



Student Handbook 2022-2023

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Student Handbook 2022-2023

This is the official Student Handbook of Leighton University and is maintained electronically in a PDF document and web-based versions. The Leighton University reserves the right to revise, amend, or change items outlined in this Student Handbook from time to time. Accordingly, readers of this Student Handbook should inquire whether any such revisions, amendments, or changes have been made since the previous version.

About Leighton University |

Introduction

This Student Handbook is prepared for the undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff of Leighton University and other stakeholders who wish to know about Leighton University policies, procedures, programs, and activities. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained herein is accurate as of the publication date (August 9, 2020). Leighton University reserves the right to correct errors and change policies, procedures, programs, and activities without prior notice. Changes and amendments made after publication will prominently be posted on the University's website.

Leighton's Student Handbook is the official means and resource that defines our student affairs/life expectations. This Handbook serves to acquaint all students with Leighton University's services and policies. These policies and practices have been adapted for the good of the entire Leighton Community and thus allow us to collaboratively work alongside each other, respond to conflicts with one another respectfully, and resolve violations of our Code of Student Conduct in ways that emphasize learning and personal accountability. Some departments and programs may have handbooks that are pertinent to programs of study. These are your guides, and you should find them helpful as you become involved in student life at Leighton.

The policies and procedures in Leighton University's Student Handbook are designed to promote fairness and will be observed as loyally as possible. While the Handbook is inclusive and applicable to all students, it is not, in any way, a contract between the University and the student. Neither is written with the specificity of the statute of law nor an all-inclusive attempt to classify every possible type of problematic behavior. Suppose circumstances determine variation from the policies and procedures described in the Handbook. In that case, the variation will not nullify a decision unless a student has been subjected to arbitrary or capricious conduct on the part of the University.

The University may alter this Handbook at any time without notice, and students are urged to contact their academic advisor to ensure that they have obtained the latest version of the Handbook.

Mission Statement

Leighton University is a private nonprofit innovative institution with a focus on meeting students where they are through accessible, student-centered, quality higher education that blends the liberal arts with career-focused degree programs marked by individualized attention, civility, and respect for differences within a supportive space where students take ownership of their learning and are motivated to succeed in an environment that promotes inclusive excellence.

Vision Statement

To fulfill its mission, the University makes every effort for quality, innovation, and continuous improvement as it pursues the following goals:

- To enhance the academic standards, quality, and competitiveness of the University.
- To improve teaching and learning.
- To strengthen scholarly research and creative achievement.
- To support and maintain student development and quality of life.
- To broaden global perspectives.
- To advance the University through defined and select strategic alliances.

Core Values

The institution's core values guide the university's commitment and aspirations to promote student learning and success, faculty scholarship and research, and community engagement. The following seven values what the university stands for and are, therefore, of intrinsic value expressed in its ethos and fundamental commitments:

Academic Excellence

We are a community that pursues excellence in the academy whose commitment is vested in teaching, learning, and professional preparation to serve the local, national, and international communities. We treasure the institutional autonomy and the veracity necessary to uphold the highest standards of intellectual inquiry and academic freedom.

Champion Student Success

We are a community that strives to nurture students for success in their academic journey, graduate promptly, and fully realize their academic and potential as they benefit from their unsurpassed education and preparation rigor.

Acts of Integrity

We are a community that strives to engage in honest communications, fairness, ethical manners, and accountability for words and deeds in all University activities and decision-making.

Commitment to Inclusivity

We are a community that embraces inclusive excellence where all individuals' unique attributes and contributions are valued to enhance the richness of our academic environment regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, political beliefs, spiritual perspectives or other ideologies.

Immersion in Innovation

We are a community that dedicates its stakeholder to discovering and applying knowledge in teaching and learning and developing innovative products and processes to form collaboration across disciplines to stimulate and create positive transformation through teaching, research, and service.

Value of Added Engagement

We are a community that encourages and supports its faculty, staff, and students in all forms of scholarship, including acts of discovery and expansion knowledge and truth.

Power of Technology

We are a community that values the enduring power of technology and information systems and the resources entrusted to our care. With vigilance, we will maintain the integrity of these critical assets.

Guided by its mission, vision, and core values, Leighton University is committed to the belief that everyone should be given a high quality and accessible educational opportunity to acquire, develop, and extend his or her innate abilities for successful careers, be responsible citizenship, and be a lifelong learner to contribute and compete, with confidence, in a diverse and global community.

Student Records

Office of the Registrar

The Office of the Registrar (or Registrar's Office) is in charge of course registration and preserving all official records associated with student enrollment. This includes recording course registration and final grades, monitoring critical students' graduation criteria, and issuing Leighton University transcripts. The Registrar's Office coordinates course and final examination schedules, coordinates the honors program, and retains the Academic Catalog content. The University's Registrar serves as the FERPA officer for the institution.

Grade Changes

Questions regarding grades in a course must be resolved within 90 calendar days following the grade's posting. Grade changes are approved only to correct errors in computing the grade, and a grade change form must be submitted no later than the close of the semester/summer Term following the posting of the grade.

Grievance issues regarding grades, course requirements and classroom procedures can occur. The first and foremost contact for resolving the problem is with the course instructor. The University expects most issues raised by the student to be resolved amicably and informally with the professor. If an informal resolution is not possible, students may file a written grievance on a General Petition Form, available online at www.leighton.edu.us/academics/forms. These forms must be submitted with the course instructor's signature within 90 calendar days of the Registrar's Office posting of the course's final grades. Appeals may be contemplated at the following levels, as necessary: course instructor, Departmental Chair, School's Dean, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Course instructors must retain all evaluated student material that may not have been returned six months after the last class of the Term evaluated.

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory Grade Policy

While earning a bachelor's degree, students may choose the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading option for a

maximum of 3 credits per Term and not more than two for an academic semester. Student in good standing may take up to a total of 16 credits toward a degree.

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory cannot be used to meet requirement courses for the University CORE Program courses to satisfy any of the following categories:

Purposive Communications [P.C.], Quantitative Reasoning [Q.R.], Behavioral and Social Understanding [B.S.U.], Scientific Reasoning [S.R.], Humanities and the Arts [H.A.] or Technology Fluency [T.F.] requirement courses or for repeated courses.

- To register for a course under the S/U option, an under-graduate must have completed 30 or more credit hours with a G.P.A. of at least 2.0. At least 15 of these credit hours must have been completed at Leighton University a GPA of at least 2.0

Except for Major & Minor areas courses, the minimum passing grade for credit is a D+ (1.33); any grade below this minimum is a U and will be recorded as a U with a value similar to a D+ or a U with a value similar to a F (0.0) A grade of U denotes work below 2.00. The S/U marks will be placed on students' transcripts and grade reports by the Registrar's Office. The course grade of S/U will not be included in the grade-point calculation. In the case of a U grade, the course credits will be counted toward degree requirements.

Graduate level courses do not have the S/U option.

Repeated Courses

A student may repeat any course taken previously at Leighton University as long as it is still offered. A student who repeats a course must register for the course and pay tuition. Hours earned in repeated courses count toward graduation requirements only once. The higher grade received is used to compute the course grade point average. The grades AUD, I, W, and TR, do not qualify for the removal of previous grades. All but the last class is identified as a repeated course on your academic record.

The Office of the Registrar runs an end-of-term process after grades have been reported for the Term to post repeats for undergraduate students. Check your unofficial transcript or degree audit report to confirm the prior grade(s) removal from calculating the grade

point average. If the grade point average has not been recalculated, you may report repeated courses to the Office of the Registrar.

- Online: Complete a Repeated Class Notification Form and forward it to Registrar@leighton-edu.us.
- In-Person: Visit the Registrar's Office

Cross-listed courses are subject to the repeated course policy and will reflect appropriately on your academic record. The Registrar's Office reserves the right to adjust your record whenever a repeated course has not been recorded. This process does not apply to classes that may be taken more than once for credit.

Repeated Course Fee

An additional fee of \$75 will be charged per credit hour for the repeated class. Subsequent registrations in the course, beyond the third enrollment, will also be assessed the \$75 per credit hour fee. If you are repeating a class, please note that you will still be evaluated for a repeated course fee, even if the course number has changed.

The third repeat of the course will neither be charged tuition except for the per credit hour fee. This policy does NOT apply to the repeatable courses completed at Leighton for credit or a course previously assigned a grade of "W" and audit (A.U.)

