

Student Grievance Process

The following pages outline the procedures for filing a grievance at Western Oregon University. You will find there are very explicit steps which need to be followed to protect the rights of students, staff and professors. A Student Grievance must be filed within 90 calendar days of the alleged situation. It is suggested you consider meeting with a staff member of the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs as you consider a grievance. This person can act as a personal support, even though this person cannot act in support of your complaint.

An academic grievance always involves differential and harmful treatment. It does not involve perceived rude treatment, classroom style, or general grading policies. For example, you may not like a particular professor's classroom style or grading practices as a whole, but this does not constitute grounds for a grievance. If the Student Grievance Committee finds in your favor, they will determine the appropriate resolution.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE PREAMBLE

It is hoped that minor differences can be resolved without recourse to the procedure listed below. However, there may be situations where a more formal procedure of this type may be necessary. This procedure is not intended to be judicial or quasi-judicial in nature. It is not intended to supplant the administrative rules of the university or any provisions of the collective bargaining agreement between the faculty and the university. For other types of grievances, including sexual harassment and discrimination, other grievance procedures and may apply.

Students who intend to file an academic or nonacademic grievance must follow the steps below in the order they are listed. A Student Grievance must be filed within 90 calendar days of the alleged situation.

DEFINITIONS

ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE: An academic grievance is defined as a written formal assertion a student believes he/she has been harmed by being treated arbitrarily or differently from other students in the same classroom setting.

NON-ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE: A non-academic grievance is defined as a written formal assertion a student believes he/she has been dealt with arbitrarily, differently or in ways which violate established laws, rules, procedures, or past practices by the university as a whole or any unit or agency or function thereof and in a manner which has caused harm to the student.

CONFIDENTIALITY: It is understood committee members, faculty, and administrators involved in the discussion of grievances will maintain professional standards of confidentiality.

INITIATING A GRIEVANCE

STEP ONE: The student must first discuss and attempt to resolve any issue with the faculty or staff member, the division chair, other appropriate administrator. If the issue is about a grade, the student must see the faculty member first. If the issue is not about grades, the student must meet with the faculty or staff member, division chair, or appropriate administrator. The student may be aided by the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs in following procedures correctly.

STEP TWO: If an issue is not resolved at Step One and the student wishes to continue the process, the student must present a written grievance petition to the faculty member involved and to the appropriate Dean (in the case of an academic grievance) or the staff member involved and the appropriate administrator of the college unit, agency or function (in the case of a non-academic grievance). The faculty member or staff member may respond in writing to the appropriate Dean or administrator. The Dean or administrator will respond in writing to the students within ten school days of receiving the grievance petition. The Dean or administrator will send copies of the response to the faculty member or staff member.

STEP THREE: If after step two the grievance remains unresolved and the student wishes to pursue the matter, the student must forward to the Student Grievance Committee the grievance petition and the Dean's or administrator's written response within ten school days of receiving the response.

STEP FOUR: The Student Grievance Committee will review the petition and the Dean's or administrator's response within ten school days of receiving the grievance and determine if there is a basis for a grievance. Should the committee determine there is no basis for a grievance, the faculty or staff member, and the Dean or appropriate administrator will be notified in writing of its decision.

STEP FIVE: If the committee determines a basis for a grievance may exist, the committee will schedule a meeting with the student, faculty or staff member and/or appropriate Dean, administrator and/or division chair involved within ten school days and will hear the explanations of the case at that time. The committee will attempt to resolve the grievance. If the grievance cannot be resolved, the committee will forward its written recommendation of whether a basis for a grievance exists to the Provost and request the Provost make an appropriate response to resolve the grievance. The committee will also forward copies of its recommendation to the student, the faculty or staff member, and Dean or appropriate administrator.

Western Oregon University
STUDENT GRIEVANCE PETITION

NOTE: The Student Grievance Procedure requires the student must first discuss and attempt to resolve any issue with the faculty or staff member, the division chair, or other appropriate administrator.

FULL LEGAL NAME: _____

LOCAL ADDRESS: _____

LOCAL PHONE NUMBER: _____

PARTIES INVOLVED: _____

NATURE OF THE GRIEVANCE: Please explain in detail all circumstances relating to the grievance, using the back of this page and additional sheets of paper if necessary. Please type if possible. All information pertaining to your petition will be kept confidential.

SIGNATURE

DATE