



GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

ADOPTED MAY 26, 2016

The College of Education Grievance Committee (CGC) is established by the College's Bylaws, as approved by the faculty in May 2016. It is comprised annually of three elected tenure-track faculty; one elected member of the specialized faculty ranks; and two graduate students elected by enrolled graduate students, who serve when the grievant is a student.

Faculty, specialized faculty, and students are encouraged to openly discuss perceived unfairness or situations that a reasonable person may perceive as unfair and to resolve disagreements insofar as possible at the level where they occur (e.g. at the department level). If the efforts at informal resolution are unsuccessful and one or more of the parties involved believes that formal review is necessary, these grievance procedures offer a process for discovering the facts of the case and making recommendations toward resolution.

The Grievance Committee may receive complaints and queries by faculty, specialized faculty, staff, and students concerning actions and policies of the College, its officers, committees, or faculty. Determination of jurisdiction will be made by the Grievance Committee and handled as outlined below. The Grievance Committee will review each written complaint that it receives to ascertain whether it can hear the complaint, or whether it is the subject of a different policy or process on campus.

Student allegations of capricious grading or evaluation, or charges of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism or improper attribution or citation that cannot be resolved at the departmental level, will be heard by the College Grievance Committee, with procedures to follow as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

General principles and procedures applying to all grievances

1. The Associate Dean for Academic Programs will be the first point of contact for submission of any written complaint. As the primary intake officer, the Associate Dean will ensure that all potential grievances are handled according to these procedures and in an expeditious and timely manner. In the event that the Associate Dean for Academic Programs has a potential conflict of interest with a grievance, the Associate Dean for Research will oversee the grievance process.
2. All written complaints must outline the details of the matter and provide relevant supporting documentation, outline the informal and departmental processes that have been exhausted, and specify the requested remedy.



3. The CGC will forward their findings and recommendation for remedy (if any) to the Associate Dean, who will forward it to the Dean. The Dean of the College is statutorily authorized to make a final determination.
4. As outlined in the Bylaws, the Chair of the Grievance Committee will be the tenure-track faculty member who receives the highest number of votes. The Chair is responsible for notifying an alternate if there is a conflict of interest on the CGC, assuring that a record of the CGC deliberations, investigation, hearings, and recommendation(s) is forwarded to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.
5. The College Grievance Committee determines whether it has jurisdiction over a complaint, and whether informal or departmental processes have been exhausted. If a matter should be redirected to an appropriate campus office, then the Associate Dean should assist the grievant in collaboration with the CGC Chair.
6. The CGC will suspend the investigation of a complaint upon request of the grievant.
7. All deliberations of the College Grievance Committee are confidential.
8. Committee minutes and records will be considered confidential and open to inspection only as required by law. Retention of the committee's records will be maintained in the Dean's Office in accordance with campus and College record retention policies.
9. The CGC will report to the Dean and College Executive Committee (CEC) annually and at such other times, as it may deem appropriate.
10. Modifications to these procedures will be recommended by the College Grievance Committee and adopted after review and approval by the CEC.
11. Grievances that are outside the scope of these procedures are addressed by the provisions of the University Statutes.

Grievance Procedures for Graduate and Undergraduate Students

These procedures apply to graduate and undergraduate students, as well as to former students who have graduated in the preceding five (5) years. Graduate and undergraduate students enrolled in classes in the College or working as a graduate assistant within the College may file a complaint regardless of the program in which the student is enrolled.

1. A student may initiate the grievance process by submitting a written statement of their grievance to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, including information about all informal and formal attempts to resolve the grievance at the departmental level, and a statement of requested remedy.



2. Within 5 business days, the students' written statement will be transmitted to the Chair of the CGC.
3. The CGC will review the statement and determine if any conflict of interest exists with any committee members. Within 10 business days (2 weeks) of receiving the written statement, the Chair will convene a meeting of the CGC, including the graduate student committee members, to review the statement, and to determine whether the CGC has jurisdiction over the matter. If it is determined that the CGC does not have jurisdiction, the grievant will be advised of other campus policies and procedures to resolve the matter.
4. If CGC determines that they have jurisdiction, they will respond to the grievant outlining the process for investigation, determining what evidence is needed, and establishing a time to meet with the parties. The primary parties involved shall receive a copy of the written statement. All hearings between the primary parties will take place when both are available, taking place within 10 business days to attempt to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. If this is not possible, the CGC will provide a rationale and request a reasonable extension from the Associate Dean for Academic Programs.
5. If the CGC determines that they do not have jurisdiction over the matter, they will so notify the Associate Dean for Academic Programs, who will inform the grievant and refer them to the appropriate office or procedure to pursue resolution.
6. Within 6 weeks of the submission of the original grievance, the chair of the CGC will report the committee's recommendation(s) in writing to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The Associate Dean will share the report with the Dean, who will make the final decision. The Associate Dean will communicate the Dean's decision to the involved individuals, along with appropriate channels to pursue an appeal if necessary.

Grievance Procedures for Faculty, Specialized Faculty, and Staff

1. Any current or retired faculty, specialized faculty, or staff member may submit a written request for consideration of a grievance to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs as outlined above. Faculty/staff also may request CGC consideration of any matter which is in the interest of the University and/or which is related to any grievance. Departmental avenues of appeal must be exhausted before the CGC will hear a matter. The CGC will not hear a matter if it determines that the subject matter is within the purview of another campus office or process.
2. Within 5 business days, the written complaint must be forwarded to the Grievance Committee chair, who will convene a committee meeting to determine jurisdiction. In matters related to faculty and staff issues, the graduate student members of the CGC will be recused from hearing the matter.



3. When the CGC determines that a matter is within its jurisdiction, the CGC will investigate a grievance by (a) requesting additional information or documentation it deems relevant, (b) arrange a meeting of the committee with all parties concerned, (c) consult with appropriate campus authorities as necessary, (d) make any recommendations it deems desirable in the best interest of the faculty/staff grievant involved and of the College and campus, (e) communicate its findings and recommendations to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.
4. The findings and recommendations of the CGC will be communicated in writing to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and to the Dean. After the Dean decides on the matter, the Dean will communicate in writing directly, or through the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, to all parties to the grievance regarding the decision and indicate any further avenues for appeal that may be available to the parties.
5. The parties to the grievance will be given an opportunity to bring to the Dean's attention, within 15 working days, any factual misunderstandings or additional relevant information that might have affected the committee's findings and recommendations.
6. The need for timely resolution is paramount, so ideally the Dean will issue his or her decision within 30 days, or as soon as reasonably possible if more time is needed. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, in consultation with the Chair of the CGC and the Dean, will notify the parties within 30 days if additional time will be necessary to ensure appropriate resolution if a grievance is complicated and requires additional time to resolve.
7. An elected alternate member of the CGC will be asked to serve if a faculty member on the CGC must be recused from participating in a matter in which an actual or perceived conflict of interest exists. Conflicts of interest, or potential conflicts of interest, shall be disclosed to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs. Guidance from the Provost's Office as to whether a disqualifying conflict exists under campus policy may be sought if necessary. Should the chair be deemed to have a conflict of interest, a chair pro tempore will be designated to conduct the official business of the committee.
8. Any matter coming before the CGC shall be confidential. All parties interviewed in connection with CGC cases shall be informed of this confidentiality policy and asked to sign a statement agreeing to confidentiality.