Procedures for Securing Student Records

All student records will be maintained in a protected location with controlled access. Regulated access to records is given based on job level and a certifiable need to view the record. Faculty and staff who have been given restricted access to view records will:

- Make sure that all records are kept in a secure, locked location.
- Lock computer desktops and/or offices when departing a workstation.
- Abstain from storing student records on the computer desktop. All student data should be warehoused on a secure network drive.
- Certify that Leighton University laptops are kept in a secure location, whether on or off-campus. Laptops must be secured and password protected whenever they are not in use.
- Properly shred printed material that contains information not necessary for storage.
- Preserve student information confidentiality by being aware of their surroundings when discussing the student or others who have a confirmable need to know the information.

- Attend periodic training to faculty and staff to ensure that up-to-date security guidelines are recognized and followed. This training will include an annual review of FERPA procedures and HIPAA.

The University is mindful has place robust measures to protect the confidentiality of student data. For that reason, access to confidential student data and databases is limited to duly authorized personnel. Leighton University requires that:

- Security log tables are monitored
- All users have individual accounts
- User permissions are controlled by user classifications that control access to data
- Documentation of site security measures and end-user responsibilities are maintained.

These practices apply both to information in the University's electronic record systems, including admission, other student records including medical, conduct, and other records covered under HIPPA such as physician and mental health, fitness, disability, academic integrity violations, career services, and emails with confidential information.

Add/Swap Courses

During the first three days [Wednesday of the first week] of the 8-week Term, an already enrolled student may use the Add/Swap Form to add a course, swap one course for another, or request a new course if your first request was not successful. Use the Form to add or swap one course at a time. Multiple courses can be requested using the Form.

- Add/swap requests are processed once a day, typically starting around noon.
- Results are typically emailed by the end of the business day.

The deadline to request an add or section swap is the end of the business day (5:00 p.m.) on the Term's 5th day. No exceptions will be made without the course instructor's permission.

Financial Matters

Student Financial Accounts

Leighton University offers an interest-free payment plan for the students upon application approval. Students using the payment plan shall pay 50% of the term tuition seven (7) calendar days before the start of class, and the balance of the term tuition shall be paid by the eighth (8th) week of each Term. Payment can be made online on Populi or mailed to Leighton University's Business

Office. Payment can be made online by credit/debit card or by providing a cashier's check, money order, or personal check. There will be a \$35.00 return check fee. The Business Office of the University does not accept cash. Students may request an alternate payment plan in writing to the Business Office at businessoffice@leighton-edu.us.

Delinquent Tuition Account

Every effort is made to enable students to meet their financial obligations to the University. If a student's account becomes delinquent, the account may be referred to a collection agency, and all additional costs associated will become an additional obligation to the student. Unless the student makes special arrangements are through the Bursars office, his/her account will incur a late fee of 2.5 % monthly. Students with accounts more than 90 days past due shall be subject to termination from the program.

Purpose of the Policy

This policy intends to establish general and specific guidelines for a tuition and fees refund and ensure that refunds are considered for students who have extenuating circumstances according to the University's approved standards. The University's policy is to refund student tuition and fees if notified of a class change or dropped classes within an appropriate time. Students dropping courses before the first day of the Term will be entitled to have 100% of the tuition canceled through the end of the Add/Drop Day. Courses dropped on or after the Add/Drop Day day of the Term are subject to the refund schedules outlined in this policy, which govern the prorated cancellation of a Term tuition charges in cases of program adjustment or withdrawal. Students with documentable and extenuating circumstances may submit an appeal to be considered for an additional tuition refund. The refund appeals process is outlined within this policy.

Refund Policy

Students may be qualified for a refund if they drop classes within the published refund period. If a withdraw after the published refund period ends, the student will not be eligible for a refund. To get a refund, a course must be officially dropped by the refund deadline. Review the refund schedule that is applicable for all 8-week Terms.

Definitions

Week of Classes: Monday through Sunday

Tuition: Charged for the number of courses on the student account.

Mandatory Fees: Mandatory Fees mean fees charged to students for a specific purpose, activity, or service, including but not limited to technology, student record, and activity fees.

Service/Miscellaneous Fees: Fees charged for specific services, including but not limited to language placement, graduation fines.

Tuition Refund Schedule

Drop Deadline	Amount of Tuition Refunded	Amount Mandatory Fee Refunded	Amount Service/Misc Fee Refunded
End of Add/Drop	100%	100%	100%
After the last day of add/drop; but not later than the end of the third week of classes	70%	0%	0%
End of the third week of classes through the 5th day of the fourth week of classes	40%	0%	0%
From the 6th day of the fourth week of classes	0%	0%	0%

Note: Refund amounts above are for dropped courses. The Standard part-time rate will be charged for all classes in which the student remains registered.

Exceptions to Policy

If, because of extenuating or other documented extraordinary circumstances, the student has withdrawn from the course(s) after the University's published deadlines, the student must complete the Tuition Appeal Form and submit it along with supporting documentation for consideration to receive a tuition and/or fee adjustment. A student pursuing an exception to the policy should contact the Office of Students Services at StudentsServices@Leighton-edu.us to initiate the appeals process.

The University Tuition Refund Appeals Committee will not consider requests after the subsequent Term's midterm as published in the Academic Calendar. Determinations are made exclusively at the discretion of the Committee and may not be appealed further.

Tuition, Fees, and Billing

Tuition bills are due no later than five (5) days before starting classes each Term. You can pay your bill in various ways, including financial aid, payment plans, and one-time payments.

Federal and State Financial Aid

Leighton University does not participate in Federal or State Financial Aid Programs.

Scholarships

Leighton University, at its discretion, may award scholarships to worthy students based primarily on need.

Tuition Discounts

Leighton offers a fifty percent tuition discount to new students on the General Education courses during the first Term at the University.

Institutional (No-Title IV) Financial Assistance, Payment Program

Leighton University does not currently participate in the financial aid program (Title IV); however, it will accept payments from non-Title IV assistance programs unless they condition the function and/or policies of the University in restricting or inhibiting the University in the pursuit of its mission or violate its core values. The University retains the right to evaluate financial assistance programs on a case-by-case basis and determine whether or not they can or will attempt to meet their criteria.

Payment Plans

The convenience of paying educational expenses monthly is an attractive alternative to many students. If you need to use some of your savings, current employment income, or loans, this option will make the payments more manageable. Leighton University offers an interest-free monthly payment service for a one-time annual enrollment fee. The payment plans make it easy to plan, budget, and pay tuition payments on time and interest-free. The service allows students to make payments on the balance owed over ten months (5-month plan/Spring and 5-month plan in the Fall).

Be advised that the monthly plan is semester-based (two 8-week Terms). You must enroll for two contiguous Terms (e.g., For the Fall semester, you will enroll in Term 1 and 2) in which you want to participate.

Payment by Guarantor

Students may have their tuition and fees paid by another individual or organization (also known as a guarantor). A guarantor may request a student to sign a release of academic information if assisting in paying tuition and/or fees.

Cancellation Policy

The student is afforded the right to cancel the enrollment agreement and subsequently obtain a refund of charges paid through attendance at the first class for the Term or the seventh day after enrollment, whichever is later. Notice of cancellation shall be given in writing using the official course/s withdrawal form. Withdrawal

may be effectuated by the student's filed withdrawal form or by the student's conduct, including, but not necessarily limited to, a student's lack of attendance. Cancellation is effective on the date students notify the University of their intent to cancel. Students are urged to reach out to the Office of the Registrar by email at registrar@leighton-edu.us or by telephone at 662 280 5444.

Leighton will refund 100% of the amount paid for institutional charges, less the non-refundable application fee of \$50, if notice of cancellation is made through attendance at the first-class Term, through day seven from the start of classes whichever is later.

A student who has completed 60% (percent) or less of the attendance period shall receive a pro-rata refund based on the number of days attended before the withdrawal.

Refund Payments

Leighton processes all refund payments within 30 days following students' notice of cancellation or withdrawal. Any credit balance on the student's account after completing the program will be refunded within 45 days.

Note: Refund amounts are the same whether tuition has already been paid in full or the student has created a payment plan that has not yet been paid in full.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Students attending or who have attended Leighton University are given certain rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended (20 U.S.C. 1232g). However, FERPA allows the University to disclose education records or personally identifiable information from education records in the following circumstances: with the written consent of the student, if the disclosure meets one of the statutory exemptions, or if the disclosure is directory information and the student has not placed a hold on the release of directory information.

What is FERPA?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, also known as the Buckley Amendment, is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of education records, to establish the right of students to inspect and review their educational records, and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate and misleading data. The Act applies to all institutions that are recipients of any level of federal funding.

Who is protected under FERPA?

The law protects students who are currently enrolled in higher education institutions or were formerly enrolled regardless of their age or status regarding parental dependency. Parents of students termed "dependent" for income tax purposes may have access to the student's educational records. Deceased students do not have rights under FERPA.

