

Grievance FAQ

Which matters may a grievance address?

The academic grievance procedure serves primarily as a means of resolving concerns about academic fairness that arises between a faculty member and a student within a particular course during a single term. Allegations may include the failure of a faculty member to observe policies set forth in the course syllabus, partiality in grading, undue or excessive disciplinary faculty responsibilities stated in the CSU Faculty Handbook. Issues of intellectual diversity may be legitimate grounds for complaints. One may not utilize the procedure to challenge university policy, although an alleged improper application of policy may be considered. The Judicial Affairs Officer will immediately and directly forward any complaint that alleges sexual harassment or racial discrimination to the Assistant Director of Human Resources (EEO/AA Officer), who will take complete charge of the case. If in doubt about the applicability of the procedure to a particular concern, you may contact the Office of Judicial Affairs.

With whom should I file an academic grievance?

Students are first encouraged to seek an informal resolution by speaking with those closest to the problem - the faculty member, department chair, and/or dean of the college in which the course was offered. If you are uncomfortable pursuing this route, or if it does not prove fruitful, you may seek mediation or file a formal grievance.

How do I go about filing an academic grievance?

The [Office of Legal Affairs](#) will provide you with information on filling out an Academic Grievance Form. After you have completed the form with supporting documentation you would submit is to the chair of the department through which the specific course was offered. On this form, you will be directed to provide the name of the faculty member against whom the grievance is made, your specific complaint(s), and the specific remedy(ies) or sanctions that you seek. It's best to make your written complaint as concise and factual as possible. Any statements that you make are subject to rebuttal by the faculty member, so avoid extraneous information. You are also advised to refrain from personal attacks, which are in poor taste and very difficult to substantiate. If possible, it is a good idea to seek an advisor from the academic community to review your written complaint before submitting it.

What length of time is allowed for me to file an academic grievance?

Grievances should be filed in as timely a manner as possible. Ordinarily, academic grievances should be initiated within the first ten university working days of the term following the term in which the dispute arose. The Dean of the appropriate college or the Associate Provost for Judicial Affairs may consider extenuating circumstances for exceptions to this time limitation. Those circumstances must be beyond the control of the student, such as hospitalization or military assignment.

What happens after I file an academic appeal?

Once your grievance has been filed, the faculty member will have a chance to respond to the complaint. She/he has three options: (1) contest whether the matter is grievable, (2) request a formal meeting with the student, or (3) volunteer to participate in mediation. In any case, the faculty member will provide a written response to the complaint to the department chair. The chair will review all material and issue a decision. If the complainant is not satisfied with the results they may forward the appeal to the appropriate college dean. The final appeal may be made with the Provost's Office by the Associate Provost for Judicial Affairs.