## Grievance Policy

Helms College is recognized by the Accrediting Council for Continuing Education & Training (ACCET) as meeting and maintaining certain standards of quality. It is the mutual goal of ACCET and the institution to ensure that educational training programs of quality are provided. When problems arise, students should make every attempt through the formal grievance procedure in this policy to find a fair and reasonable solution.

A grievance is any event, condition, rule or practice, which the student believes violates his or her civil rights, treats him/her unfairly or causes him/her any degree of unpleasantness while in school.

If at any time a student has a problem with an instructor or staff member, the student should request a meeting with that instructor or staff member to attempt to solve the problem at that level.

If the problem cannot be resolved at that level, the student should request a meeting with their Student Services Advisor, either verbally or in writing.

The Student Services Advisor will schedule a meeting within three days after the request, with the student, instructor, staff member or relevant parties in an attempt to bring resolution to the problem.

If the problem cannot be resolved in the meeting, the Program Manager or Program Director will be notified and schedule a meeting with the instructor, staff member, the student, and all relevant parties will be notified within three days of receiving the request.

The problem will be discussed with all concerned and a final decision will be rendered by the Program Director or the Helms College Senior Vice President of Education.

If the student is still dissatisfied with the solution, they may contact the Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission (GNPEC) by submitting an Authorized School Complaint Form, which will then be referred to the appropriate Regulatory Specialist. The form can be found by visiting  [https://gnpec.georgia.gov/student-resources/complaints-against-institution](%20https%3A//gnpec.georgia.gov/student-resources/complaints-against-institution) and selecting “Consumer Resources.” The information below outlines the GNPEC Complaint Procedure:

**GNPEC Authorized School Complaint Procedure—Authority: O.C.G.A. § 20-3-250 et al.**

Any student who feels that an institution for which GNPEC is the complaint agent has not adequately addressed a complaint, or who feels that the institution is not in compliance with the Commission’s Minimum Standards, may file a formal complaint. In order to be considered, a formal complaint must be submitted in accordance with the Commission’s Complaint Procedures by using its online complaint form. The complaint **must** include documentation of the basis of the complaint and of the final determination from the institution indicating no further institutional review is available. If preliminary findings indicate a violation of GNPEC regulations by the institution or a failure to follow its procedures, the Commission shall attempt to resolve the complaint through mediation.  All parties will be notified in writing of the outcome of the investigation.

In order to be reviewed by the Commission, the complaint must be filed within 90 calendar days of the final resolution from the institution, and it must include the following:

* Basis for any allegation of noncompliance with GNPEC standards or requirements.
* All relevant names and dates and a brief description of the actions forming the basis of the complaint.
* Copies of all documents or materials related to the allegations, including institutional responses documentation and/or analysis.
* Proof of completion of the institutional complaint or grievance process; and
* Desired resolution.

The Commission will not review a complaint that fails to provide complete information or does not address an issue that can be reviewed.   In no instance will a complaint be accepted for review that has not completed the process published by the institution.

Upon receipt of a complaint filed in accordance with the aforementioned format, the Commission will forward a copy of the complaint to the school for a response.

**GNPEC can also be reached at:**

**Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission**

**2082 East Exchange Place, Suite 220**

**Tucker, Georgia 30084**

**770.414.3300**

ACCET Complaint Procedure

Helms College is recognized by the Accrediting Council for Continuing Education & Training (ACCET) as meeting and maintaining certain standards of quality. It is the mutual goal of ACCET and the institution to ensure that quality educational training programs are provided. When issues or problems arise, students should make every attempt to find a fair and reasonable solution through the institution’s internal complaint procedure, which is required of ACCET-accredited institutions and frequently requires the submission of a written complaint. Refer to the institution’s written complaint procedure, which is published in the institution’s catalog or otherwise available from the institution, upon request. Note that ACCET will process complaints that involve ACCET standards and policies and, therefore, are within the scope of the accrediting agency.

If a student has used the institution’s formal student complaint procedure, and the issue has not been resolved, the student has the right and is encouraged to submit a complaint to ACCET in writing via the online form on the ACCET website (https://accet.org/about-us/contact-us). The online form will require the following information:

1. Name and location of the ACCET institution

2. A detailed description of the alleged problem(s)

3. The approximate date(s) that the problem(s) occurred

4. The names and titles/positions of all persons involved in the problem(s), including faculty, staff, and/or other students

5. What was previously done to resolve the complaint, along with evidence demonstrating that the institution’s complaint procedure was followed prior to contacting ACCET

6. The name, email address, telephone number, and mailing address of the complainant. If the complainant specifically requests that anonymity be maintained, ACCET will not reveal his or her name to the institution involved.

7. The status of the complainant with the institution (e.g., current student, former student)

Please include copies of any relevant supporting documentation (e.g., student enrollment agreement, syllabus or course outline, correspondence between the student and the institution).

Note: Complainants will receive an acknowledgment of receipt within 15 business days.



Interactive Distance Learning Student Complaint Procedure

Interactive Distance Learning student complaints relating to consumer protection laws offered under the terms and conditions of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA), must first be filed with the institution to seek resolution. The full policy can be found here: <https://nc-sara.org/student-complaints>

Students should begin the complaint process with the institution, following the Grievance Policy above. If resolution is not found, the student should contact the institution’s home state SARA Portal Entity—GA-SARA at the link below:

<https://gnpec.georgia.gov/student-resources/student-complaints/ga-sara-online-student-complaint-form>