

3.12.1 Grievance and Appeals Procedure

Source: 2023-2024 Student and Community Life Handbook

A grievance process is available to students whose request for accommodations has been denied by a staff or faculty member.

Informal Resolution

The student, the person who denied the request, a designated seminary representative, and, if appropriate, the student's advisor, meet to discuss the denial of the accommodation. (Note: The designated staff representative is responsible for arranging the meeting.) The meeting must take place within ten working days of the initial notification of denial. The issue may be resolved at this level. However, if the issue is not resolved, the process moves to filing the formal grievance.

Formal Grievance

Students should consult their academic advisors in formulating a formal written grievance. In all cases where a formal written grievance is filed, a record of all the proceedings shall be made and a permanent record maintained in the student's file.

- Grievances must be submitted to the Disabilities Accommodations Coordinator within 14 days of the date the person filing the grievance becomes aware of the alleged discriminatory action.
- A complaint must be in writing, containing the name and address of the person filing it. The complaint must state the problem or action alleged to be discriminatory and the remedy or relief sought.
- The Disabilities Accommodations Coordinator (or their designee) shall conduct an investigation of the complaint. This investigation may be informal, but it must be thorough, affording all interested persons an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. The Disabilities Accommodations Coordinator will maintain the files and records of Wartburg Theological Seminary relating to such grievances.
- The Disabilities Accommodations Coordinator will issue a written decision on the grievance no later than 2 weeks after its filing.
- The person filing the grievance may appeal the decision of the Disabilities Accommodations Coordinator by writing to the Academic Dean within two weeks of receiving the Disability Accommodations Coordinator's decision. The Academic Dean shall issue a written decision in response to the appeal within 5 working days after its filing.
- The availability and use of this grievance procedure does not prevent a person from filing a complaint of discrimination on the basis of disability with the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education.

Office for Civil Rights,
Chicago Office
U.S. Department of Education
John C. Kluczynski Federal Building
230 S. Dearborn Street, 37th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604
Telephone: (312) 730-1560

Facsimile: (312) 730-1576
Email: OCR.Chicago@ed.gov

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>

The Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that disabled persons are provided other accommodations, if needed, to participate in this grievance process. Such arrangements may include, but are not limited to, providing interpreters for the deaf, providing recorded material for the blind, or assuring a barrier-free location for the proceedings. The Disabilities Accommodations Coordinator will be responsible for such arrangements.

Should the appeal be denied, the student may contact the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education (see contact info above) for further consideration.