



NURSING PROGRAM

Policy Title: Program of Nursing Complaint and Recognition Policy

Reason for Policy: To provide direction and clarity for communicating recognition or a complaint.

I. OVERVIEW

This policy is designed to facilitate the creation and maintenance of an environment that is professional, respectful, inclusive, and intellectually stimulating. The process allows individuals to both recognize exemplary behavior as well as submit complaints about all aspects of the learning environment. Matters not covered by this policy include faculty matters appropriate for consideration by the School of Medicine Grievance Committee, and student matters appropriate for consideration by the PON Code of Professional Conduct.

II. DEFINITION

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- **Formal Complaint:** A complaint made by a student, staff or faculty in which where dissatisfaction with a particular situation or inappropriate treatment from any aspect of the learning environment. Formal complaints are written and signed via the [PON Complaint Form](#).
- **Recognition:** Written recognition of exemplary treatment of a learner or any member of the learning environment and who are role models for professionalism, either experienced or witnessed. Recognition is written and signed via the [PON Recognition Form](#).

III. POLICY STATEMENT

The Tulane University School of Medicine Program of Nursing is committed to creating and maintaining a positive and respectful environment for its faculty, learners, and staff by holding accountable those who do not follow the tenets of professional workplace behavior. The Tulane Healthcare Community believes that a profession gains its credibility by its commitment to society. As a professional group, we recognize our multiple responsibilities to our patients, colleagues, communities, families, and ourselves. Realizing that it is a privilege and an honor to be a healthcare professional, we hold the following ideals:

- * Patient welfare is our primary concern, for only by this commitment do we justify the trust placed in us by patients and the community at large.
- * Relationships with our peers, faculty, and staff are an essential part of professional conduct.
- * Integrating personal growth into our professional development is essential to our commitment to nursing.
- * As nursing professionals, we shall strive to be responsible citizens and strive to instill and uphold the values and ideas set forth in this policy.

The program receives all complaints and records them in a confidential database. Each report is reviewed and investigated. An essential assumption is that all members of our community do not intend harm, rather may need education and awareness of the impact of their actions. Thus, early intervention is key to prevent continued or escalated unprofessional behavior.

An emphasis has been placed on recognizing those individuals with exemplary behavior and who are role models for professionalism.

Reporting of a Complaint

Complaints about any member or aspect of the learning environment, either experienced or witnessed, can be reported utilizing the [PON Complaint Form](#).

*Please note that the Complaint Form should not be used to report behavior related to an individual's personal medical visit or include any health information.

Reporting of Exceptional Behavior

Exemplary treatment of a learner or any member of the learning environment, either experienced or witnessed, can be reported utilizing the [PON Recognition Form](#).

For students, staff, or faculty:

Perceived inappropriate treatment of a learner or any member of the learning environment, either experienced or witnessed, should be reported by one or more of the following methods:

1. In writing, utilize the [PON Complaint Form](#).
 - When submitting a complaint, you will be asked to select a B-SAFE category from a list. You can find the categories and definitions [here](#).
2. As an alternative, the [Tulane University Campus Reporting Form](#) can be utilized by students, staff, or faculty to report any complaints. If an incident involves perceived harassment or discrimination, the [Tulane University Campus Reporting Form](#) should be used to send the report directly to the Title IX Coordinator and/or the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) as required by federal law. Reports submitted to the PON that are deemed to include harassment or discrimination will be forwarded to OIE. For more information about University sexual harassment and discrimination policies, [visit this link](#).
3. If you feel like you are in immediate danger, contact TUPD for assistance. Their contact information is below. Also, all Tulane community members should download the Everbridge app, which allows you to receive TU Alerts directly from the app and to utilize several safety features. To download the app, [click here](#).

