

Academic Policies and Regulations: Registration, Grading and Cumulative Performance

Student Complaints and Academic Grievances

This policy outlines the procedures by which students may file complaints or academic grievances against faculty. The goal is to ensure that all student concerns are addressed fairly, promptly, and respectfully within a clearly defined chain of command.

Student Complaints Against Faculty

1. Informal Resolution

Whenever possible, students are encouraged to resolve concerns directly with the faculty member involved. Many misunderstandings can be clarified through open, respectful communication. If the student does not feel comfortable meeting with the faculty member, or if the matter involves harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or other serious misconduct, the student should bypass this step and proceed to the next level or contact the College's Title IX Coordinator, if appropriate.

2. Department or Program Level

If the concern is not resolved informally, the student should submit a written complaint to the Department Chair or Program Director within a reasonable period (typically within 30 calendar days of the incident). The Chair or Director will:

- Review the complaint and meet with the student to gather details.
- Meet with the faculty member to hear their response.
- Attempt to mediate or resolve the matter.
- Document the findings and resolution.

3. Dean's Review

If the student remains dissatisfied, they may appeal in writing to the Dean of Academic Affairs.

The Dean will:

- Review documentation from the department level.
- Determine if additional review, mediation, or investigation is warranted.
- Provide a written response outlining the resolution or next steps.

4. Escalation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA)

If the issue remains unresolved after review by the Dean, the student may submit a formal grievance to the VPAA for consideration by the Academic Petitions Committee, as outlined below.

Academic Grievance and Petition Process

Overview

The Academic Petitions Committee serves as the institutional body for reviewing formal academic grievances and petitions that fall outside of standard academic policies and procedures. These include, but are not limited to: grade appeals, academic amnesty, reconsideration of incomplete grades, biased treatment, failure to follow academic procedures, academic accessibility, student's rights, and reinstatement of academic privileges.

Charge of the Committee

The committee's primary charge is to fairly review and resolve academic grievances and petitions not related to academic review, dismissal, or expulsion.

After reviewing a case, the committee may:

- Recommend appropriate resolutions to the VPAA, including changes to academic records or institutional policy.
- Communicate written decisions and recommendations to all involved parties.
- Refer policy-related issues for institutional review and improvement.

Filing a Formal Grievance or Petition

1. The student must submit a written petition or grievance to the Office of Academic Affairs, addressed to the VPAA.
2. The petition must include:
 - A clear description of the issue or complaint.
 - Evidence or supporting documentation.
 - Steps already taken to resolve the issue.
3. The VPAA will forward the petition or grievance to the Academic Petitions Committee for review and action.

Communication of Decisions

All decisions and recommendations will be communicated in writing to the student, the faculty member, and any other relevant parties. Decisions are typically issued within 30 days of the committee's final review.