

Student Grievance Procedures

1. **Definition:** A grievance is an allegation by a student that, as to him or her, an agent of the college has violated board or college policies relating to students other than assignment of grades or other academic evaluation (see Review of Academic Standing for grievances pertaining to grades or academic evaluation).
2. **How to file a grievance:** A grievance is to be submitted in writing to the dean of student affairs or such other college official as the president may designate (hereinafter, the dean of student affairs), within thirty days of the date the grievance knew or reasonably should have known of the alleged violation. The written grievance shall specify the right claimed to have been violated and state briefly the underlying facts.
3. **Procedure for grievance resolution:** The Dean of Students shall investigate the grievance and, within thirty days from the time the grievance was submitted recommend to the president a disposition of the grievance, except as provided hereinafter:
 - a) In the course of each investigation, the dean of student affairs shall consult with the dean responsible for the area of the college operations in which the grievance arose.
 - b) In the case of a grievance alleging discrimination based on race, color, religious creed, sex, age national origin, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder; marital status, mental retardation or physical disability, prior conviction of a crime, political beliefs, veteran status, or sexual preference, the dean of students shall consult with the college's affirmative action person during the course of the investigation.
 - c) In the case of a grievance against a dean, the grievance shall be filed with the president.

The president may accept or reject the recommendation, or direct such further investigation as he or she deems appropriate. The president shall notify the student of the final disposition of the grievance within fifteen days of receiving the recommendation, except for good cause or as provided in 4 below.

Informal Grievance Procedure

The informal stage of the grievance procedure is designed to solve problems through discussion. It is progressive, in that each successive step requires the participation of additional individuals within the administrative and instructional staff. Every effort is made to arrive at a resolution during the informal stage.

The informal stage involves the following phases:

1. The student must first discuss the matter of concern with the individual in question, e.g., the instructor or staff member. This should be done within one week from the time the student could reasonably have known of the grievance.

2. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the above discussion, he or she then appeals to the individual's immediate supervisor, e.g., department chairperson, coordinator or director, within one week. It is the supervisor's responsibility to meet with the individual against whom the grievance is brought. The supervisor may ask the student to attend this meeting in order to insure complete openness in the deliberations. The results of this meeting should be put in writing and transmitted to the student and the individual involved in the case.

3. If the meeting in Step 2 does not resolve the grievance, the student may appeal in writing to the Dean in whose area the grievance occurred. This should be done within one week of the correspondence generated by Step 2. The Dean will then meet with the supervisor and individual staff person. The student may also be included in a meeting with the Dean and college personnel involved. The results of this conference should be put in writing by the Dean and sent within three days of the conference to the student, the supervisor and the individual staff person.

Only after failure to resolve the problem in discussions with the appropriate personnel, as outlined above, is the formal grievance procedure initiated. The student does this by submitting a written statement of the problem to the Dean of Students.

The following is a guide for students to use in order to discuss a grievance at the informal stage.

Person to Contact	Grievance Area
Dean of Academic Affairs	Discrimination prohibited by college policy. Academic evaluation and instructions. Extension courses, summer school, continuing education programs
Dean of Administration	Parking violations, buildings and grounds maintenance, tuition and fees, financial aid, refunds, clerical personnel, wages and related fiscal matters, bookstore.
Dean of Students	Student activities, counseling, records, suspensions, probation.

Formal Grievance Procedure (non-academic grievances)

1. The grievance is to be submitted in writing to the Dean of Students after the informal stage has been exhausted but within 30 days of the date the grievant knew or reasonably should have known of the alleged violation. The written grievance shall specify the right claimed to have been violated and state briefly the underlying facts.
2. The Dean of Students shall investigate the grievance within 30 days from the time the grievance was submitted and recommend to the President a disposition of the grievance, except as provided hereinafter.
 - a) In the course of each investigation, the Dean of Students shall consult with the Dean responsible for the area of college operations in which the grievance arose.
 - b) In the case of a grievance alleging discrimination based on race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, marital status, mental retardation or physical disability, prior conviction of a crime, political beliefs, veteran status, or sexual preference, the Dean of Students shall consult with the college's Affirmative Action Officer during the course of the investigation.
 - c) In the case of a grievance against a Dean, the grievance shall be filed with the President.
3. The President may accept or reject the recommendation or direct such further investigation as he or she deems appropriate. The President shall notify the student of the final disposition of the grievance within fifteen days of receiving the recommendation, except for good cause or as provided in Step 4, below.
4. The President may establish an advisory committee of students and staff which may be charged with the responsibility of making recommendations at either the level of the Deans or the President. If an advisory committee is appointed, the President shall establish a reasonable time frame within which the committee must make recommendations. The President may appoint and remove members of the committee.

Review of Academic Standing

(academic grievances)

A student may seek review of the assignment of a grade or other decision affecting academic status in accordance with the following procedure:

1. The grade or academic decision affecting academic status should be discussed informally with the instructor or official responsible for the decision within fifteen calendar days of the student's awareness of the decision.

2. If the matter is not satisfactorily adjusted within ten calendar days of this appeal or the instructor is not available, the student may refer the matter to the academic dean by filing a written appeal. The appeal must be filed with the academic dean within thirty calendar days of the student's awareness of the decision which is being appealed. Upon receipt of such appeal, the dean shall meet with the instructor, if he or she is available, to determine that step 1 has taken place or is not possible and to receive relevant information from the instructor responsible for the decision. The dean may then refer the matter to the academic supervisor for informal consideration prior to step 3 below.
3. The Dean of Academic Affairs or other designated official(s) shall afford review as provided below. The president may designate an official or an academic appeals committee to provide review at this step in lieu of the Dean of Academic Affairs.

The student shall be afforded the right to present a statement of appeal and relevant information in support of it. It is the student's responsibility to show that the decision in question is arbitrary, i.e., without a reasonable basis, or was made for improper reasons in violation of section 1 of this policy. The student is entitled to a written response within thirty days of the completion of his or her presentation. A decision to change the grade or modify the decision which has been appealed is advisory to and subject to the approval of the president.

4. The foregoing decision may be appealed to the president by filing a statement of appeal within ten calendar days of the date of the decision. Review by the president shall be on the basis of the written record unless he or she decides that fairness requires broader review. The decision of the president shall be final.
5. The time frames provided herein may be modified by the president for good cause shown.

Advisory Committee: The President may establish an advisory committee of students and staff who may be charged with the responsibility of making recommendations at either the level of the Deans or the President. The President may appoint and remove members of the committee. If an advisory committee is appointed, the President shall establish a reasonable time frame within which the committee must make recommendations.

The Advisory Committee for Student Grievances is convened as individual cases occur. Since the number of cases requiring formal hearings are rare, the committee meets on an ad hoc basis, and professional staff and students are appointed by the President as the need arises.

The Advisory Committee for Student Grievances shall:

1. Hear grievances of all types received either from an individual student or group of students.
2. Serve as a review board by inviting those concerned to meet with the Committee, if deemed necessary by the Committee.

3. Make a recommendation to the Dean of Students, who will resolve the grievance.