

LAMAR UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH AND HEARING SCIENCES

**PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS AGAINST GRADUATE EDUCATION
PROGRAMS OF SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY AND AUDIOLOGY**

A complaint about any accredited program or program in candidacy status may be submitted by any student, instructional staff member, speech-language pathologist, audiologist, and/or member of the public.

Speech and Hearing Sciences majors, faculty members, Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists, or the general public are provided with methods for contacting the Council of Academic Accreditation in the event that they should develop concerns about the Speech and Hearing Sciences Department compliance with CAA standards and regulations. The complaint procedure is detailed in the **CAA Accreditation Manual** (Section XIII) which is available online here: <http://caa.asha.org/wp-content/uploads/Accreditation-Handbook.pdf>

Every possible attempt is made to resolve student complaints and grievances within the Speech and Hearing Sciences Department and Lamar University using the grievance procedures listed in the student handbooks.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON THE SUBMISSION OF COMPLAINTS ORIGINATES FROM OUR GRADUATE PROGRAM ACCREDITING AGENCY, THE COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION (CAA) and can be found at: <http://caa.asha.org/programs/complaints/>

ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK—CHAPTER XIII: COMPLAINTS

The CAA is obligated by federal regulations to review complaints it receives about any accredited program or program in candidacy status. A complaint process is also in place for considering complaints filed against the CAA.

Complaints Against Programs

The CAA will address concerns via the complaint process that are clearly related to a program's compliance with accreditation standards. The CAA cannot intervene in disputes between individuals and programs, and cannot affect outcomes such as grade changes, reinstatement to the graduate program, employment, etc., as part of this complaint process.

Before filing a complaint, it is strongly recommended that you read Chapter XIII: Complaints in the *Accreditation Handbook*.

Criteria

Complaints about programs must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be against an accredited graduate education program or program in candidacy status in audiology or speech-language pathology

- Relate to the Standards for Accreditation of Entry-Level Graduate Education Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology in effect at the time that the conduct for the complaint occurred, including the relationship of the complaint to the accreditation standards
- Be clearly described, including the specific nature of the charge and the data to support the charge
- Be within the timelines specified below:
 - If the complaint is being filed by a graduate or former student, or a former faculty or staff member, the complaint must be filed within one year of separation* from the program, even if the conduct occurred more than 4 years prior to the date of filing the complaint
 - If the complaint is being filed by a current student or faculty member, the complaint must be filed as soon as possible, but no longer than 4 years after the date the conduct occurred
 - If the complaint is being filed by other complainants, the conduct must have occurred at least in part within 4 years prior to the date the complaint is filed

**Note: For graduates, former students, or former faculty or staff filing a complaint, the date of separation should be the date on which the individual was no longer considered a student in or employee of the graduate program (i.e., graduation, resignation, official notice of withdrawal or termination), and after any institutional grievance or other review processes have been concluded.*

Submission Requirements

- Complaints against a program must be filed in writing using the CAA's official Complaint Form [DOC]. The Complaint Form must be completed in its entirety. The CAA does not accept complaints over the phone.
- The complainant's name, address, and telephone contact information and the complainant's relationship to the program must be included in order for the Accreditation Office staff to verify the source of the information. The CAA does not accept anonymous complaints.
- The complaint must include verification, if the complaint is from a student or faculty/staff member, that the complainant exhausted all pertinent institutional grievance and review mechanisms before submitting a complaint to the CAA.
- Documented evidence in support of the complaint must be appended, including as appropriate relevant policies/procedures, relevant correspondence (including email), timelines of referenced events, etc. **Do not** enclose entire documents, such as a handbook or catalog; only the specific pages should be included that present content germane to the complaint. Page numbers to these appendices should be referenced in the complaint. Materials may be returned to the complainant if not properly organized to support the complaint.
- All complaints and supporting evidence must be submitted in English, consistent with the business practices of the CAA.
- The complaint form must be signed and submitted with any relevant appendices via U.S. mail, overnight courier, or hand delivery—not via e-mail or as a facsimile—to:
*Chair, Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology
 American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
 2200 Research Boulevard, #310
 Rockville, MD 20850*

The complainant's burden of proof is a preponderance, or greater weight, of the evidence. It is expected that the complaint includes all relevant documentation at the time of submission.

Copies of the CAA's complaint procedures, relevant Standards for Accreditation, and the Complaint Form are available in paper form by contacting the Accreditation Office at accreditation@asha.org or 800-498-2071. All complaint materials (completed and signed complaint form and relevant appendices) must be typewritten or printed from a computer.

Complaints Against the CAA

The CAA also has a process in place for complaints to be filed against the CAA. Before filing a complaint, it is strongly recommended that you read Chapter XIII: Complaints in the *Accreditation Handbook*.

Criteria

Complaints against the CAA must meet the following criteria:

- Relate to the content or the application of the Standards for Accreditation of Entry-Level Graduate Education Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology [PDF], or the policies, procedures, and operations that were in use by the CAA at the time the conduct being complained about occurred;
- Be clearly described, including the specific nature of the charge and the documentation to support the charge;
- Must be filed within 1 year of the date the conduct being complained about occurred

Submission Requirements

Complaints also must meet the following submission requirements:

- Include the complainant's name, address, and telephone contact information in order for the Accreditation Office staff to verify the source of the information;
- Must be complete at the time of submission, including the complaint and all appendices;
- Append documented evidence in support of the complaint, including as appropriate relevant policies/procedures, relevant correspondence (including email), timelines of referenced events, etc. Complainants should not enclose entire documents; only the specific pages should be included that present content germane to the complaint. Page numbers to these appendices should be referenced in the complaint. Materials may be returned to the complainant if not properly organized to support the complaint.
- Submit all complaints and supporting evidence in English, consistent with the business practices of the CAA;
- Be signed and submitted in writing via U.S. mail, overnight courier, or hand delivery—complaints will not be accepted via e-mail or as a facsimile— to the following address:
*Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs ("Vice Presidents")
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
2200 Research Boulevard, #310
Rockville, MD 20850*

There is no formal complaint form for filing complaints against the CAA. However, the complaint must address all the criteria for the complaint to be considered and be submitted as outlined above. The complainant's burden of proof is a preponderance or greater weight of the evidence.