TUPD Contact Information:

- Emergency: **(504) 988-5555**
- Non-Emergency: **(504) 988-5531**

For students only:

In addition to the methods listed above, students have the opportunity to report perceived concerning behavior by one or more of the following methods:

1. Verbally or in writing to the PON Director of Curriculum and Academic Affairs or PON Academic Advisor.

- a. After discussing the complaint with the student, the Director of Curriculum and Academic Affairs or Academic Advisor is encouraged to submit a [Complaint Form](#) or if feasible and appropriate, manage the complaint.
- b. If a Complaint Form is not used and resolution has been achieved within 5 business days, the resolution will be communicated to the complainant and to the Dean. All complaints are documented in the tracking database and used to identify trends for program improvement.
- c. If resolution is not achieved within 5 days, the Director of Curriculum & Academic Affairs and Academic Advisor are required to submit a Complaint Form, and the process defined in the section, Review of Complaint Form Submissions, will be followed.

Confidentiality of Reports

The Program and the University will keep confidential all records of complaints to the extent permitted by law. Note that behaviors that violate Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments to the Higher Education Act, which includes discrimination or harassment based on sex or gender, must be reported by any University official so they can be promptly acted upon in compliance with federal law. If a report suggests discrimination, the Program is required to notify the University's Office of Institutional Equity so that an investigation may be initiated. Required notification also includes behaviors that pose an imminent danger to others (e.g., violence or threats of physical violence, illegal drug use by caregivers in the clinical setting, deliberate violation of patient safety procedures) or are illegal (e.g., stealing narcotics, falsifying patient records) and must be reported immediately (possibly TUPD) so that action can be taken.

All complaints that don't meet the criteria for immediate reporting will be confidential, if the reporter requests. If the reporter requests confidentiality, their information will be limited to the Department Administrator, who will redact the reporter's name from the PON Administration review as well as any other party that is automatically identified, in the case of learners. We therefore encourage you to include your name so that we can request further detail if needed. If a report is made anonymously, the complaint will be reviewed and addressed based on the information provided, which may be limited. Full disclosure of the persons involved, and the behaviors witnessed, can lead to more effective action to address the complaint.

Of note, any learner who reports inappropriate behavior may request a delayed review of their complaint until after grades and/or evaluations have been completed. The process will include an initial review by the Department Administrator to assess for required reporting. Then, following the requested delay, the complaint will be reviewed by the PON Administration and sent to the appropriate parties identified for notification. Please note, however, that time delays in addressing an incident may lessen the impact of the intervention.

Protection of Rights of those Reporting Concerning Behavior

The success of the complaint reporting process in safe-guarding the learning environment depends on the timely reporting of incidents of inappropriate treatment. In all cases, retaliation, or the encouragement of another to retaliate against the person making such a report will be considered a breach of professionalism and will be addressed accordingly.

Protection of the Rights of those Reported for Concerning Behavior

Intentional false or malicious reports of concerning behaviors will not be tolerated and will be handled as a disciplinary matter in the learner’s program. All reports of concerning behavior will be handled confidentially, with the exceptions noted above, and in a manner that affords due process.

Review of Complaint Form Submissions

Within 5 days of receipt of the written complaint, the complaint is reviewed by the Department Administrator II, in consultation with the Dean, and an investigation is started. If requested by the individual reporting, the timing of a review can be adjusted or delayed to relieve fear of intimidation or retaliation. However, if the complaint involves behavior that suggests a violation of Title IX or imminent danger, the report will be referred to the Office of Institutional Equity without delay. We encourage all reports to be as detailed as possible to allow for a complete review.

All documentation and investigation related to a complaint are reviewed, and resolution is expected within 30 days. The resolution is communicated to the complainant.

Utilization of the Complaint Form allows for tracking of trends and program improvement initiatives.

III. POLICY GOALS

1. Facilitate a professional and inclusive learning/work environment based on our ideals.
2. Provide consistent educational opportunities for all members of our community.
3. Provide a clear and transparent process for reviewing and resolving all submissions.
4. Provide a fair system to ensure accountability of all members of our community.
5. Ensure confidentiality and minimize fear of retaliation.

III. POLICY RESOURCES

PON Professional Code of Conduct
PON Complaint Form
PON Recognition Form
Tulane University Campus Reporting Form
Tulane University Office of Institutional Equity
Tulane University Title IX Office
B-SAFE Definitions

IV. POLICY REVIEW

Effective Date:	November 7, 2024
Last Reviewed/Updated:	January 27, 2025 (updated)
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