COMPLAINTS AND CLAIMS POLICY

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to protect the privacy of student information and ensure it is collected, stored, and used responsibly in compliance with applicable laws. It applies to all students, faculty, staff, and third parties who access or process student data, including academic, personal, financial, health, and digital records. The policy safeguards against unauthorized access or disclosure and promotes trust, accountability, and respect for student rights.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all students of the institution, as well as faculty, staff, and third parties who handle student information. It covers all forms of student data, including academic, personal, financial, health, and digital records, regardless of format or storage system.

3. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- Non-Discrimination Law (Title VI, Title IX, ADA): “U.S. Department of Justice. (1964). Civil Rights Act of 1964.”
- Inclusion and Diversity Policies in Schools: “U.S. Department of Education. (2020). The Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC).”
- Diversified Student Experience: “U.S. Department of Education. (2021). Guidelines for promoting student diversity in higher education.”
- Multicultural Education and Cultural Sensitivity: “U.S. Department of Education. (2019). Cultural competence standards in education.”
- Diversity in Hiring and Academic Programs: “U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (2021). Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Employment.”
- Support Programs for Students from Vulnerable Groups: “U.S. Department of Education. (2020). Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.”
- Privacy and Data Protection Law (FERPA): “U.S. Department of Education. (2021). Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).”
- Professional Experience and Volunteering Programs: “U.S. Department of Labor. (2021). Youth Employment and Labor Standards.”
- Digital Accessibility and Inclusion: “U.S. Access Board. (2021). Section 508 Standards and Guidelines.

4. DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

- **Academic Advisor:** Professional responsible for providing academic guidance, monitoring, orientation, and referrals as needed.
- **Student Typification:** Institutional classification of students based on academic status (e.g., new, regular, reinstated, withdrawn, suspended, expelled).
- **Student Experience:** The set of services, activities, interactions, and support a student receives throughout their academic life and Alumni stage.
- **Student Services:** Areas of support such as well-being, academic advising, financial aid, employability, technology, among others.
- **Complaint:** Expression of dissatisfaction by the student regarding a service received, the attention, treatment, or an institutional process.

- **Claim:** Formal manifestation of nonconformity related to the breach of a commitment, process, regulation, or student right.
- **SLA (Service Level Agreement):** Agreement that establishes the maximum response and resolution times for requests, complaints, and claims.
- **FERPA:** U.S. federal law protecting the privacy of student records.
- **Help Center:** Institutional digital platform for administrative or academic requests.

5. GENERAL POLICY AND GUIDELINES

5.1. POLICY STATEMENT

Continental Florida University affirms its commitment to safeguarding the confidentiality, integrity, and lawful use of student information. All students, faculty, staff, and third parties are expected to respect and comply with the principles outlined in this policy. The institution declares that student data will be managed with transparency, fairness, and accountability, ensuring compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and fostering an environment of trust, equity, and respect for individual rights.

5.2. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

5.2.1. Reception of Complaints and Claims

Complaints and claims may be submitted through the following channels: Help Center, institutional email, digital request platform, or with an Academic Advisor. All channels ensure traceability and an acknowledgment of receipt.

5.2.2. Instructions for Students

Students receive clear guidance on how to file a complaint or claim through the Student Portal and the Help Center guides. Each registered case is automatically forwarded to the institutional email of the Student Experience Department, where it is reviewed, classified, and, if necessary, escalated to the corresponding area. The process ensures traceability and strict compliance with the response times established in the Service Level Agreements (SLA).

5.2.3. Response Times (SLA)

According to the interdepartmental Service Level Agreement (SLA), the service deadlines are as follows:

- Simple inquiries: immediate resolution.
- Operational requests: up to 48 business hours.
- Interdepartmental requests: up to 72 business hours.
- Complaints or claims to the Student Experience Department: up to 48 business hours.
- Complaints or claims to other areas: up to 72 business hours.

5.2.4. Process Principles

The handling of complaints and claims is governed by the principles of confidentiality, impartiality, respect, fairness, right of reply, and due process. If a claim involves a faculty member or staff, their right to respond before the final resolution is guaranteed.

5.2.5. Escalation to External Entities

The policy informs students of their right to escalate claims to external entities, including state or federal authorities and the accrediting agency (DEAC), if they believe they have not received an adequate response from the institution.

5.2.6. Record Keeping

All records of complaints and claims, including communications, responses, and resolutions, will be stored in the institutional system for no less than five (5) years or until the next accreditation review, whichever is longer.

5.2.7. Responsibilities

- Academic Advisors: Guide students in filing a complaint or claim and ensure traceability.
- Student Experience Department: Centralize and follow up on complaints and claims.
- Academic Area: Resolve complex cases and issue final resolutions.
- All involved areas: Comply with the deadlines established in the SLA.

5.2.8. Communication and Continuous Improvement

The policy will be published on institutional platforms and shared with students and staff. It will be reviewed annually as part of the continuous improvement process and based on the results of complaint and claim reports.

5.3. DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

Terms	Description
Educational Model	It consists of a compilation or synthesis of different theories and pedagogical approaches that guide teachers in the development of study programs and in the systematization of the teaching and learning process.
Academic Regulations	This formal document sets out the obligations, benefits, and sanctions of the members of the university community in order to guide their conduct, establish academic processes, and foster a harmonious environment.
Shared Folder	A set of files held exclusively by the Academic Records department, which are shared only within that area.
Banner	Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software designed for higher education.
Academic Fee	Refers to the payment that must be made for the requested document.
Help Center	A platform where student requests for documentary or academic procedures are registered.

6. APPENDIX

Code	Appendix	Validity
POL02.SU03- DOC1	Typification Matrix	1 year
POL02.SU03- DOC2	Follow up complaints and claim report	Indefinitely

7. VERSION CONTROL

N°	Requested by	Changes Control
1.0	Executive Director	Initial Documentation

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