

# Academic Grievance Process

## Grounds for Filing an Academic Grievance

This process is designed to address an academic situation the student perceives as unfair or unjust. It is not a process to be used when there is dissatisfaction with a grade or to obtain a grade change. For that type of grievance, see the Grade Appeal Process. For non-academic grievances, refer to the relevant sections of the Student Handbook.

## Initial Attempts at Resolution

The student should try to resolve the situation by discussing it with the following people in the order listed below. The procedure would halt at any point that satisfaction has been reached. If the administrative path for the appeal is unclear, the student should consult with the Vice President of Academic Affairs for clarification.

- Course Faculty
- Division Dean/Chair/Graduate Program Director
- Vice President of Academic Affairs

The employees listed above are responsible for documenting their meetings with an aggrieved student, including any resolutions that have been reached.

## Formal Academic Grievance

If, after discussion with the people listed above, the issue has not been resolved, the student may file a formal written academic grievance with the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The formal grievance must be filed by the student within thirty days of the end of the semester in which the incident occurred. This timeframe may be extended by a showing of good faith attempts to resolve the situation pursuant to the "Initial Attempts at Resolution" section above. The written grievance should clearly describe the subject matter of the grievance and include any available supporting materials. Within three working days of receiving the written grievance, the Vice President of Academic Affairs will review it to determine if it has been timely filed and if it is covered by this policy and therefore warrants review by the Community Standards Board (CSB). If the Vice President of Academic Affairs determines that the grievance should go forward, the grievance will be reviewed by the CSB in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

## Procedures:

- If the Vice President of Academic Affairs determines that the written grievance will be reviewed by the CSB, the student and the faculty member(s) who are the subject of the grievance will be notified in writing. The faculty member(s) will also be given a copy of the grievance and supporting materials provided by the student and given the opportunity to provide a written response and any supporting materials. Such response should be provided within three working days.
- The Vice President of Academic Affairs will then notify the CSB of the grievance and arrange for a meeting of the CSB. The meeting should occur as soon as is reasonably possible, and it will typically occur within

five working days of receipt of the faculty member's response absent extenuating circumstances. The student's grievance (and supporting materials) and the faculty member(s)' response (and supporting materials) will be provided to the CSB members in advance of the meeting.

- Though the parties will be notified of the time and place of the CSB meeting, they will not typically be invited to address the CSB. However, the Vice President of Academic Affairs may, in his/her sole discretion, determine it is necessary for the parties to meet with the CSB in certain situations. If one party is given the opportunity to address the CSB, the other party will be given a similar opportunity. The Vice President of Academic Affairs may also determine that witnesses with relevant information will be called to speak with the CSB as it considers its decision.
- At the meeting, the CSB will review and discuss the grievance, response, and supporting materials provided by the parties. The CSB will then vote to determine the appropriate resolution of the grievance. The Vice President of Academic Affairs, serving as chair of the CSB, will only vote in the case of a tie.
- The decision of the CSB is final and not subject to appeal. The decision will be communicated to the parties in writing within three working days of the CSB's decision.