

Student Grievance Procedure

A grievance, or complaint, exists when an enrolled student is dissatisfied with an aspect of his or her college experience over which he/she has no control and on which remedial action is desired. A grievance may include an apparent violation of equal opportunity laws, regulations, fair grading practices or behavioral concerns.

If a student feels unfairly treated, or has a complaint, the student shall first discuss it with the faculty member, department chair, staff member, director or student within the area, or with the person, where the perceived unfair treatment occurred. It may be a case of misunderstanding which can be resolved by thorough discussion.

Filing a Student Complaint

Initially, the student who is considering submitting a complaint, or complainant, should attempt to resolve the concern directly with the appropriate faculty member, staff member or student. If the complainant is not satisfied or not willing to address the issue with the individual, a student complaint form must be completed and submitted to the department chair (for faculty member), the director (for staff member) or to the dean of student services (for student or policy). The office of the dean of student services or the instructional deans' offices can provide the complainant with any information needed to complete this process.

The department chair, director or dean of student services will initiate the resolution process by investigating the complaint within ten working days of receipt by contacting the individuals involved (complainant, accused). A resolution is then recommended to the dean of the appropriate department. The dean will either concur with the findings and recommendations, dismiss the charge or suggest a new resolution. If there is no appeal, the decision of the dean is final.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, a written appeal can be submitted to the vice president for academic and student affairs within five working days of the initial response. The appeal must reasonably establish that

- a.) the established procedures were not properly followed; or
- b.) an adequate opportunity to present evidence was not allowed; or
- c.) the evidence was not substantial enough to justify the decision or resolution.

The vice president shall assemble a student grievance committee, composed of two students selected by the Student Senate, two faculty members selected by the Faculty Senate and the vice president for academic and student affairs, within five working days. (A prejudiced member may be removed or may voluntarily take himself or herself off the committee if the situation warrants such action.)

The vice president shall inform the complainant and the members of the student grievance committee of the specific time and place of the meeting. The details of the grievance shall be presented to the committee. Once they have reached a decision, the vice president shall, if possible, orally communicate the decision to the student followed by a written statement of the committee action within two days. The complainant may appeal the decision within ten working days to the president.

All students have the right to present grievances in accordance to the steps outlined in this policy and are assured freedom from discrimination, coercion, restraint or reprisal in presenting grievances.