Introduction

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. The departmental Faculty-Student Relations Committee (FSRC) shall be comprised of a minimum of five (5) faculty members, and a minimum of one (1) student. The department chairperson, director or coordinator will appoint one of the five faculty members to serve as committee chairperson. 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 selection process for the departmental Faculty-Student Relations Committee is as follows:

1. The faculty members (adjuncts will be eligible at the discretion of the department chairperson, director or coordinator) will be appointed by the chairperson, director or coordinator of the department or according to departmental by-laws.

2. The student representative will be selected from a student organization within the department or program and may change depending on #3.

3. The student representative should not be enrolled in any classes of the grievant.

4. The faculty member against whom the grievance is lodged should not be a member of the grievance committee.

The departmental FSRC shall have authority and/or responsibility only to make recommendations to the chairperson, director or coordinator of the department. The final departmental decision will be made by the chairperson, director or coordinator in writing, with a copy of the decision sent to the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

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 or relief has not been provided, the student should follow the procedures 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, director or coordinator will attempt to resolve the dispute or request the student to submit the complaint in writing for a hearing by the departmental FSRC (this is only needed if you move to step 3). If the student feels that a satisfactory solution has not been provided, the student should follow the procedures outlined in Step Three.

Step Three

- The student must submit a written complaint within 60 days of the incident (e.g. rendering of the final grade) to the chairperson, director or coordinator. The written complaint must include supporting documents and must clearly state a resolution within the authority of the department (e.g., changing a grade from D to C or refunding tuition). The chairperson, director or coordinator will convene the departmental FSRC and distribute the written complaint, along with any supporting documents to its members and to the faculty member involved in the grievance. At this point, the faculty member must submit a written response with any supporting documentation. The faculty documents are then forwarded to the departmental FSRC. The departmental Faculty-Student Relations Committee 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 send recommendation(s) to the department chairperson, director or coordinator and will send a copy to the dean. Within ten days of receipt of the committee’s recommendations, the department chairperson, director or coordinator or dean will render a written decision to all parties involved with a copy to the Dean. All meetings of the departmental Faculty-Student Relations Committee shall be closed to protect the confidentiality of both parties while also protecting their rights of privacy. Any and all witnesses must be approved in advance by the chairperson of

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the departmental Faculty-Student Relations Committee. Note: Departments cannot host virtual meetings. All meetings must be face-to-face.

Step Four

- The student may request to have the grievance considered by the CAS FSRC within fifteen days after receipt of the written notice from the department chairperson, director or coordinator. If the decision is unsatisfactory to either party, the CAS FSRC will convene for the specific purpose of hearing an academic grievance as needed. All materials must be forwarded to the CAS FSRC Committee within 15 days. (See College Process.)

College Process

When a student or faculty members initiates an appeal to the dean, the procedures are as follows:

Step One

a. The petitioner must file this grievance in writing, stating the reasons the appeal is being made and the facts upon which the appeal is based. He or she also must state clearly the resolution sought. (The resolution must be within the authority of the dean to grant.)

b. 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/director’s/coordinator’s reply and any other supporting documentation connected with the case, as well as any new documents.

No new or unrelated allegations shall be added to this petition.

Step Two

The dean will forward the written complaint to the CAS FSRC Chairperson within ten calendar days. This committee will include a minimum of nine (9) faculty members, two (2) program directors and/or 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 statement, the faculty member involved must submit a written response to the chairperson of the CAS Faculty-Student Relations Committee. Copies will be distributed to committee members.

Step Four

a. Within 30 calendar days of receipt of all materials, the CAS FSRC will schedule a meeting to review the grievance. Both parties involved (student and faculty member) will be expected to attend the meeting.

b. All meetings of the CAS FSRC shall be closed to protect the confidentiality of both parties while also protecting their rights of privacy.

c. Any and all witnesses shall be approved by the chairperson of the CAS FSRC.

d. Only members of the CAS FSRC may ask questions of the parties involved.

e. When the 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.

f. Following the final discussion of the CAS FSRC meeting, the chair of the committee within five calendar days will submit written recommendations to the dean, along with any supporting documentation.

g. Within ten calendar days of receipt of the recommendations from the CAS FSRC, the dean shall inform the student, faculty member, and department chairperson, director or coordinator of the decision made in writing.

h. Parties may appeal to the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The decision of the dean will be final.

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