

ADVERSE DECISIONS

Informal Grievance Procedure

Before submitting a formal grievance, the graduate student shall first attempt to informally resolve the issue with the academic officer responsible for the action or decision being grieved. The student shall discuss the problem in a meeting with the academic officer within 15 business days after receiving notice of the adverse action. If informal resolution is unsatisfactory, the student may proceed by filing a written formal grievance with their Graduate Program Director ("GPD").

Formal Grievance Procedure

1. The graduate student must submit a written appeal (email allowed) addressed to their GPD within thirty (30) business days following the informal discussion. The Graduate Program Director or the Unit Dean may extend the time limit for good cause shown if the grievant makes a request for extension of time within the thirty (30) day period. If the grievance is against the GPD, then the student should submit the formal grievance to their Academic Unit Dean ("Unit Dean"). Filing occurs when the written grievance is submitted to the GPD or the Unit Dean.
2. This communication must clearly set forth, in reasonable detail: 1) what decision is being challenged, 2) which academic officer made the decision, 3) how the policy, regulation, rule, or law was misapplied or misinterpreted, and 4) the remedy sought. The graduate student may attach additional documentation or evidence if necessary.
3. The GPD or Unit Dean shall review the submission, consult with the academic officer involved, and provide a written decision by email to the graduate student within 30 business days after the filing date. An additional extension may be granted for good cause shown, and the need for an extension and the anticipated decision date will be communicated to the graduate student by email.
4. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome at this level, the student may submit a written notice of appeal (email allowed) to the Dean of the Graduate School within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the written decision.

Graduate School Appeals

The Dean of the Graduate School will convene the Graduate Appeals Committee after receiving timely written notice of appeal. The Appeals Committee is comprised of members of the Graduate Council who are assigned to this standing committee. The Appeals Committee must review all written documentation in the case, and it must provide the graduate student grievant with an opportunity to appear in person to present testimony and evidence. The student appearing before the Appeals Committee may bring one support person who is not allowed to address the committee. The Unit Dean or their designee shall be invited to the hearing to observe but will not participate.

Appeal Committee Procedure

1. The Appeals Committee Chair may provide a brief overview of the appeal at the beginning of the hearing. This statement shall be limited to an objective summary of the issues present in the appeal.
2. The student will state their case. There will be no interruptions, but committee members may ask clarifying questions by asking permission from the Appeals Committee Chair.
3. The academic officer whose decision is being appealed will state their case. There will be no interruptions, but Committee members may ask clarifying questions by asking permission from the Appeals Committee Chair.
4. Committee members may also ask questions of any other involved parties present.
5. The Student will respond and ask questions of the academic officer and other involved parties who previously provided information.
6. The Appeals Committee will have the opportunity to ask final questions of both the student and the academic officer.
7. The members of the Appeals Committee will deliberate in private.
8. The Appeals Committee Chair will send a written report within fifteen (15) business days to the Unit Dean or designee and the Dean of the Graduate School. This report must describe the facts of the appeal as determined by the Appeals Committee after hearing the evidence and the Committee's recommendation for the action to be taken.
9. The Unit Dean or designee and the Dean of the Graduate School shall jointly review the report and consult with the Provost. Then, the Dean of the Graduate School will make the final University decision and provide copies of this decision in writing to all involved parties within 20 business days of receiving the Appeals Committee report. This decision is final.