

College of Arts and Sciences (CAS)

Departmental Uniform Grievance Policy and Procedures

The purpose of the student grievance procedure is to provide an impartial review process and to protect the rights of all parties involved in student-faculty disputes. Any student who believes he or she has a grievance should first utilize the departmental process as listed herein.

Departmental Process

Step One: A student who has a grievance against a faculty member should make an appointment with the faculty member within 30 calendar days of the incident to discuss and resolve the dispute. If the student feels that a satisfactory solution has not been provided, the student should follow the procedure outlined in Step Two.

Step Two: The student should make an appointment with the chairperson (director or coordinator) of the department within ten days after the initial meeting with the faculty member. The chairperson will attempt to resolve the dispute and notify the student of the decision in writing. If the student feels that a satisfactory solution has not been provided, the students should follow the procedure outlined in Step Three.

Step Three: The student must submit a written request for a hearing within 60 days of the incident (e.g. rendering of the final grade) to the chairperson. The written request must state the complaint, include supporting documents, and clearly state a resolution within the authority of the department (e.g., changing a grade from D to C or refunding tuition). The chairperson will convene the departmental Faculty Student Relations Committee (FSRC), which will be comprised of a minimum of five (5) faculty members, and a minimum of one (1) student. The selection process for the departmental FSRC is as follows:

- Faculty members may be tenured, tenure track, or adjunct, as provided in the department bylaws.
- Student representatives will be selected from a departmental student organization and should not be enrolled in any classes with the grievant.
- The faculty member against whom the grievance is lodged should not be on the grievance committee.
- The chairperson will appoint one of the five faculty members to serve as committee chairperson.

The department chairperson will distribute the written complaint and supporting documents to FSRC members and to the faculty member involved in the grievance. At this point the faculty member may submit a written response and supporting documents to the FSRC. The department FSRC will have a hearing with all parties present within (30) calendar days of receipt of the complaint. Within ten calendar days after the committee has met, the committee chairperson will render a written decision to all parties involved with a copy to the Dean. All meetings of the departmental FSRC shall be closed to protect confidentiality and privacy of the parties involved. Any witnesses must be approved in advance by the chairperson of the departmental FSRC. Departments cannot host virtual meetings. All meetings must be face to face.

Step Four: When the departmental FSRC is convened to hear a grievance, decisions of the committee will be by a simple majority vote, provided 75% of the membership is present, including one student representative. The departmental FSRC shall have authority and/or responsibility only to make recommendations to the chairperson of the department. The final departmental decisions will be made by the chairperson with a written copy of the decision sent to the CAS Dean. If the student or faculty member involved in the dispute is unsatisfied with the outcome, a request to have the grievance considered by the CAS FSRC must be made within fifteen days after receipt of the written notice from the department.

College Process

Step One: To have the complaint considered at the college level, the petitioner must file the grievance in writing with the Dean, stating reasons for the appeal and facts upon which the appeal is based. He or she also must state the resolution sought. (The resolution must be within the authority of the Dean to grant.) The petitioner must attach to the written petition (i) a copy of the original complaint (ii) a copy of the instructor's reply, if applicable, and (iii) the chairperson's reply. No new or unrelated allegations shall be added to the petition. The CAS FSRC chairperson will be appointed by the Dean.

Step Two: The Dean will forward the written complaint to the CAS FSRC Chairperson within ten calendar days. The committee will include a minimum of nine (9) faculty members, two (2) program directors/ coordinators, and a minimum of two (2) students. The committee chairperson will be appointed by the Dean.

Step Three: Within ten (10) calendar days of the distribution of the grievance statements, the faculty member involved must submit a written response to CAS FSRC.

Step Four: Within 30 calendar days of receipt of all materials, the CAS FSRC will schedule a meeting to review the grievance. Both parties (students and faculty member) will be expected to attend the meeting. All meetings of the CAS FSRC shall be closed to protect the confidentiality of both parties while also protecting their rights of privacy. Any witnesses shall be approved by the chairperson of the CAS FSRC. Only members of the CAS FSRC may ask questions of the parties involved.

When CAS FSRC is convened to hear a grievance, decisions of the committee will be by a simple majority vote, provided 75% of the membership is present including one student representative. The chair of the committee will submit written recommendations to the Dean, along with any supporting documentation within five calendar days. The Dean shall inform the student, faculty member, and department chairperson of the decision in writing. If the student or faculty member is not satisfied with the outcome, they can make a final appeal directly to the CAS Dean. *The decision of the Dean will be final.*

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