

College of Education Student grievance policy

The purpose and the authority

This policy is approved by the Dean of the College of Education in consultation with staff and faculty members. It is developed in compliance with the [STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES](#) policy File number STU-0119, [FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS IN THE INSTRUCTIONAL ENVIRONMENT](#) policy, and the [COMPLAINT PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS](#) policy, File number STU-110

The scope of authority of this policy is to consider all student complaints and appeals that (1) have exhausted all venues for grievance within academic programs and branches, and (2) pertain to alleged violation of specific student rights. If a program or a branch has its own set of written grievance or appeal policies, they should be stated in program handbooks or the branch's web page. Such policies must be consistent with the college policy principles and procedures and can't supersede it. All program- or branch-level policies are subject to Dean's review and must include reference to this policy. Programs and branches without a written grievance or appeal policies will follow the general principles presented in this policy.

This policy **does not** cover issues that are considered through specialized grievance/complaint procedures:

1. In cases involving an employee or member of the faculty which is based on discrimination, refer to the policy on System-wide Sex Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Dating & Domestic Violence, & Stalking ([EO 1095](#)) (or any superseding policy or EO). Contact the [Office of Equal Opportunity](#).
2. Grade appeals should be handled through the [University Grade Appeal Policy](#).
3. Admission appeals should be filed according to the [University guidelines](#)
4. For matters of physical danger or immediate safety concerns, students are advised to go directly to campus police (Emergencies: 911; Dispatch: (916) 278-6000; Email: police@csus.edu) and/or report to the closest staff or faculty member.

Definitions

- Grievant - student who initiates grievance (complaint)
- Grievance - complaint against faculty or staff member's behavior and practices, or an appeal of a decision that impacts grievant's academic standing.
- Dean - Dean of College of Education or a designee (normally an Associate Dean)
- Respondent - faculty or staff member, or a formal body (such as an appeals or a disciplinary committee) against whom the complaint is filed.

General Principles

1. The general approach of consideration of student grievance encompasses the requirements of equity, fairness, and due process: (a) The right to complain and protection against retaliation, (b) An opportunity to present the grievant's side of the story and evidence, (c) The right of the respondent(s) to present their view and evidence, (d) The authority that considers the grievance must be impartial, and provide a written response based on evidence and rational argumentation.
2. Anonymous complaints are forwarded to the respondent, but normally are not investigated or acted upon. Anonymous or confidential complaints with serious accusations may be forwarded to appropriate authorities.
3. Oral complaints will be heard, but grievants will be asked to submit a written version.
4. Signed complaints with a request to keep the grievant's identity confidential cannot be fully investigated, because the respondent cannot respond without the knowledge of facts.
 - a. Grievant has the right to be heard in a confidential setting. All grievants are encouraged to speak with someone, including the Dean to express their concerns.
 - b. The essence of the complaint will be communicated to a respondent without disclosing the grievant's identity.
 - c. The grievant may request a delay in investigation until the end of the semester during which the alleged violation took place.

5. Complaints signed by more than one grievant (a group complaint) will be forwarded to or discussed with the respondent. Grievants will be encouraged to file individual complaint(s), while collectively signed letters may be used as additional evidence.

Procedure

1. This policy must be posted on the College's website and publicly accessible.
2. The grievant should make every effort to resolve a problem or dispute directly by meeting or corresponding with the respondent.
 - a. The respondent is expected to meet with the grievant and apply a reasonable effort to resolve the issue.
 - b. If a branch chair is the respondent, the matter may be addressed directly to the Dean.
3. The grievant must file a written complaint (by email or in person) with the Dean's office within a reasonable time after consideration at the lower level; normally within two weeks. The grievant should indicate which [specific right](#) is alleged to be violated (or failure to meet [faculty responsibilities](#)), who violated it, in what manner, and what resolution the grievant seeks. The grievant should provide documentation of the complaint consideration at program and branch levels, and all evidence pertaining to the case.
4. Dean acknowledges receipt of the complaint and communicates the intent to investigate, normally within five business days.
5. Dean normally requests a meeting with the grievant, and a separate meeting with the respondent. Dean may seek other input from program or branch leadership, university officials, and additional evidence pertaining to the case.
6. Dean will send a written response to the grievant and to the respondent within a reasonable amount of time, normally within four weeks of receiving the complaint.
7. If, after receiving the Dean's decision, the grievant feels that policy was not followed, they have the right to appeal the decision to the office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Decisions made at the University level shall be considered final, and the matter resolved.

The policy was approved by Dean's Advisory Council on February 24, 2022

Approved by Dean Sidorkin on April 4, 2022