

Academic Grievances

A student wishing to appeal an academic decision (including a course grade) which directly affects the student, should file an academic grievance no later than 15 business days from the date final grades were issued by the professor for the course in question. A formal grievance related to a grade may be filed only if one of the following conditions applies:

- The student can provide evidence that an assigned grade was based on arbitrary or non-academic criteria.
- The student can provide evidence that the criteria for evaluating the assignment or coursework were not applied or were misapplied such that the assigned grade does not accurately reflect her or his fulfillment of course requirements and/or course policies as stated in the syllabus (e.g., class attendance, grade standards, penalty for late or incomplete work) and/or other applicable requirements of the College.

Process for Filing an Academic Grievance

1. A student wishing to appeal an academic decision which directly affects the student should first present the issue to the faculty member or administrator making the decision. If a grade inaccuracy is determined, the instructor will submit a grade change request to the Office of Records and Registration.
2. If satisfaction is not reached, the student should present the issue in writing to the Vice President and Dean of Adult and Graduate Studies for review. Such a written grievance shall include statements of the grounds for the grievance, supporting evidence, and suggested steps to resolve the matter.
3. After careful investigation, the Vice President and Dean of Adult and Graduate Studies may summarily dismiss the complaint if, in her or his discretion, the grounds for appeal are frivolous or do not otherwise rise to the level of a legitimate grievance. If the complaint is not dismissed, the Vice President and Dean of Adult and Graduate Studies will form a panel of two other uninvolved faculty members with whom he or she will review all applicable material and make a determination on the appeal. The panel may (a) recommend that the grade be changed, either higher or lower than the original grade, (b) recommend that the instructor revise course and/or grading requirements and reevaluate the grade accordingly, or (c) dismiss the case.

4. The Vice President and Dean of Adult and Graduate Studies shall inform the student of the outcome within ten (10) business days after the decision has been made. In the case that an appeal is approved, all official paperwork, including the student's grievance and the panel's decision, shall be sent to the Office of Records and Registration to become part of the student's academic record and to the Faculty Services office for the instructor's file.

Non-Academic Grievance Policy

A student wishing to appeal a decision made by the College which directly affects the student, but is not related to academic policy, should follow one of these procedures:

Informal Grievance Procedure

- Discuss the grievance with the Academic Advisor.
- If circumstances of the grievance prevent going to the Academic Advisor or if the Advisor does not resolve the grievance within 15 working days, the student may discuss the grievance with the Vice President and Dean of Adult and Graduate Studies. Upon counsel, recommendation, and approval of the Vice President and Dean of Adult and Graduate Studies, the aggrieved person may be advised to proceed directly to a formal grievance procedure.

The student may request a formal hearing by initiating the steps for a formal grievance.

Formal Grievance Procedure

Request: The student must file a written request for a formal grievance hearing with the Director of Academic Advising and Student Services. The request must include the specific grievance, a description of the incident(s) from which the grievance arises, and the relief being sought.

Committee: Upon review of the written grievance, the Director of Academic Advising and Student Services may ask for additional material and documentation. After these are provided, the Director of Academic Advising and Student Services calls a meeting of the Grievance Committee as soon as possible or within 15 working days of receiving the request. The Director of Academic Advising and Student Services serves as the chairperson of this committee whenever it acts as a formal grievance committee, unless the President directs otherwise. The Director of Academic Advising and Student Services, however, has no vote in the final decision of the committee.

Hearing: The committee hears the grievance together with such witnesses as it deems appropriate to the grievance and forwards its recommendations in writing to the Vice President and Dean of Adult and Graduate Studies within five working days of the close of the hearing. The hearing is closed and confidential.

Report: The Grievance Committee makes every reasonable attempt to reach its conclusion and make its recommendations to resolve the matter within 15 working days of the convening of the committee, and to present its report to the Vice President and Dean of Adult and Graduate Studies for review and appropriate actions.

Appeal: The decision of the Grievance Committee may be appealed in writing to the Vice President and Dean of Adult and Graduate Studies by the aggrieved student or the Academic Advisor within three working days after receiving the decision. With regard to the informal and formal grievance proceedings, the decision of the Vice President and Dean of Adult and Graduate Studies is final.

Scope: These grievance procedures are in no way intended to limit the rights of students under applicable laws.

Retaliation Clause: No employee of the College may make any retaliatory action against any student of the College as a result of that person (1) seeking redress under these procedures, (2) cooperating in an investigation, or (3) otherwise legitimately participating in a proceeding under these procedures. Any violation will be regarded as a separate and distinct grievance matter under these procedures.