

CATEGORY: STUDENT SERVICES

SUBJECT: STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

POLICY

The administration, faculty, and staff encourage open communication. It is our belief that minor differences can be resolved without recourse to the process listed below. The Academic Advisor may be used as a resource at any step within the problem-solving process. **Should a concern arise, the student should first speak to the faculty or staff member involved.** However, there may be situations where a more formal process becomes necessary. The grievance process is intended to settle disputes through mediation and reasoned discussion. It is not intended to supplant the students' code of conduct, course syllabus, program requirements, etc. Usually, the resolution of a complaint or grievance involves the resolution of the problem/issue, not the punishment of those involved.

A "grievance" is a complaint based on the belief that one has been treated unfairly.

- Academic: The student has the right to grieve and appeal a grade, an academic policy decision, or academic dismissal.
- Non-academic: The student also has the right to grieve and appeal a complaint pertaining to a staff, faculty, or administrator violating a student's right or privileges.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

All matters involved in this procedure will be confidential. All disputes need to be delivered in writing. When concerns, problems, and complaints cannot be alleviated by the usual communication channels in place within the College, the following steps are to be followed:

1) Informal Meeting

If a student has a grievance concerning any grade, academic policy decision, or academic college dismissal, he or she first must meet with the instructor or decision-maker to discuss the concern and present documentation that supports the grievance. This meeting must occur **within 3 business days** of notification of the grade, policy decision, or academic dismissal.

2) Petition

If unsatisfied with the outcome of the informal meeting, the student may make a petition, requesting that the Dean review and possibly amend the prior decision. In the event that there is a conflict of interest, the petition will be referred to another person of authority.

- The student will submit the Grievance Petition Checklist and all relevant documentation (i.e., policies, syllabi, handbook, etc.) within **2 business days**. Students who have questions regarding the process are encouraged to contact their faculty advisor.
- The Dean must meet with the student within **3 business days** of receiving the student's Grievance Petition Checklist. The Dean will:
 - serve as a mediator and attempt to resolve the concern through mutual agreement.
 - review relevant documentation, meet with additional parties as appropriate, and provide a written decision within **5 business days** of receiving the student's Grievance Petition Checklist.
 - all documentation related to the decision will be submitted to the Registrar and held in the student's academic file.

3) Appeal

If either party (student or instructor) disagrees with the decision of the Dean, he or she may file an appeal with the Grievance Committee.

- The appeal must be submitted to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs (VPASA) in writing **with all relevant documentation no later than 2 business days** after the date of the Dean's written decision.
- The Committee will:
 - review all documentation and may request to meet with the parties concerned.
 - provide a decision in writing within **5 business days** of receiving the appeal to the student, faculty member, Dean, and the student's academic advisor of the decision.
 - all documentation related to the decision will be submitted to the Registrar and held in the student's academic file.
 - **The decision of the Committee is final.**

The Grievance Committee will consist of:

- The VPASA or designee, Chair of the Committee
- One uninvolved faculty from within the division
- One uninvolved faculty from another division
- If the grievance is not academic, a staff member will be involved

Approved: _____

Monika Bissell, DBA
President

Date: September 14, 2000

Amended: August 14, 2001, February 6, 2003, August 1, 2007, July 30, 2010, August 4, 2016,
November 3, 2017, February 9, 2018, March 28, 2020