

**1.7 The institution truthfully represents its academic goals, programs, and services to students and to the larger public; demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion and treats students equitably and fairly through established policies and procedures addressing student conduct, grievances, human subjects in research, and refunds.**

*Guideline: The institution has published or readily available policies on student grievances and complaints, refunds, etc., and has no history of adverse findings against it with respect to violation of these policies. Records of student complaints are maintained for a six year period. The institution clearly defines and distinguishes between the different types of credits it offers and between degree and non-degree credit, and accurately identifies the type and meaning of the credit awarded on its transcripts.*

**Evidence:**

Sonoma State University has a [“Regulations and Policies”](#) page which describes the academic policies governing enrollment, registration, adding/dropping courses, payment, withdrawal from courses, withdrawal from the university, academic load, advising, academic status, academic probation, course repeats, and many other aspects of academic life. The SSU [Catalog](#) provides a comprehensive description of the university’s programs and services, and includes information on the different types of [degree programs](#) the university offers and the distinction between degree and non-degree credit. Sonoma State’s policy on [Evaluation of Transfer Credit](#) specifies the number and sources of units that may be transferred in. The university has a policy on [Credit/No Credit Grading](#) which distinguishes this from the A-F letter grading system. The catalog includes the four-year “roadmaps” each department has created for students to help them achieve academic goals. The [fact sheets](#) outline the department or program’s core required courses and number of elective units in a nutshell. The university, through the scheduling process, arranges courses so that students can graduate in a timely fashion. This is one of the points described in the Sonoma State University [Facilitating Graduation Initiative](#), which presents twenty-two points and their associated action plans. The points encompass a broad spectrum of ways to streamline and facilitate the graduation process for students, from reduction of required units to providing appropriate funding and support.

The [Office of Admissions](#) provides extensive documentation outlining institutional policies with regard to admissions procedures, requirements, and records. The information is targeted toward specific audiences (e.g., prospective students, freshmen, transfer students) and includes both academic information on degrees offered and practical information on housing, fees, and registration matters.

The [Judicial Affairs](#) office, which is part of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, is the campus unit responsible for investigating alleged violations of the CSU Student Code of Conduct and SSU policies. For example, SSU instituted a new policy on hazing ([http://www.sonoma.edu/saem/new\\_hazing\\_law.doc](http://www.sonoma.edu/saem/new_hazing_law.doc)) in response to California's new law defining hazing as a potential felony. The Director of Judicial Affairs and Special Projects is the student grievance counselor. The Student [Grievance Procedures](#) describe the processes involved in initiating, investigating, and resolving a variety of student grievances. SSU's [grade appeal policy](#) outlines precisely what steps a student seeking to appeal a grade must follow.

The conduct of research with human participants is assessed by the Institutional Review Board, which is sponsored by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP). The [ORSP Home Page](#) contains links to policies on many facets of the research enterprise, including grants and contracts, copyright ownership, animal care and use, misconduct in research, conflicts of interest, and others. The ORSP and the IRB are part of the office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. The members of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) are appointed by the Provost, and are primarily faculty members, together with the Vice-Provost and a community member. The IRB's charge is "to facilitate scientific inquiry while preserving the dignity of individuals and the rights of various social groups." The IRB [policy](#) on use of human research participants describes the policies and procedures governing research conducted under SSU auspices.