

COLLEGE OMBUDSPERSON

Pursuant to Florida Statute 1006.51, each institution in the Florida College System must have an established procedure by which a student may appeal to the Office of the Ombudsman a decision that is related to the student's access to courses and credit granted toward the degree.

The ombudsperson offers a safe and confidential environment for students to discuss concerns, problems or complaints. As an advocate, the Ombudsperson serves as an independent and unbiased mediator as students resolve academic challenges. In this vein, the Ombudsperson helps students understand college procedures, assists students in exploring possible options for resolution, and makes referrals to appropriate internal and external resources.

Students can direct concerns to the Ombudsperson, Carolyn Scott (scottc@lssc.edu), or Dr. Carol Tolx (tolxc@lssc.edu).

College Complaint Procedure Information

Federal regulations and State laws require that public colleges in The Florida College System have processes for students, employees, and applicants to file complaints against their respective college. In almost every situation, the college's process for resolving complaints must be followed first. If a student believes that their complaint has not been addressed satisfactorily after exhausting the college's complaint or grievance procedure, they can pursue filing a complaint with the Florida Department of Education. Click here (<https://www.fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system/about-us/concerns-complaints.shtml>) for more information.

Additional Information

Lake-Sumter State College is committed to providing prompt and equitable resolutions to students' complaints in accordance with college policy, state statutes and federal regulations. If a student or prospective student believes their complaint has not been addressed satisfactorily after exhausting all available complaint procedures outlined by the College, they have the right to file an external complaint with the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE), the College's accreditation agency, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), the Office of Civil Rights and for distance education students the FL-SARA PRDEC Council:

- **FLDOE**--Contact the Division of Florida Colleges. Additional contact information is available at <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system/about-us/concerns-complaints.shtml>.
- **SACSCOC**--should be contacted only if there is evidence that appears to support the College's noncompliance with an accreditation requirement or standard. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500.
- A student may file a complaint of discrimination with the **Office of Civil Rights** at <https://www.hhs.gov/ocr/index.html> (<https://www.hhs.gov/ocr/>).

Distance Education students, who have completed the internal institutional grievance process and the applicable state grievance process, may appeal non-instructional complaints to the FL-SARA PRDEC Council. For additional information on the complaint process, please visit the FL-SARA Complaint Process page at <https://www.fldoe.org/sara/student-concerns.shtml>. (<https://www.fldoe.org/sara/student-concerns.shtml>)