

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
(Last Revised by the Dean of Students Office, June 6, 2013)

A grievance that should be resolved under these procedures is one that rests on an allegation by a student (undergraduate or graduate) that he/she has been treated with substantial unfairness by another student or by a faculty, staff, or student employee of the University. Such matters usually have their basis in University policy, except that the procedures for grade appeals are outlined in the *Undergraduate Bulletin* and the *Graduate Student Catalog*. Student grievances may be based upon alleged violations of state or federal law, except that grievances related to sexual misconduct and sexual harassment, undue favoritism, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 must be handled through the separately designated University policy.

I. INFORMAL REVIEW

A student who believes that he/she has been treated with substantial unfairness should initially attempt to resolve the matter by the end of the academic semester (fall, spring, or summer) following the academic semester when the alleged incident occurred (e.g. if the incident occurred during spring semester, the initial attempt must be completed by the last day of the final summer term) by communicating in writing allegations to the administrative officer most directly concerned, excluding the person accused of the improper act. This officer is likely to be a Director, a Department Head, Dean or Vice Chancellor or designee. In the case of an allegation against a faculty member, if the student wishes to appeal the decision of the Department Head/Chair, the Dean shall be the first avenue of appeal. The final step in the informal review for all students shall be the Vice Chancellor to whom the respondent ultimately reports.

The officer, or his or her, designee should attempt immediately to discover the truth of the allegation and in the case of valid complaints, should seek resolution by discussion, counseling, mediation, or agreement of the parties, or by administrative action. The nature of the grievance and any information about it should be treated with the utmost confidentiality and with sensitivity to the issues involved.

At the end of efforts to resolve the grievance, the officer should record the complaint in a written statement identifying the complainant, the conduct complained of, the name of the respondent, and the outcome of the information inquiry. A copy of the written statement of findings should be maintained in the office's complaint files to be made available to other appropriate officials if needed. A written response of the findings should also be sent to the student.

II. FORMAL REVIEW

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of an informal inquiry may submit a formal complaint for resolution under this grievance procedure. A student who has a grievance against another student will proceed in accord with the *Student Code of Conduct*. A student who has a grievance against a faculty, staff, or student employee of the University will proceed in accord with these grievance procedures.

Within a reasonable time after the conclusion of unsuccessful efforts to resolve the matter through an informal review, the complainant shall present to the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs a written statement of the grievance and any action that may have been taken. This statement will then be

forwarded to the Grievance Committee by the Vice Chancellor or his/her designate who will serve as the Convener of the Committee. A hearing will be scheduled with both the student and alleged offender(s). Facts surrounding the grievance will be presented at the hearing in the presence of all parties. The Committee will proceed in the manner, in its judgment, most likely to produce a fair resolution of the matter.

Within a reasonable time following the hearing, the Committee, through its Convener, will issue a report of its conclusions. Depending on the nature of those conclusions, these steps will follow:

1. If the Committee recommends a reversal or amendment of the action affecting the complainant, the Convener will send the report to both the complainant and the respondent. The respondent will then (1) proceed accordingly and the matter is then concluded, or (2) communicate to the Committee Convener that the action will not be reversed or changed. Upon receipt of a communication that the recommendation is not accepted, the Convener will send the recommendation to the Vice Chancellor of the division where the alleged offense occurred. If the Vice Chancellor concurs with the recommendation, he/she will authorize the appropriate action and the matter is then concluded. If the Vice Chancellor decides that the Committee's recommendation cannot be accepted, he/she will communicate the decision to the Convener, who will then notify the complainant of the decision and the right of appeal. (Because in this case, a Vice Chancellor has made a final decision for the division, the line of appeal is to the Chancellor.) See "Appeals."
2. If the Committee finds that the grievance is unfounded, its Convener will send the report to both the complainant and the respondent, and will further advise the complainant of the right to appeal.

All steps of a grievance procedure shall be closed to the public. All documents generated in the course of an inquiry into a charge shall be confidential and not subject to any public disclosure except to the extent where disclosure may be required by state or federal law. The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, who will, according to the circumstances of the case, forward such documents to the Office of the Chancellor. A copy of all documents shall be placed in the Dean of Students Office.

III. GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

The Grievance Committee will be convened by the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (or his/her designate) and will include a pool of sixteen members. These will include four undergraduate students appointed by the President of Student Government, four graduate students appointed by the President of the Graduate Student Association, two student service administrators appointed by the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, six faculty members appointed by the Provost (after consultation with the Deans), at least two of whom must be graduate faculty members who have been recommended by the Dean of the Graduate School. These appointments will be made in an effort to insure the representation of all constituent groups in the University community.

The Grievance Committee will be selected by the Convener for hearing a grievance. The Convener will assemble a hearing panel which will normally consist of four individuals: two (2) students, and two (2) members of the faculty/staff. In situations where the grievance has been brought forward by a graduate student, the panel will consist of graduate faculty and graduate students. The Convener will preside over the hearing, but will not be a voting member.

Should sufficient numbers of the Grievance Committee be unavailable during the summer months, the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (or his/her designate) will convene an ad hoc committee of available faculty, staff, and students to hear the grievance.

IV. APPEALS

After all steps set forth above under "Formal Review" have been accomplished, a complainant who remains dissatisfied with the outcome may appeal. If the matter has not been reviewed by a Vice Chancellor, then the appeal is to the Vice Chancellor of the division where the matter arose. In the case of an appeal of the Grievance Committee findings involving graduate students, the appeal will be heard jointly by the Dean of the Graduate School and the Vice Chancellor of the division where the matter arose.

If a Vice Chancellor has reviewed the matter, then the appeal is to the Chancellor. The complainant will write to the Chancellor stating the grievance, the outcome of the formal review, and the basis on which the decision of the Vice Chancellor should be overturned. Normally the Chancellor's review relates to the procedures of a case and not its merits. The decision of the Chancellor is final. The decision will be sent to the complainant, respondent and Vice Chancellor. A copy of all documents will be kept in the Dean of Students Office.