar days of the Academic Dean decision.

2. The President's Council (the Dean will excuse herself) will contact all relevant parties to gather information regarding the concern.

3. The President's Council will conduct an investigation and review of the complaint/concern and inform all parties of the progress of the investigation and review.

4. Once the investigation is complete, the President will respond to the student in writing, no later than 15 calendar days after the receipt of the concerns, or complaint.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS RESOLUTION:

1. If a resolution cannot be found through the President's Council, or if the complaint involves members of the President's Council, the student may pursue the matter further by sending an email to the Chair of the Board of Governors. Contact information for the

Chair of the Board will be provided in the written decisions from the Dean and the President's Council.

2. The Board of Governors will contact all relevant parties to gather information regarding the concern.

3. The Board of Governors will conduct an investigation and review of the complaint/concern and inform all parties of the progress of the investigation and review.

4. Once the investigation is complete, the Chair of the Board will respond to the student in writing, no later than 15 calendar days after the receipt of the concerns, or complaint.