What are Educational Records?

With certain exceptions, a student has the right to access those records maintained by an educational institution or party authorized to keep records for the institution. "Educational Records" include any records in possession of an employee shared with or accessible to another individual.

FERPA contains no requirement that individual records be kept at all. This is a matter of institutional policy and/or state regulation. The records may be handwritten or in the form of print, magnetic tape, film, or other mediums. FERPA coverage includes records, files, documents, and data directly related to students.

This would include transcripts or other records obtained from a school in which a student was previously enrolled.

What is not included in an Educational Record?

- Sole possession of records or private notes held by educational personnel which are not accessible or released to other personnel.
- Records relating to an individual whom the institution employs (unless contingent upon attendance).
- Records relating to treatment provided by a medical doctor, physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional and disclosed only to the individual providing the therapy.
- Institutional records contain only information about an individual obtained after that person is no longer enrolled at Leighton (i.e., alumni records).

What documents can be removed from an Educational Record before the student reviews it?

- Any information that pertains to another student.
- Financial records of parents.
- Confidential letters of recommendation under conditions described in FERPA section 99.12.

What is Directory Information?

FERPA regulations define "Directory Information" as information contained in an education record of a student "that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy." At Leighton, this includes:

- Student name
- Date and place of birth
- Major (curriculum of study)
- Participation in official school activities
- Dates of attendance
- Degrees and awards received
- Class schedule
- Previous educational institutions attended
- Legal and local mailing addresses
- Leighton University email address
- Photographs that the University took
- Hometown and previous high school's name

Who is eligible to have access to student information?

1. The student and any outside persons or entity who have the student's written consent.
2. University officials who have legitimate educational interests as defined by FERPA.
3. The parent(s) of a dependent student as defined by the I.R.S.
4. A subpoena or judicial order allows the institution to release records without the student's approval. However, a reasonable effort must be made to inform the student before tendering with the order.

When do you need consent to disclose personally identifiable information from an educational record (including transcripts)?

A signed and dated agreement by the student must be acquired before any disclosure is made. The signed written consent must:

- Specify the records that may be disclosed
- State the purpose of the disclosure
- Identify the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made

When is the student's consent not required to disclose information?

- To school officials with a genuine educational interest.
- To federal, state, and local agencies involving an audit or evaluation of compliance with educational programs.
- To organizations engaged in studies on behalf of educational institutions.
- To accrediting organizations;
- To parents of dependent children (with appropriate documentation on file);
- To comply with judicial order or subpoena;
- Facilities Releasing directory information in a health or safety emergency situation for individuals at Leighton University's facilities;
- Releasing results of a disciplinary hearing to an alleged victim of a crime or violence.

How does increasing technology impact FERPA at our University?

The use of digitized record-keeping systems is increasing at a tremendous rate. Electronic data has supplanted most hard-copy/physical documents. Leighton University will ensure that appropriate policies are established to protect the privacy of those records. The same principles of privacy must be applied to electronic data as apply to paper documents.

Student Development

Disability Accommodation

Leighton University ensures that it provides reasonable accommodation(s) upon request to otherwise qualified students as required by law and thus ensure equal access to University educational opportunities, programs, services, and activities in the most integrated setting, to the extent such accommodation(s) do not impose an undue hardship on the University, constitute a vital alteration to a program or compromise academic integrity. In general, it is the student's responsibility to make known their disability status and accommodation needs.

Once the need for accommodation becomes evident, it is the University's responsibility and the individual with a disability to engage in a dialogue to identify possible accommodations to assess their fairness and efficiency. Determinations on accommodations are made on a case-by-case basis.

The Office of Disability Services will direct students who disclose a disability to have the status of their disability certified. The Office of Disability Services will confirm that students can receive certain University services per their needs. The University may request that the students provide appropriate documentation of disability. You may reach the Office of Disability Services through a redirection Main Switchboard at 662-214-5300 (Request redirection to the Office of Disability Services) or email a completed and signed Disability Services Request Form to ods@leighton.edu, and a representative will respond.

Student Disability Services

Under Federal Law, students with disabilities are provided a "level playing field" to compete equally with their peers. Leighton University welcomes students with disabilities to participate fully in all aspects of the University's life. The institution's mission is to ensure that students with physical, learning, or psychological disabilities or chronic medical conditions are presented with equal access to all Leighton's academic programs,

activities, and services. The Student Disability Services staff counsel students about the University's policies, procedures, and resources, assess students' clinical and educational documentation, and collaborates with students, faculty, and staff to coordinate reasonable accommodations that support students' individual needs. A Letter of Accommodation, based on documentation from a licensed physician, psychologist, diagnostician, or other healthcare professionals, is issued for students with disabilities when they have presented the necessary documented evidence, or the receipt for the testing accommodation, to this office. Students are urged to connect with Student Disability Services as early as possible.

Advisement Services

Successful, self-directed students are our University's aim. To that end, academic advisors are entrusted to helping each Leighton student identify and evaluate academic paths that be found to be in their best interest. Advisement at Leighton is a collaborative, continuous evaluation and clarification process, leading to student development, growth, and maturity. Keeping the students' career goals in mind, students and advisors define and assess choices and consequences, extending from degree program selection to course selection – what to take and why to take it. While the advisors' role is vital in this process, the student's ultimate responsibility for advisement decisions rests. Advisors take a personal interest in each student, guiding him/her toward a program fitting for their academic and career goals and aspirations as well as expectations and challenges.

Each Leighton student is assigned an academic advisor based on his or her major and the number of credit hours completed. First-year students are assigned a staff academic advisor once they have attended an online orientation. Transfer students are assigned to academic navigators (advisors) based upon their earned credit hours and major. For questions, either call (662) 280 5444 or email.

Section 504 / American with Disabilities Act Compliance

The University is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. To this end, all academic units are willing to make reasonable and appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies to facilitate equality of educational access for persons with disabilities. Leighton University responds to its responsibility under **Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act** to prohibit discrimination in its policies and programs regarding

students. Intolerance and discrimination against any individual with a disability will not knowingly be permitted at the University. Under Section 504, Leighton has the responsibility to make reasonable modifications or accommodations to individuals with disabilities.

To be eligible for accommodation, the student must contact the University's Academic Advisement Center. It is the student's responsibility to inform the Student Success Office promptly about his or her disability. Students may be required to provide documentation of the disability to provide suitable accommodations. Preferably, this contact should be made as early in the semester as possible. It is the student's responsibility to provide medical or other diagnostic documentation of disability and limitations. If documentation is not adequate, the student may be asked to participate in additional evaluation before receiving accommodations. The student will incur the cost of this testing. Students with disabilities are not exempt from following Leighton University policies and procedures, such as drug/alcohol policies, grade appeal procedures, etc.

Students who request academic accommodations will be required to provide the appropriate documentation to the A.D.A./Section 504 Coordinator will review the documentation and meet individually with the student to determine which accommodations will be allowable. The student will be given an "A.D.A. Accommodation Request" form, and the student is responsible for taking this Form to each class/teacher in which accommodations are requested. Accommodations services are provided on an individual basis according to the documentation provided by the student, tailored to individual needs, and may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Extended time on exams (up to time and a half)
- Taped or digital text
- Extended time on reading material
- Enlarged material
- Distraction-free environment
- Graphic organizers

The A.D.A./Section 504 Coordinator's Role

The A.D.A./Section 504 coordinator ensures that the University's policies and procedures comply with federal, state, and University requirements. The A.D.A./Section 504 coordinator serves as a resource to those with disabilities who believe they are not receiving appropriate accommodations or being treated discriminatorily. Also, the A.D.A./Section 504 coordinator may set aside or modify an accommodation that is under dispute.

Discrimination Complaint

Filing Complaint

Any person (the "complainant") at Leighton University who believes that he or she has been discriminated against based on sex by Leighton University students, faculty, staff, or external third parties is urged to take the following actions promptly:

1. Immediately communicate with the individual perceived as having engaged in the alleged discriminatory conduct (the "respondent") and request a proposed course of action to resolve the situation.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level or if the complainant does not feel or wish to communicate directly with the respondent, the complainant may write within two weeks of the alleged discriminatory conduct to the vice president of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. Suppose the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs is involved in the complainant's acts to be discriminatory. In that case, the complaint should be made to the University's General Counsel.
3. The complaint should provide the following information.
 - The names, contact information that includes addresses, and telephone numbers, if available, of the petitioner and accused;
 - Specific acts alleged, plus dates, times, and locations;
 - Names of any probable witnesses, including addresses and telephone numbers, if available
 - Actions are taken by any party to address the discrimination if any.

