

Student Conduct, Rights, and Responsibilities Frequently Asked Questions About Complaints/Grievances for Students

How does a student initiate a grievance?

A student initiates a complaint by completing a "Notice of Inquiry" with SCRR. The notice must be completed within 30 days of the action or incident. This form can be found online or in the Student Conduct, Rights, and Responsibilities office located in SSC 190.

Do students have to try to resolve the situation informally?

Yes. The Notice of Inquiry is the beginning of the informal resolution process. Students are instructed to meet with their professor, and if not satisfied, their Department Chair and College Dean. If the situation arises from a complaint of discrimination, retaliation or harassment, students are not required to attempt informal resolution.

What happens if there is no informal resolution?

If the student feels there is no resolution, they may file a request for a formal grievance hearing. With some exceptions (noted in 05-10), the grievance must be filed during the semester of the incident.

What is a formal student grievance hearing?

A formal student grievance hearing is a process which gives both parties an opportunity to be heard by an impartial panel.

What is the timeline process leading to the grievance hearing?

- 1) Within ten (10) instructional days of receiving the request for formal grievance, SCRR will notify you, the Chair and Dean (or other appropriate staff and administrators) regarding the complaint.
- 2) Within 5 instructional days, the Dean will notify SCRR in writing whether all informal means for resolving the complaint have been exhausted.
- 3) Within 10 instructional days and if all informal means for resolution have been exhausted, SCRR will forward all materials to the facilitator.
- 4) Within 15 instructional days of receiving materials from SCRR, the facilitator will hold a meeting to select the panel for the Hearing.
- 5) Within 15 instructional days of selection, the Panel will convene for the hearing.

What happens at the hearing panel selection meeting?

Individuals are selected from a pool of potential panelists, which includes two faculty members from each college and fourteen students selected by random sample. Both parties are required to attend the meeting to select panel members. During this meeting, both the student and the individual being grieved will be given an opportunity to exercise challenges to any potential member where a conflict may exist. Both parties are required to turn in a list of witnesses with

a brief statement regarding the nature of their involvement. The facilitator will also review the hearing process, answer any questions, and inform everyone of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

Who presides over the hearing?

A facilitator, appointed by the President, presides over, and manages the Hearing.

Who attends the hearing?

Formal Student Grievance Hearings are closed and limited to the Student, the Respondent, and their respective representatives, witnesses, the Facilitator, the Panel, and an individual who provides clerical support.

What is the policy on representation during the grievance process?

Both parties may have an Advisor. The Facilitator must be provided with the name of each party's representative no less than two (2) instructional days prior to the Hearing. However, if either the grievant or respondent is an attorney, both parties may be represented by attorneys. Both parties are responsible for notifying their representatives of all relevant information and ensuring their presence at the hearing.

How is evidence presented at a hearing?

All exhibits and/or witness declarations must be clearly labeled and prepared by both the grievant and respondent and submitted to the facilitator at least two (2) instructional days prior to the Hearing. All witnesses planning on providing testimony during the hearing must submit all information to the facilitator by this same deadline. Prior to the Hearing, copies of witness reference materials, including regulations, student handbooks, or statements from University catalogs, should be included as exhibits and enough copies should be made by the grievant or Respondent for both the other party as well as all panel members.

The facilitator shall admit evidence which reasonable persons are accustomed to relying on in the conduct of a serious affair, but shall exclude evidence that is irrelevant, inappropriate, or unduly repetitious.

How does the Panel formulate the recommendation?

At the conclusion of the Hearing, the Panel meets to deliberate on a recommendation. Deliberation occurs between panel members only. Three of the four members of the panel constitute a quorum. When the grievance involves a grade dispute, both faculty members on the panel must be present to constitute a quorum. Additionally if the panel found in favor of the grievant, student panel members may not vote to determine the final grade. In all cases, the facilitator must be present for consultation and to vote in the event of a tie.

Who makes the final decision on the outcome of a formal grievance hearing?

In most cases, the Provost makes the final decision. In certain cases, an appropriate a Vice Present may make a final decision.

How and when is the recommendation sent to the Provost or appropriate Vice President?

All recommendations and materials on file form the basis of the report, which is submitted to the Provost or Vice President within ten (10) instructional days.

What is an “instructional day”?

"Instructional days" are days on which regularly scheduled classes or examinations are held.

Is the hearing recorded and if so, may I get a copy?

Student grievance hearings are recorded by the University and maintained by SCRR. Either party may request a copy of the recording after the hearing process is completed. Use of the recordings shall be limited to subsequent administrative and judicial proceedings held in connection with the matter.

Can the outcome of a student grievance hearing be appealed?

The President will manage appeals of the Provost’s decision from either party. The appeal must be made in writing, copies provided to all and delivered to the President within five (5) instructional days from the date of the Provost’s decision. The written appeal must include the name of the person appealing the decision and the reasons for the appeal along with supporting facts.