

## **SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND TROPICAL MEDICINE Grievance Committee Policy and Procedures for Student Academic Complaints**

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### **Student Academic Grievance**

The School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine (SPHTM) Grievance Policy is for the professional and graduate students in the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

The Grievance Procedures apply to student academic complaints for:

- Complaints concerning grading
- Failure to pass a comprehensive examination
- Recommendations for termination from a program on academic grounds

### **The Student Grievance Policy And Procedures Do Not Apply To:**

Undergraduate Students: Undergraduate BSPH students should follow the Newcomb/Tulane Grievance Procedures <http://tulane.edu/college/documents.cfm>

Violations of the Honor Code are heard under the SPHTM Procedures or the Code of Academic Conduct <https://tulane.box.com/v/honor-code-FULL>

Appeals to the Academic Standards and Policy Committee for Academic Dismissal: The Academic Standards Policy Committee hears appeals from students at risk of dismissal due to failure to meet the SPHTM academic standards when there is no grievance for unfairness. Such appeals may include claims of extenuating circumstances that may have affected academic performance. Appeals to the Academic Policy Committee are not a grievance. If student are not satisfied with the results of an appeal to the Academic Policy, the student may file a grievance.

<https://tulane.box.com/v/policy-academic-stand>

Discrimination: Complaints regarding discrimination are filed directly with the Tulane Office of Institutional Equity. <http://www2.tulane.edu/equity/reporting-policies.cfm>

Harassment or Sexual Harassment:

<https://tulane.box.com/v/harassment>

Complaints regarding harassment should follow the Tulane University Harassment Policy and reports should be made directly to the Tulane Office of Institutional Equity

<http://www2.tulane.edu/equity/reporting-policies.cfm>

<http://www2.tulane.edu/equity/reporting-complaints.cfm>

The Faculty Grievance Committee hears complaints regarding faculty matters.

**The Grievance must be made in writing and follow the procedures and timelines set forth in the policy below.**

## **1. 0 Initiating the Grievance Process**

1.1 Within one (1) month of receiving the grade or other cause of academic complaint, the student should make an attempt to informally resolve the issue by contacting the instructor or other academic supervisor. If the initial complaint is not made within one (1) month after receiving a grade or action, the complainant must make a case of extenuating circumstances that prevented the timely discussion of the issue before the grievance can proceed.

1.2 If the complaint cannot be resolved informally within seven (7) days of presentation to the instructor or other academic supervisor, the student must submit a written complaint to the Department Chair.

1.3 If the complaint involves the action taken by the Department faculty as a whole, the student need not present anything to an individual faculty member, but must submit his complaint in writing to the Department Chair.

1.4 If the Department Chair cannot resolve the complaint within seven (7) days of receipt, s/he shall notify the Senior Associate Dean that a grievance has been filed and establish an Academic Grievance Committee.

## **2. Grievance Committee**

2.1 The Department Chair shall appoint a committee of five members of the full time faculty to hear the complaint. The Committee will consist of a minimum of one faculty member selected from another department of the School, with the concurrence of that faculty member's Department Chair. All Committee members must have been in residence during the time of the events under question. The Department Chair shall appoint one member of the committee to serve as the Committee Chair, and this individual will be responsible for coordinating with committee members to compile the final report.

2.2 The Department Chair shall not serve as a member of the committee. If the student's grievance concerns an individual faculty member, that faculty member will not serve on the Committee. If the student is appealing an action taken by the faculty as a whole, the student's advisor will not serve on the Committee. Should the grievance be lodged against the Department Chair, the Dean or Dean's designate shall appoint the committee.

2.3 The Academic Grievance Committee shall select one of its members to serve as chair for the duration of each case.

2.4 The Grievance Committee shall meet within ten (10) days following formation. The Committee shall follow the procedure contained in Section 3 of this document.

2.5 The Chair of the Grievance Committee shall ask if the complainant and the instructor or academic supervisor wish to submit written statements or other evidence.

2.6 The decision of the Committee shall be by majority vote. The Committee shall issue its final report within ten (10) days following its last meeting. The report should contain not only the decision but an explanation of the grounds upon which the decision was reached.

### **3. Procedures**

3.1 The Committee may consider written evidence as well as oral testimony. All evidence presented must be relevant to the issues raised in the complaint. The Chair of the Committee will rule on all questions of relevancy.

3.2 The written documentation presented to the Committee by each party shall be unavailable to the other. Each party will be interviewed separately by the Committee and remain available during all Committee proceedings for recall. Taping of the proceedings of the Committee shall not be allowed.

3.3 The complainant, the person complained against, and the Committee may all call witnesses to testify. All witnesses are subject to examination by both parties and the Committee.

3.4 Neither the Committee nor the complainant may have counsel represent them.

3.5. Within ten (10) days of the conclusion of the proceedings, the Committee Chair shall issue a report that contains the decision and summarized the evidence presented.

3.6 The Committee Chair, in addition to the summary report, shall issue a report of findings. These reports shall be sent to the Department Chair, with a copy to the student, the faculty member and the Dean.

### **4. Appeal to the Dean**

4.1 If the student or the faculty member is dissatisfied with the findings of the Committee, either may appeal to the Dean. The appeal shall be sent in writing to the Dean within five (5) days of receipt of the Committee's findings and shall detail the reasons for the appeal.

4.2 The Dean may accept the decision of the Committee or may send it back for consideration. The Dean's decision should be made within thirty (30) days and communicated in writing to all principals in the case.

4.3 If the Dean returns the findings back for reconsideration, the Committee must complete its reconsideration within fourteen (14) days. The Committee may adopt its original findings or issue amended findings. Upon receipt of the committee's reconsideration, the Dean, within thirty (30) days, must either accept the findings or reverse them.

### **5. Appeal to the Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility of Students**

5.1 If the student is dissatisfied with the Dean's ruling, the student may file a written appeal with the Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility of Students. The procedures set forth by that committee will be followed.