Investigation Procedures

The following procedures shall guide all investigations of complaints alleging violations of this policy. Leighton University reserves the right to depart from these procedures only when such deviation is necessary to ensure the investigation's appropriate processing.

1. Suppose the Vice Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs or his/her designee is involved in the alleged discrimination. In that case, the complaint will be investigated by Leighton University's General Counsel. The probe will begin within 10-work days of the receipt of the complaint. Should the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs be unavailable within the time frame, his/her designee will act instead.
2. The Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, or his/her designee(s), will investigate the allegations of this policy's violations.

3. In the instant that the complainant or the respondent is under 18 years of age, his/her parent or legal guardian will be informed of the complaint via phone, email, or U.S. mail.
4. The probe includes interviewing the complainant, the respondent, and any relevant witnesses suggested by the complainant and the respondent.
5. The probe should also include interviewing any additional witnesses or reviewing any relevant documents by the **Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs** or his/her designee(s).
6. The confidentiality of the probe will be maintained to the extent possible. Suppose a complainant submits a written request for confidentiality or asks that the complaint not be pursued. In that case, Leighton will evaluate the request for confidentiality against the following factors: the weightiness of the alleged aggravation, the complainant's age, whether there have been other harassment complaints about the same individual, and the alleged aggressor.
7. If witnesses cannot be reached or are not available, the complaint will be probed in their absence.
8. After the entirety of available information is reviewed and interviews are completed, the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs or his/her designee(s) will:
 - Establish whether an infringement of this policy has occurred, and if so, the appropriate retort.
 - Notify the complainant and the respondent verbally and write the probe's outcome within five working days after completing the investigation.
 - Make sanctions to the appropriate supervisor regarding discipline, where necessary or warranted.
 - Partner with departments areas to take any corrective action as may be appropriate under the circumstances.
 - All complaints will be adjudged as expeditiously as possible and generally within 14 workdays.

Academic Advisement

Academic advisement is a critically important service and an integral part of the educational mission of the University. Academic advising helps you to meet your educational objectives. Academic Navigators help students define goals through student development instruction, academic advising, personal counseling, and programming.

The Academic Success Center selects an academic navigator for each student. Each academic advisor is chosen for the student based on the student's identified interests. Students meet with a Academic Navigators during orientation to discuss their goals, plan for their

progress, and select their academic courses. Students typically consult and work closely with their Navigators frequently as they progress through their degree programs.

Non-Degree Student

Admission as a non-degree student enables students to take a limited number of credit courses (either full-time or part-time). Students in this status are not pursuing a degree but may wish to earn a certificate or take courses for job achievement, personal enrichment, intellectual curiosity, or other personal reasons. Students cannot receive a degree in non-degree status.

Non-degree students must meet all pre-requisites for courses (or obtain permission from the instructor). All fees, deadlines, and performance standards for degree students apply to non-degree students.

Transient Students

A student pursuing a degree at another institution may apply as a transient student to Leighton University. Such a student must be in good standing. The transient undergraduate student must possess a minimum 2.0 GPA (on a scale of 4.0) to be eligible for admission. The Transient Permission Form must be completed and certified in writing by the Registrar or School's dean, where the student is enrolled.

Transient status is for one semester (3 Terms) only. Students wishing to attend more than one semester must reapply. Returning transient students must be in good academic standing at Leighton University. A non-refundable transient student fee will be assessed for each transient admission.

Transfer Students

A student from accredited institutions may be considered for transfer to Leighton University provided s/her are in good standing both academically and socially (minimum grade of a C average – 2.0 cumulative grade point average). The possession of the minimum grade point average for consideration does not necessarily imply admissibility to Leighton University.

All transfer students must submit official transcripts from all institutions previously attended and follow the regular admission process. Official transcripts must be sent directly to Leighton University (Office of Admissions) from the university or college previously attended. The transcript must contain an official seal. Leighton will accept up to 90 credit hours from a four-year institution and up to 70 credit hours from a two-year institution (community college). A transfer student

is considered for a degree only if the last 30 semester hours have been taken from Leighton University and met other degree requirements.

Leighton will also accept up to 45 credit hours toward an associates degree. The last 15 credit hours towards the degree must be completed at Leighton University.

Additional admission or transfer credit criteria may apply depending on the program the transfer student intends to major.

Transfer Credits

Leighton University's new students often bring college credit from many years ago or from multiple schools. We value your past college experience and want to help you transfer your credit toward a Leighton degree so you can fast-track your path to graduation. Leighton has a generous transfer policy. Leighton University can accept official copies of transcripts from previous educational institutions for a course-by-course evaluation that compares the context of transferable courses to those in the Leighton University catalog to tell you what is comparable and that is transferable.

Transfer Policy

Get the community college transfer credits you deserve so you can earn a bachelor's faster. Suppose you have taken courses at an approved two-year community college. In that case, you may be able to apply these credits toward an associate's (for military and veteran students) or bachelor's degree. You can transfer up to 45 credits toward an associate's or up to 70 credits toward a bachelor's from approved two-year colleges or universities or other combined sources (including credit by examination, military education, training, or other fast paths to credit). You can, however, transfer up to 90 credit hours towards a bachelor's degree program from a four-year college.

Student Honor Code

I pledge to pursue all academic efforts with honor and integrity. I recognize the Honor System's principles, and I promise to respect and uphold these standards set forth by the University by adhering to the Honor Code to maintain the integrity of Leighton University and its members.

A short-form version of the Honor Code Pledge, to be signed on all quizzes, tests, examinations, projects, and similar works: "I pledge on my honor to Leighton University that I have neither received nor received unauthorized aid on this examination."

Student Rights & Responsibilities

Unlawful Discrimination

This Policy prohibits discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability, genetic information, age, and protected military or veteran status. Retaliation for reporting or participating in the complaint process is also prohibited

- **Right:** No student shall be subject to unlawful discrimination on the grounds of religion, age, gender, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability in any activity sponsored by the University.
- **Responsibility:** Students shall not engage in unlawful discrimination against other students or faculty members. Every student shall treat all college community members with respect and courtesy.

Freedom of Expression and Inquiry

The First Amendment guarantees our right to free expression and association, which means that the government does not have the right to forbid us from saying what we like and writing what we want; we can form clubs and organizations and participate in demonstrations rallies. Students, faculty, and staff are obligated to respect freedom of inquiry and expression and to take appropriate action when illegal prevention or disruption of this right occurs.

- **Right:** Students have First Amendment rights to freedom of expression and inquiry. Such freedom is protected to build a community dedicated to the pursuit of truth, grounded in respect for diversity and civil discourse.
- **Responsibility:** Students must express themselves civilly and lawfully that does not materially or substantially disrupt the operation of the University or interfere with the rights of others.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity means that one should respect another person's work and efforts. Any activity undertaken to create or obtain an unfair academic advantage over other students' academic work, or inhibiting the progress of another person's academic work, violates academic integrity. The University strives to create a learning environment that is both challenging and supportive. The University is committed to upholding the fundamental values of honesty, respect, and individual responsibility.

- *Right:* Students have the right to expect a learning environment where academic integrity is valued and respected.
- *Responsibility:* Students are responsible for demonstrating academic integrity and shall not engage in or condone acts of academic dishonesty.

Freedom of the Press

Freedom of the press or freedom of the media is the principle that communication and expression through various media, including printed and electronic media, primarily published materials, should be considered a right to be exercised freely.

- *Right:* Students may publish news and commentary under established First Amendment standards.
- *Responsibility:* Students may not misuse University property (including computer resources) or the college name for unauthorized purposes. Students are responsible for adhering to appropriate state and federal law, including laws regarding defamation, obscenity, copyright infringement, invasion of privacy, prohibited harassment, ethnic intimidation, and threats of violence. Students shall adhere to established standards of journalistic ethics, including a commitment to honest reporting and a responsibility to allow diverse views to be heard.

Freedom of Speech

Academic freedom is essential to higher education and to the University's goals of fostering critical thinking, moral discernment, and active citizenship among its members. It is the responsibility of the faculty and the administration to protect academic freedom. This Policy is intended to protect members of the University community from discrimination, not regulate protected speech. This Policy shall be implemented to recognize the importance of rights to freedom of speech and expression.

- *Right:* Students have the right to express their views on matters affecting University life per established procedures for University governance.
- *Responsibility:* Students are responsible for encouraging a diversity of views and following democratic procedures designed to create a climate of reasoned discourse and action.

