SEMINARY COMPLAINT POLICY

Columbia Theological Seminary ("the Seminary") welcomes open communication from students, faculty, and staff regarding its policies and practices. Feedback helps the Seminary evaluate, clarify and improve processes, policies, and procedures.

If a member of the Seminary has a complaint, the person should, first, attempt to resolve the complaint with the directly responsible individual. If direct communication is not possible and/or unsuccessful, the person should communicate with the directly responsible individual's supervisor.

If direct communication and/or supervisor communication is not possible or unsuccessful, a person may lodge a more formal complaint using the Online Complaint Form, which will forward a copy of the complaint to the Dean of Students. Complaints may also be submitted in writing. If the complaint is with the Dean of Students, the complaint should be submitted in writing directly to the President of the Seminary (AloyoV@ctsnet.edu). Written complaints should include:

1. the name of the person(s) and/or office against whom the complaint is being filed,
2. a detailed description of the incident(s) – providing dates and times where possible,
3. a description of any attempts taken to resolve the matter informally; and
4. a clear statement of the desired outcome or remedy being sought.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the Dean of Students will forward the complaint to the President and Vice President ("VP") responsible for the area. The VP responsible for the area will engage in an initial review of the complaint to ensure the complaint is within the scope of this Policy. Should the VP determine further action is necessary, they will conduct a thorough and fair review of the complaint, which may include follow up conversations with parties involved. The review shall be completed within fourteen (14) business days of receipt of the complaint.

Ordinarily, the VP will respond to complaints with a determination, copying the President and Dean of Students, within fourteen (14) business days of receipt of the complaint from the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will assist with and monitor progress and response to the complaint. Copies of the complaint, response, and all related correspondences and documentation will be maintained in the Office of the Dean of Students. If the complaint is with the Dean of Students, copies of the complaint and response will be maintained in the President's Office.

The Seminary recognizes its obligation to ensure that students, faculty, and staff who make complaints do not suffer adverse treatment because of the complaint. If a member of the Seminary community alleges such treatment, they will be referred to either the Seminary Grievance Policy or Anti-Discrimination Policy.

Seminary Appeals
All appeals of grievances will be administered by the Seminary Appeals Panel, which is co-convened by the Associate Dean for Academic Administration and Assistant Dean for Student Life & Formation. Please refer to the Seminary Appeals Policy for more information.

Grounds for Appeal

At the conclusion of any process adjudicated by the Seminary Complaint Policy, Seminary Grievance Policy, Anti-Discrimination Policy, Academic Standing Commission, or Judicial Commission, a party may appeal the decision on the following grounds:

- There was a procedural error, irregularity, or other inaccuracy on the part of the Seminary of such a nature as to cause doubt as to whether the result would have been different had there not been such an irregularity.
- There exists evidence of discrimination, prejudice, or bias on the part of the adjudicatory body or members making the recommendation.
- Extenuating circumstances affect the reporting or responding party's performance, of which the initial adjudicatory body in question was unaware at the time the recommendation was made and which could not reasonably have been presented.

Dissatisfaction with the decision or determination of the initial adjudicatory body alone is not a valid ground for an appeal.