

Academic Grievance for Graduate Students

The Human Development and Masters in Human Rights department recognizes a student's right to due process.

When a student believes that actions by department staff or faculty have caused them undue academic harm, if for example they believe that they were graded unfairly or perceive that instructors or administrators unjustifiably affected their academic performance, they have the right to initiate an academic grievance. The grievance procedure offers students the opportunity to present a case showing how they were harmed and to seek a remedy for that harm if it is substantiated.

CCPA procedures state that there are three situations where academic grievances may apply: “1) The process by which a grade was determined; 2) unfair treatment regarding program or course requirements, other academic contact, or funding; and 3) other academic matters in the program or with individual members of the department that may affect their academic standing.”

Who Should Follow This Process/Policy?

The process and policy outlined on this page is for all graduate students in the Masters in Human Rights program.

How Long Does a Student Have to File an Academic Grievance?

Whenever a student believes that a grievable offense has occurred, they must seek resolution informally with the other(s) involved in the dispute beginning no later than 30 days after the incident occurred or grades are posted.

If the grievant does not receive a response from the faculty member/administrator within five (5) calendar days, the grievant may contact the Department Chair in writing.

If a resolution is not reached at a department level, the grievant must initiate the formal College procedure within five (5) calendar days of the end of the informal departmental procedure by filing a written statement of charges with the CCPA Dean's Office.

Follow these steps when pursuing an graduate academic grievance:

STEP 1:

If a student has a complaint, they should start by preparing a written description of it, and include the syllabus, the assignment, their work product and any feedback they received from the instructor or department related to the complaint.

STEP 2:

The grievant should meet with the faculty member or administrator involved with the goal of finding a resolution to your concern. It is highly recommended that the grievant take careful notes of what transpires in this initial meeting.

While the interaction in this meeting should be solely between the grievant and the faculty member/administrator, the grievant may choose to bring an additional person to accompany them in the meeting. Whomever the grievant chooses to bring to the meeting, must be agreed upon in advance by both the grievant and the faculty member/administrator. It must be understood that the accompanying student's role is not to actively speak on behalf of the grievant in the meeting. This person's role would be to provide support and to possibly assist in the note-taking.

STEP 3: (optional)

If no mutually agreeable resolution is reached, the grievant may seek mediation through the Department Chair. The grievant should make an appointment with the Department Chair and bring all pertinent or requested documentation to this meeting. Once the Department Chair has a full understanding of the grievance, an informal meeting will be scheduled with the chair, the grievant, and the instructor or administrator.

If the concerned parties reach an agreement about what, if any, action should be taken, the Masters in Human Rights department will provide a written summary of the agreement to the instructor, student, or administrator.

Appeals

If the concerned parties do not reach an agreement, the grievant may request a formal hearing in accordance with the CCPA academic grievance procedures. As a reminder, if a resolution is not reached at a department level, the grievant must initiate the formal College procedure within five (5) calendar days of the end of the informal departmental procedure by filing a written statement of charges with the CCPA Dean's Office.

Information regarding the CCPA academic grievance procedure can be found here:

<https://www.binghamton.edu/ccpa/resources/academic-policies/ethics.html>

Additional information regarding Graduate School policies and procedures can be found here:

<https://www.binghamton.edu/grad-school/resources/policies-procedures/manual/grievance-procedures.html#308>