Freedom from Harassment

Harassment is a form of discrimination that is prohibited under our non-discrimination policy. Harassment includes unwelcome verbal, physical, or other actions that intimidate, harass, threaten, coerce, or otherwise endanger the health or safety of any person based upon

a student's age, ancestry, arrest or conviction record, genetic testing, marital status, military service, national origin, political affiliation, color, religion or religious creed, disability, gender and gender identity, race, sex, sexual orientation, or any other protected class.

- *Right:* Students have the right to be free from unlawful intimidation or coercion, including sexual harassment.
- *Responsibility:* Students are responsible for respecting the rights of others to be free from unlawful intimidation or coercion, including sexual harassment.

Freedom of Association

Freedom of association encompasses both an individual's right to join or leave groups voluntarily, the right of the group to take collective action to pursue the interests of its members, and the right of an association to accept or decline membership based on specific criteria.

- *Right:* Students have the right to freedom of association.
- *Responsibility:* Students are responsible for respecting the rights of others to freedom of association. When assembling and expressing their views, students must do so in a manner that does not materially or substantially disrupt the educational process or the college's operations.

Freedom from Arbitrary and Capricious Grading

Student academic performance will be evaluated on an intellectual basis (including attendance) and the ability to apply skills, not on a student's opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards.

- *Right:* Students have the right to be free from arbitrary or capricious grading and seek appropriate review of legitimate grievances, as specified in University regulations.
- *Responsibility:* Students are responsible for achieving reasonable standards of performance and behavior established for each course.

Right to Privacy

Students have the right not to be discriminated against by any agent or organization of Leighton University for reasons of age, creed, ethnic or national origin, gender, disability, marital status, political or social affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, or any other protected class as described by law. As members of student organizations, students are not responsible for discriminating against others.

- *Right*: Students have rights to privacy, inspection, and challenge of their educational records, as provided by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).
- *Responsibility*: Students have the responsibility to respect the established privacy rights of others, including the privacy of educational records belonging to other students.

Disability Accommodation

The University affords reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities admitted at the university. As the term is used in this publication, “reasonable accommodations” refer to those academic adjustments, services, and aids made available to otherwise qualified students with disabilities to facilitate equal access to University programs and activities. The Office for Accessibility Services (OAS) coordinates the University’s efforts to provide these reasonable accommodations.

- *Right*: Students have a right, under *the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, to request for reasonable accommodation. It is also your right to decide whether or not to disclose a disability to an employer.
- *Responsibility*: In general, students have the responsibility to inform the university of their status as a person with a disability and their need for reasonable accommodations. Students with disabilities should direct their requests for reasonable accommodations. In order to be considered for reasonable accommodations, the student must meet the following requirements:
 - The student must secure from OAS, complete, and submit a completed Application for Services to OAS
 - The student must have a disability and provide documentation of a disability in accordance with the applicable documentation criteria.

Review of Academic Records

At the end of each Term, the Office of the Registrar conducts a close review of student records to ascertain each student's academic standing, including graduation honors, dean's list, satisfactory progress, academic Probation, academic suspension, and academic dismissal. The following guidelines and policies governing academic standing apply to all students. Unless specifically indicated, the following policies apply to all terms of enrollment.

Academic Withdrawal

The University's Registrar may administratively withdraw/ drop a student from a course or courses for

academic reasons such as, but not limited to, the following: academic dismissal, academic probation, academic suspension, extended academic probation, and unapproved credit overload. The student may also be removed from a course for which all pre-requisites have not been acceptably completed. An academic drop/ withdrawal will be processed according to the established drop/withdrawal deadlines. A grade of "W" will be assigned in the case of a withdrawal. The student's G.P.A. will not be affected.

Leighton University is an academic community deeply engaged in inquiry and intellectual exchange and committed to core principles of academic freedom, academic integrity, and rigorous, creative thought. We recognize that intellectual and artistic exchange depends on mutual respect for an independent expression, inquiry, and reflection. Therefore, faculty, staff, and students are devoted to fostering an environment that upholds the highest standards of integrity, fairness, and respect in all academic endeavors.

As contributors to an enduring scholarly and creative conversation work attributed upon thoughtful and fair acknowledgment and treatment of the inquiries, reflections, and expressions of others, each member of Leighton University is expected to use and represent the work of others fairly and honest manner; to fully acknowledge the work of others, and accurately through proper citation, and to produce their original work unless collaboration is permitted. Faculty and staff members are required to meet these standards in all their work. Students are subject to the policies and procedures described below.

In educating students in the values, dispositions, and responsibilities of independent thinkers and scholars, the Leighton faculty acknowledges that certain scholarly practices reflect complex tasks that involve instruction and practice. Faculty are devoted to teaching these critical practices. In turn, students are responsible for learning these scholarly practices and demonstrating them in all their work; they are a means of showing learning and developing genuine understanding, the mark of an independent scholar, and the way to become one.

This policy statement outlines these practices and principles, roles, and responsibilities. Potential consequences for students are described in Leighton University Academic Integrity Procedures.

Withdrawal from a Course

Once a student is formally enrolled and committed to attend class, he/she must formally drop his/her classes by the deadline. If the course is not officially dropped, the student will be charged full tuition and receive failing

grades. If necessary, a student may withdraw his/her enrollment from a course by submitting a completed Course Withdrawal Form to the Director of Academic Advisement by the date specified in the Leighton University academic calendar.

A "W" grade is given for an authorized withdrawal. If an enrolled student withdraws from a course without authorization (stops attending class without complying with school procedure), a grade of "F" will be recorded on the student's transcript. Late withdrawals from a course will be considered only for extraordinary circumstances accompanied by appropriate documentation. If a course drop/withdrawal for a full-time student results in the student's course load dropping below six credit hours, the student will be judged full-time for the entire semester. No refund will be credited back into the student's account for the withdrawn course.

Human Resources

Statement of Equal Opportunity

Leighton University obligates itself to a nondiscrimination policy and equal opportunity for all persons irrespective of race, gender, color, national origin or ancestry, creed, age, marital status, disability, or veteran status. Leighton University also is committed to compliance with all applicable laws regarding nondiscrimination.

In keeping with the mission of the University and the essence of the federal and state equal opportunity laws, we uphold as the standing policy of the University to realize fairness of opportunity in education and employment; to guard against discrimination conflicting to that aim, and to remove discriminatory behavior if found to have occurred within the University community. Consistent with providing an educational program of the highest quality, Leighton's standing policy includes affirmative efforts to attain the above goals in employment and education.

This institutional policy has been and shall be further implemented by the President and faculty members and the administration designated by the President for that purpose.

(Adopted by the University's Board of Trustees on April 12, 2020). These policies apply to all University community members, including faculty, staff, students, and volunteers.

Title IX

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 states:

No person in the United States shall, based on sex, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or any activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

To that end, Leighton University prohibits discrimination based on sex, including sexual misconduct, in its educational programs and activities. As an institution of her learning, Leighton is committed to fulfilling the Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972 and guaranteeing that the University's educational programs and activities are operated in a manner consistent with applicable regulations provisions federal law.

Complaint Procedures

Any person (the "complainant") at Leighton University who believes that he or she has been discriminated against based on sex by Leighton University students, faculty, staff, or external third parties is urged to take the following actions promptly:

1. Immediately communicate with the individual perceived as having engaged in the alleged discriminatory conduct (the "respondent") and request a proposed course of action to resolve the situation.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level or if the complainant does not feel or wish to communicate directly with the respondent, the complainant may make a complaint in writing within two weeks of the alleged discriminatory conduct to the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. Suppose the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs is involved in the complainant's acts to be discriminatory. In that case, the complaint should be made to the University's General Counsel.
3. The complaint should provide the following information.
 - The names, contact information (addresses and telephone numbers), if available, of the accuser and accused.
 - Specific facts were alleged, including dates, times, and geographic locations.
 - Names of any probable witnesses, including contact information (addresses and telephone numbers), if available.
 - Actions are taken by any party to address the discrimination if any.

Student Grievance Process

Policy Statement

Leighton students have the right to pursue timely, legitimate grievances against employees of the University. Therefore, the University shall establish, publish, and follow a procedure that delineates the rights and responsibilities of the aggrieved party and the University employee against whom a grievance may be lodged.

Procedure

Leighton University (Leighton) has established the following procedures for resolving **student** disputes with employees, regardless of status (full-time, part-time, temporary, contractual) or role (administrators, faculty, and staff), and volunteers.

The University's formal student grievance procedure applies to all student (undergraduate and graduate alike) issues that are associated with Leighton University, including but not limited to **academic matters/issues**, student services, and administrative concerns. Grievances involving academic matters/issues are limited to final course grades and satisfactory completion of an instructional program's requirements. Students in need of **additional accommodations** at any time during this procedure should contact staff in the Counseling and Advocacy Services office.

