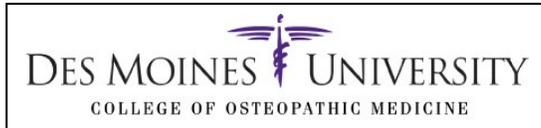


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**Applicability:** DO Program,  
Preclinical and Clinical

## Policy on Submission and Review of COCA Accreditation Complaints

### **POLICY**

Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine (DMUCOM) is accredited by the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA).

Accreditation standards are published on the AOA website at:

<https://osteopathic.org/accreditation/standards/>

Any individual who believes DMUCOM is not in compliance with a COCA accreditation standard has the right to address his/her concern. The individual may address the concern informally or through one or two mechanisms formally.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to describe a process for the effective handling of COCA accreditation complaints

### **SCOPE**

This policy applies to students, faculty, staff, alumni, and members of the public.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

As a COCA accredited program, the DO program is guided by a constellation of accreditation standards to ensure that our program meets high academic standards and continuous quality improvement. If any member believes the program is not in compliance, it is essential that the program addresses it through the procedures set forth below.

# PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

## **Informal Complaint Process**

An individual may initiate the informal process by contacting the appropriate DMUCOM administrator.

## **Formal Complaint Process**

A complainant may file a formal complaint internally. If the internal complaint is not resolved to their satisfaction, they may then file a complaint directly to COCA. The complainant also has the option to file the complaint directly with COCA thus bypassing the internal (informal and formal) mechanisms.

### Filing an Internal Formal Complaint

1. The process to file an internal formal complaint is as follows:
  - a. The complainant must submit a written statement that is signed and dated. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.
  - b. The statement must identify the COCA standard or standards in question and specific details as to why the complainant perceives that DMUCOM is not in compliance.
  - c. The statement must be submitted to the Office of the Dean, College of Osteopathic Medicine, Des Moines University, 3200 Grand Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50312.
2. The process for review and adjudication of an internal formal complaint related to accreditation standards is as follows:
  - a. The written complaint will be reviewed by members of the Dean's administrative team.
  - b. One or more administrators will be assigned to conduct an investigation of the complaint and report back to the administrative team within 30 days.
    - 1) The report will address the following:
    - 2) The COCA standard(s) in question
    - 3) The details of the complaint
    - 4) Findings that support or refute the complaint
    - 5) Corrective action plan, if applicable
  - d. The administrative team will review the report and may accept it as complete or take further action as indicated.
  - e. Once the matter has been deemed fully addressed by the administrative team, a written response will be prepared and sent to the complainant. This response will detail the findings of the review and any steps taken to correct the complaint, if applicable.
  - f. A report of the complaint and its adjudication and response will be submitted to the COM Faculty Organization as information. If the complaint is relevant to a standing committee of the College (e.g. Curriculum Committee), the report will be shared with that committee.
  - g. A copy of all documents related to the complaint and its adjudication and response will be kept on file in the College's record retention system.
  - h. There will be no retaliation to the complainant for filing a complaint.

### Filing a complaint directly to COCA

1. Individuals may choose to file a complaint directly and confidentially with the AOA Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation.
2. A formal complaint to COCA may be filed by using this [form](#).

**Relevant COCA Element(s):** Standard 2.4 – Leadership and Administration