

STUDENT COMPLAINT POLICY AND PROCESS

This policy and process applies to complaints that students may have concerning academic matters. The policy does not include issues related to final course grades (see challenge of final course grade policy). Also, it does not apply to such issues as sexual or other harassment based upon sex, age, race, religion, color, national origin, sexual preference, or disability (see policies on harassment and related issues).

The student first should discuss the complaint directly with the faculty member and try to resolve it at that level. A student who attempts to begin the process at a higher administrative level will be directed to address the issue with the faculty member first.

If the student refuses to confer with the faculty member or the faculty member refuses to confer with the student, the student may confer with the department chair/program director or with a faculty advisor. If such a meeting occurs prior to the student meeting with the faculty member, the department chair will inform the faculty member of the student's request to meet and, if known, the nature of the issue, prior to the meeting. The department chair/program director will not engage in substantive discussion with the student (i.e., inquire into the exact details or circumstances surrounding the complaint) but will listen to the student's concerns, inform the student that the concerns will be communicated to the faculty member, recommend that the student meet with the faculty member to resolve the issues and, if necessary, arrange time for the student and faculty member to meet to resolve the complaint, if appropriate, with the director present.

If an acceptable solution is not reached at this stage of the process (as stated above), the student must then document his or her complaint in writing and deliver a copy to the faculty member and the department chair/program director, respectively. In these cases, the department chair/program director will make a judgment about the student complaint and inform the faculty member, student, and the Dean of the appropriate school. If the complaint is judged to be valid, the department chair/program director will ask the faculty member to respond to the issue in writing or to resolve the issue in an appropriate manner.

If the resolution is unacceptable to the student, the student may appeal to the Dean.

If the resolution is unacceptable to the student, the student may appeal to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs is final and may not be appealed further.