The student grievance procedure may also be used by individuals who were Leighton students at the time the incident in question occurred. The student filing the grievance must be the subject of the alleged unfair/unbecoming treatment related to their status as a student. In no instance should a grievance matter be filed on behalf of another student?

Throughout the grievance process, it is the burden and responsibility of the student to present evidence to support the claim. Students are advised to keep written notes, where possible, and maintain documentation to provide proof of compliance with each of the 4 steps of the grievance procedure. Allegations should not necessarily, be cumulative. Instead, they should be presented individually and as they occur. However, claims arising from a single incident must be submitted in one grievance.

The student grievance procedure includes specific deadlines and timelines for pursuing a grievance. Students are required to follow the published steps and timeline outlined within this student grievance procedure. In most cases, issues have a shelf-life. Issues presented after the deadline elapsed will not be considered unless specific, extenuating circumstances caused the delay. A formal and written request for an

extension due to extenuating events must have been made in writing by the student, the employee, the supervisor, or another leader within the specified timeframe for each step. Without exception, requests for deadline extensions must be submitted to the appropriate University officials. Where extenuating circumstances are present, documented, and supportive of the request, the University official handling the case will determine and communicate an appropriate revised timeline and next steps in writing to all involved parties.

In all cases, University officials (or designee) will conduct their work within each step of the process in a manner that is quick as possible within the fourteen (14) week day limit. The exception to this may occur in cases where a resolution in the case is deemed to affect students' ability to progress and matriculate in a particular program.

If University officials determine that the student cannot continue to attend class, participate or engage in student activities for a defined period because of the potential for harm to self or others, the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, after consultation with other University officials, may recommend specific restrictions and will provide the rationale in writing.

Suppose the grievance or appeal involves claims of bias, discrimination, or harassment at any time in the process. In that case, the University official handling the grievance will coordinate with the University's Legal Counsel. The Legal Counsel will have up to fourteen (14) week days to complete the initial fact-finding inquiry and determine whether to open a Title VI or related investigation.

Suppose the grievance or appeal involves a claim of **sexual misconduct** at any time in the process. In that respect, the matter must be forwarded immediately to the University's Title IX coordinator in the Office of Human Resources, for will review and determine within fourteen (14) week days (beginning from the day the case was received) of the notification on the option to open a Title IX investigation. If the matter is determined as falling under the **Title IX investigation**, the procedures supporting the Sexual Misconduct Policy will be followed. If the issue does not fall under Title IX, the case will return to the appropriate University official handling the grievance case.

Prohibition on Retaliation

It is strictly prohibited for any person participating in good faith in connection with a grievance or complaint to exercise an act of retaliation. Violations will be addressed through these procedures and/or other applicable

Leighton's disciplinary procedures. Any party that perceives to have been subjected to retaliation should report to a University official.

Prohibition on Providing False Information

Leighton places importance on the integrity of its policies and procedures. Consequently, any individual who intentionally and knowingly files a false report or complaint provides false information or deliberately misleads University officials will be subject to disciplinary action. It should be understood that false complaints may cause irreparable harm to the University community, regardless of the findings and decisions that follow an investigation.

Grievance Process

Step 1. The student meets or communicates with the University employee concerned within six working days of the incident occurrence. It should be understood that the purpose of this conversation should be an **informal** attempt on the part of the student to seek a resolution of the issue from the alleged University employee. Both parties must document the facts and possible outcome(s) for their records if the student is not satisfied that the concern has, amicably, been addressed or has documentation of attempted to contact the employee without getting a response. In that case, the student proceeds to move to Step 2. Following

Step 2. The student meets with the University employee's supervisor to discuss the grievance within fourteen (14) week days following the meeting with the employee. After this additional informal conversation, all parties should document the facts and possible outcomes for their records. Suppose the student communicates that the issue remains unresolved. In that case, the supervisor provides the student with specific information about the formal grievance procedure, which outlines Step 3, including a copy of the Official Student Grievance Form.

Step 3. If the student feels that the employee's conversation and supervisor did arrive to resolve the issue, the student should begin initiating the University's formal grievance procedure. The student submits the Official Student Grievance Form within fourteen (14) week days of the meeting with the supervisor. The student is encouraged to hold a meet with a counselor in the Counseling and Advocacy Services office for support with the following activities:

- Identifying the specific issues and aspects involved in the grievance;
- Developing precise verbal and written approaches appropriate to the grievance and in compliance with the student grievance procedure;

- Reviewing the procedure and possible strategies to meet the requirements of each step;
- Determining when immediate support and other available assistance is necessary, especially if the matter involves claims of discrimination or sexual misconduct; and
- Completing the Student Grievance Form;

1. The student completes the electronic form posted on the University's website to document the dates of any previous meetings and prior discussions held to resolve the grievance
2. Within fourteen (14) week days from the meeting with the employee's supervisor, the student submits the form and any accompanying document. The form is, after that, routed directly to the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (or, in their absence, their designee).
3. Within fourteen (14) week days of receipt of the form, the Vice President of Enrolment and Student Affairs logs the formal complaint and determines whether the student has met the published guidelines for procedures. If the said guidelines have been met, the Vice President establishes the official case, assigns it to the appropriate University official, and notifies the **appropriate Vice President**. Where the procedure's guidelines have not been met, the grievance is denied, and an explanation of the reason for the written denial is forwarded to the student. If the grievance procedures do not appropriately handle the issue raised by the student, the Vice President may redirect the student to other procedures for adjudication.

Step 4. Within fourteen (14) week days of receiving a grievance, the University official investigates the case to determine whether the concern meets the guidelines and threshold for being heard. If so, the University official notifies the employee and supervisor that a grievance has been lodged, requests a written copy of a response, and monitors the process through the successive steps. If not, the University official rejects the filed grievance and responds in writing to the student explaining the rationale for the denial.

Step 5. The employee and supervisor forward a written response or response to the University official within fourteen (14) week days days of receiving the notification from the university official. The University official uploads this documentation and adds it to the official case file.

Step 6. The University official discusses the official grievance case with the student within fourteen (14) working days of receiving the written responses noted in Step 5 and shares the information gathered regarding the issue. Both parties are required should document the conversation and possible outcome(s) for their records. The University official will determine the appropriate resolution within fourteen (14) week days of the discussion and inform the student, employee, appropriate supervisor, appropriate Vice President, and the Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs of the decision made. The decision of the University official is concluded except in instances outlined in the published appeals procedure. All records of formal grievances cases are stored in the complaint's portion of the University's Student Information System (Populi).

Appeals

The discovery of new evidence previously not offered or disclosed in the initial grievance and/or an allegation in cases of severe bias or discrimination at some level of the student grievance procedure and/or documentation showing that the University did not correctly follow the grievance policy are allowable exceptional circumstances. If the student believes that extraordinary circumstances justify reconsideration of the decision made by the chair or leader of the area, the student may file an appeal to the decision. An appeal may not be pursued if the student disagrees with the decisions made during the grievance procedure.

Requesting an appeal, the student follows these steps:

Step 1. Within ten (14) week days of the date of the written decision in the grievance case, the student files a written formal appeal with the assistance of a University counselor, who would have approved privilege and access to the appeal form available via the University's secure student management and tracking system on Populi. The appeal is sent within the Populi to the Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, who redirects the form to the appropriate vice president.

The student must work with a Counseling and Advocacy Services counselor to explain what qualifies the grievance for an appeal based on the University's definition of exceptional circumstances. The student should be specific, use as much clarity as possible, and attach any relevant written documents supporting their appeal request. The name of the University's counselor assisting the student must be included on the appeal form.

Step 2. Upon receiving the appeal, the appropriate Vice President reviews the written appeal based on the University's definition of unusual circumstances.

Suppose the vice president determines that the grievance, as presented, is not eligible for a draw an appeal; in that case, they communicate that decision to all the involved parties, and the case is closed within fourteen (14) week days. If a determination is made that the grievance is eligible for appeal, they conduct an appeal investigation and decide to receive the appeal within fourteen (14) week days. During this time, the appropriate area Vice President has the prerogative to request any number of meetings with any party involved believe that such conversations will assist the parties in reaching an amicable decision. The area Vice President sends a copy of the decision to the aggrieved student, employee, University official, and Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs via the University's case management and tracking system. The decision reached is final. No further appeal opportunity is available after the Vice President renders a final decision.

All appeal records are documented and maintained in the University's secure student management and tracking system.

Confidentiality

The University will make every reasonable and good-faith effort to protect the confidentiality of information received from a student grievance report and its related investigation; information related to a case will be shared on a need-to-know basis only. However, as appropriate and necessary, college administrators will share information to address and resolve the issues' concerns and prevent the relapse of similar instances. There may be instances where the University's ethical and legal responsibility is to disclose information regarding the circumstances relative to the specific grievance issue, depending on the nature of the alleged matter. The student will be notified before the information is released, should this be the case.

Complaint Procedures for Section 504

Any person (the "complainant") at Leighton University who believes that he or she has been discriminated against based on sex by Leighton University students, faculty, staff, or external third parties is urged to take the following actions promptly:

STEP 1 - Immediately communicate with the individual perceived as having engaged in the alleged discriminatory conduct (the "respondent") and request a proposed course of action to resolve the situation.

STEP 2 - If the matter cannot be resolved at that level or if the complainant does not feel or wish to communicate directly with the respondent, the complainant may make a complaint in writing within two weeks of the alleged discriminatory conduct to the Vice President of Enrollment and Student Affairs. If the Vice President for Enrollment and Student Affairs is involved in the complainant's acts to be discriminatory, then the complaint should be made to the University's General Counsel.

STEP 3 - The complaint should provide the following information.

- The names, addresses, and telephone numbers, if available, of the complainant and respondent.
- Specific facts were alleged, including dates, times, and locations.
- Names of any potential witnesses, including addresses and telephone numbers, if available
- Actions are taken by any party to address the discrimination incident if any.

Discrimination Complaint Filing Complaint

Any person (the "complainant") at Leighton University who believes that he or she has been discriminated against based on sex by Leighton University students, faculty, staff, or external third parties is urged to take the following actions promptly:

1. Immediately communicate with the individual perceived as having engaged in the alleged discriminatory conduct (the "respondent") and request a proposed course of action to resolve the situation.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level or if the complainant does not feel or wish to communicate directly with the respondent, the complainant may write within two weeks of the alleged discriminatory conduct to the vice president of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. Suppose the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs is involved in the complainant's acts to be discriminatory. In that case, the complaint should be made to the University's General Counsel.
3. The complaint should provide the following information.
 - The names, contact information that includes addresses, and telephone numbers, if available, of the petitioner and accused;
 - Specific acts alleged, plus dates, times, and locations;
 - Names of any probable witnesses, including addresses and telephone numbers, if available

- Actions are taken by any party to address the discrimination if any.

Investigation Procedures

The following procedures shall guide all investigations of complaints alleging violations of this policy. Leighton University reserves the right to depart from these procedures only when such deviation is necessary to ensure the investigation's appropriate processing.

1. Suppose the Vice Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs or his/her designee is involved in the alleged discrimination. In that case, the complaint will be investigated by Leighton University's General Counsel. The probe will begin within 10-work days of the receipt of the complaint. Should the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs be unavailable within the time frame, his/her designee will act instead.
2. The Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, or his/her designee(s), will investigate the allegations of this policy's violations.
3. In the instant that the complainant or the respondent is under 18 years of age, his/her parent or legal guardian will be informed of the complaint via phone, email, or U.S. mail.
4. The probe includes interviewing the complainant, the respondent, and any relevant witnesses suggested by the complainant and the respondent.
5. The probe should also include interviewing any additional witnesses or reviewing any relevant documents by the **Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs** or his/her designee(s).
6. The confidentiality of the probe will be maintained to the extent possible. Suppose a complainant submits a written request for confidentiality or asks that the complaint not be pursued. In that case, Leighton will evaluate the request for confidentiality against the following factors: the weightiness of the alleged aggravation, the complainant's age, whether there have been other harassment complaints about the same individual, and the alleged aggressor.
7. If witnesses cannot be reached or are not available, the complaint will be probed in their absence.
8. After the entirety of available information is reviewed and interviews are completed, the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs or his/her designee(s) will:
 - Establish whether an infringement of this policy has occurred, and if so, the appropriate retort.
 - Notify the complainant and the respondent verbally and write the probe's outcome within five working days after completing the investigation.

- Make sanctions to the appropriate supervisor regarding discipline, where necessary or warranted.
- Partner with departments areas to take any corrective action as may be appropriate under the circumstances.
- All complaints will be adjudged as expeditiously as possible and generally within 14 workdays.

Academics

Course Numbering

The number by which a course is designated is intended to indicate the relative level of the course. A student will generally choose courses within his/her classification but may elect courses of one rank above or below his/her classification upon his/her academic advisor's guidance. The following numbering system should be helpful to students in planning their respective programs:

Lower-Division Courses:

- The freshman year represents courses numbered from 100 to 199.
- The sophomore year represents courses numbered from 200 to 299.

Upper-Division Courses:

- The junior year represent courses that are numbered from 300 to 399.
- The senior year represents courses that are numbered from 400 to 499.

Courses lower than 100, e.g., MATH 098, READ 095, do not count toward degree programs or graduate credit hours. Students pursuing an associate's degree cannot enroll in upper-division courses unless approved by the academic advisor.

A count of at least 40 semester credit hours of upper-division credits is required for the bachelor's degree.

Credit/No Credit Record

A student may elect one course each semester (a summer Term is considered a semester) for which he/she chooses to be graded based on credit/no credit. The student must declare the grading option by the end of the 4th week of the semester and the end of the first class day in the summer. The credit/no credit refers only to the course's final grade, as recorded by the Office of the Registrar. Nothing will change in the content, assignments, examinations, etc. A letter grade will be assigned to the student after the course. If that grade is a "C" or higher, the student will receive credit "P" for the

course. If the letter grade is lower than a "C" grade, the student will receive an F grade for the course. In either case, the student's G.P.A. will neither be positively or negatively affected. This grading system is at the preference of the student but will operate within the following limitations:

1. The option is available only to students who have completed at least 25 semester hours at Leighton University (excludes transfer credits) and are in good academic standing.
2. The student must have met all of the pre-requisites required for enrollment in the course chosen.
3. The course chosen cannot be used to meet major or minor area requirements.
4. Only one course per Term is approved to be taken as selected by the student, and no more than 12 credit hours may be completed and counted toward graduation.
5. A maximum of 12 credit hours may be taken on a credit/no credit basis.
6. Students wishing to declare a course P/F must do so through the Office of the Registrar no later than the 4th week of the Term (Spring or Fall). The P/F grading option cannot be changed after the deadline.

The accountability for ensuring that the student has satisfied the above limits resides with the student and his/her Academic Navigator. However, the actual permitting or denying of credit is the responsibility of the Office of the Registrar's.

Request for Incomplete Grade

The instructor must approve requests for Incomplete grades. Email the Incomplete Form to the Registrar's Office by Friday, the week of the 7th week of the Term. All students must contact their advisor first to request an Incomplete. No incomplete form will be logged without a note forwarded from the Academic Advisement Center.

Dean's List

University students averaging honor grades for any given semester are placed on the dean's list. Specific criteria for addition to the list are as follows:

Credit-load requirements:

1. Students are expected to have earned at least 12 credits in the semester (two terms) in question and achieve a grade point average of 3.50 or above, or Students granted permission for part-time study must earn 8 – 11 credits and achieve a grade point

average of 3.50, or Students with documented special needs must achieve a grade point average of 3.50 and earn eight (8) or more credits.

2. No grade in the semester in question may be lower than "B," and no grades of Incomplete ("I") or Withdrawal ("W") are allowed.
3. The dean's list is computed based on a cutoff date of all grades received by the end of the second week of classes in the following semester. Students should be aware that any work meant to meet a grade change to make the dean's list must be submitted to their course instructors for review well before the dean's list's cutoff date.

General Education [CORE]

Courses in the CORE program contain the collective knowledge and skills you need to be useful as a person, a global citizen, an employee, and a consumer. These courses provide the breadth, perspective, and rigor that allow Leighton University graduates to claim to be "educated people." Additionally, General Education courses introduce great ideas and controversies in human thought and experience. Most Americans change their careers three times during their lifetime. A solid general education program provides a strong foundation for life-long learning that makes career-change goals attainable. As a foundational program, the CORE satisfies a significant proportion of your degree requirements at Leighton University.

The University has a defined set of the CORE competencies that all its graduates, from associate degree and bachelor's programs, must attain prior to graduation. These competencies are anchored under six Categories, as follows:

Category 1: Purposive Communications – A competent communicator can interact with others using all communication forms, resulting in understanding. A Leighton University graduate will demonstrate the ability to understand and interpret complex materials; espouse, develop, organize and present an idea formally and informally; use standard English; use appropriate verbal and non-verbal responses in interpersonal relations and group discussions; use listening skills; and recognize the role of culture in communication.

Category 2: Quantitative Reasoning – A competent person in quantitative reasoning possesses the skills and knowledge necessary to apply logic, numbers, and mathematics to deal effectively with common problems and issues. A quantitatively literate person can use numerical, geometric, and measurement data and concepts, mathematical skills, and mathematical reasoning principles to draw logical conclusions and make well-reasoned decisions. A Leighton University graduate will demonstrate the ability to use logical and

mathematical logic with the context of various disciplines; interpret and use mathematical formulas; understand mathematical models such as graphs, tables, and schemata and draw inferences from them; use graphical, symbolic, and numerical methods to analyze, organize, and interpret data; estimate and consider answers to mathematical problems to determine reasonableness; and represent accurate information numerically, symbolically, and visually using graphs and charts.

Category 3: Behavioral and Social Understanding – A culturally and socially competent person possesses an awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the interconnectedness of the social and cultural aspects within and across local, regional, state, national, and global communities. A Leighton University graduate will demonstrate the ability to assess the impact that social institutions have on individuals and culture— past, present, and future; describe their own as well as others' ethical systems and values within social institutions; recognize the influence that arts and humanities have upon individuals and cultures; appreciate the role of language in social and cultural contexts; and identify the inter-dependence of distinctive worldwide social, economic, geopolitical, and cultural systems.

Category 4: Scientific Reasoning – A competent person in scientific reasoning holds to a self-rectifying inquiry system (the scientific method) and relies on empirical evidence to describe, understand, predict, and control natural phenomena. A Leighton University graduate will demonstrate the ability to generate an empirically evidenced and logical argument; differentiate a scientific argument from a non-scientific argument; reason by deduction, induction, and analogy; distinguish between causal and correlational relationships; and recognize methods of inquiry that lead to scientific knowledge.

Category 5: Humanities and Fine Arts – As a component of the General Education, under the category of Humanities and Fine Arts, students learn to explore issues that are fundamental to human uniqueness, as these are expressed in the cultural, artistic, and intellectual traditions of the world's civilizations. Course requirements under Category 5 of the General Education program offer students the opportunity to orient themselves to give meaning to the human experience by studying fine arts, interpretations of history, rituals, and the various belief systems of religious-philosophical thought. After completing the coursework under Category 5, students will have the knowledge and skills to respond more knowledgeably to those humanistic and artistic works and traditions created by people of various societies and times.

Category 6: Technological Literacy – A competent person in Technologically literate recognizes when

information is essential and can locate, evaluate, and use it effectively. A Leighton University graduate will demonstrate the ability to determine the nature and extent of information needed; access desired information effectively and efficiently; judge information and its sources critically and integrate carefully selected information into his or her knowledge base; use information effectively, as an individual or as a member of a group, to realize a specific purpose; and recognition of many of the economic, legal, and social issues around the use of information and access and use information ethically and legally.

Academic Standards

Good Standing

Students are considered to be in good academic standing with a cumulative G.P.A. of 2.00.

Academic Warning

Students are placed on Academic Warning when less than 12 attempted Leighton University credit hours are earned, and the cumulative grade point average is below the 2.00/4.00 scale. An academic warning does not restrict registration, but students are encouraged to discuss their lack of satisfactory progress with a counselor.

Academic Probation

Students are placed on probation when 12 or more Leighton University credit hours are attempted and earned less than a 2.00/4.00 cumulative and semester grade point average. Students must meet with a counselor to review their academic progress before enrollment for the following Term. A student on Academic Probation is restricted from registration until he or she complies with this requirement. A registration hold will stay on the student's record until the cumulative grade point average reaches 2.00 or higher. The student will be restored to good standing once their cumulative grade point average is 2.00 or higher.

Academic Suspension

Students are placed on Academic Suspension after serving one semester on Academic Probation with a cumulative and semester grade point average of less than 2.00/4.00. After the Academic Probation semester, a student will be withdrawn from current semester courses and issued a refund when final grades are posted. The Suspension status will be in effect for 12 consecutive months. A registration hold will remain on the student's record until the cumulative grade point average reaches 2.00 or higher. Students will be reinstated to "Good Standing" once their cumulative grade point average is 2.00 or higher.

Excessive Withdrawal Policy

Students with a recurring, overall withdrawal pattern from Leighton University courses will be periodically notified of the effect of withdrawal grades on progress toward degree completions. Students are asked to meet with an Academic Navigator, in the Academic Success Center, to discuss effective course selection and completion strategies.

Appeals for Academic Reinstatement

Appeals relating to the Standards of Academic Progress policy should be made to the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Students Affairs.

Online Tutoring Services

The Academic Success Center provides one-on-one tutoring services through the TutorMe platform in most subject areas; and specific major-based content. This online support service is available 24/7, and all students are entitled to up to 7 hours of TutorMe in any given Term. TutorMe is accessible via the Student Services tab on Populi and in all courses.

Academic Integrity Policy

Infringements of academic integrity are among the most serious offenses that students can commit. Any contravention may result in consequences at both the course and institutional levels. Procedures, rulings, and penalties for violations of academic integrity may depend on specific circumstances, such as the student's grade level, educational background, prior violation of academic integrity attempts made to cite or acknowledge sources, and the amount and type of work at issue.

Breaches of principles and practices of academic integrity fall into two subcategories: (1) plagiarism and misuse of sources and (2) cheating.

Plagiarism and Misuse of Sources

Plagiarism is the use of material(s) without proper attribution of someone else's words, ideas, or other work as if it were one's own. Failure to properly indicate and acknowledge others' work can lead a reader, listener, or viewer to think that information, research, ideas, words, images, data, artistic and creative elements, or other work are the student's efforts when they are not. Plagiarism significantly deviates from accepted standards in the academic community and misrepresents self to others into thinking the work is the student's own.

Misuse of sources, like plagiarism, reflects a failure to credit others' work appropriately but involves errors,

mistakes, incomplete or inadequate attempts, and other errors in the citation, quotation, and attribution that would not seriously mislead others into thinking the work is the student's own. Plagiarism and misuse of sources carry different penalties, as described in Leighton University's Academic Integrity Policy.

The obligation to give credit for material that would not meet the criteria as common knowledge applies to almost all types of assignments and conditions, not just papers, and not only to finished work but also tendered drafts. Work in which students must recognize sources and the contributions of others includes but is not limited to both works in progress and final versions of the following:

- Websites and pages, webcasts, and other multimedia work.
- Talks speeches and other oral presentations, whether audio or video.
- Presentation slides, Visual aids, or other media tools.
- Artistic, oratories, musical, and other creative work.
- Lab sheets and reports
- Thesis chapters, proposals, papers, literature reviews, abstracts, reviews, annotated bibliographies, and other writing
- Exams, including in-class and take-home exams.

Cheating

Cheating includes violating recognized norms for academic inquiry or specific norms instituted by faculty for particular assignments or using other methods to gain unearned academic advantage. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Unauthorized collaboration.
- Use materials not permitted during the administration of an exam, in the writing of a paper, or in completing other in class or out-of-class assignments.
- Receive assistance from someone else other than the course instructor beyond what is permitted.
- Manufacturing or falsifying data.
- Submitting previously submitted work in another course to satisfy the requirements of two different courses without getting permission from the instructor of the second course or permission from both instructors if the same work is submitted in two courses during a single semester.
- Knowingly assist with any kind to another person who is attempting to cheat or plagiarize.

Technology & Communications

Student Email Accounts

Leighton uses email as the primary means of communication with students. All students are required to log in to their student email account. Currently, enrolled credit or continuing education students will automatically receive an email account. Email addresses will follow this format: UserID@leighton-edu.us. Leighton's emails can be forwarded to another personal email account (Hotmail, Yahoo!, and Gmail). The account's use will expire two years after completing a program or last class attended at the University.

Email Policy

Electronic Mail is a facility provided by the University to serve as a primary means of communication and improve education and administrative efficiency. All users are responsible for using this resource efficiently, principled, ethical, and lawful manner. Use of University Email Accounts evidences the user's agreement to be bound by this policy. If a University employee holds multiple University Email Accounts, the most stringent rules of this policy shall apply.

The University's policy is that only the Leighton-edu.us account be used for student academic and business electronic communications. All official electronic communication initiated by University's offices for students is sent to students' University email accounts. This applies to all students. Students must check their Leighton University Webmail often.

Telephone Calls and Messages

To reach the University operator, dial the main number for Leighton at 662.280.5444. The operator can direct calls to University departments or the voice mail system.

Mailing Address

You must keep your mailing address on record to receive all official university contact, correspondence/ information, such as refund checks, scholarship notification, graduation updates and information, and others. Your degree and other credentials are forwarded only to your last known address.