STUDENT GRIEVANCE CODE
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD

I. STATEMENT OF APPLICABILITY:

This Grievance Code is applicable to all persons enrolled in classes at the Campus. The Code covers a grievance brought by a student against another member of the Campus community. Nothing in the Code shall preclude a Campus administrator, faculty member or staff member from taking appropriate and immediate action in matters involving a student. The success of this Grievance Code depends in large part upon its ability to protect the confidentiality of all parties involved. The procedures contained herein are to be implemented with the expectation that members of the Campus community will respect the confidentiality of the process.

A grievance under this procedure is a complaint by a student at the Campus which alleges that s/he has been treated unfairly or that rights or privileges guaranteed to that student by the Board of Trustees and/or University; and/or Campus policies, regulations, or rules; and/or relevant law have been adversely affected by another member of the Campus community. This Grievance Code applies to both academic and non-academic grievances.

ACADEMIC GRIEVANCES involve matters related to the application of academic policies and/or practices of the Board of Trustees and/or University, the Campus or any Campus-related unit, or individual faculty member, such as admission, academic probation, academic suspension and grading. Matters of academic irregularity such as dishonest conduct or plagiarism resulting in action against a student which affects only grading or course credit may be remediable under this Grievance Code. Matters of academic irregularity such as dishonest conduct or plagiarism resulting in an action against a student to be placed on probation, suspended or dismissed from a program or the Campus should be handled under Academic Integrity Policy. A grade grade grievance may only be filed at the final grade stage.

NON-ACADEMIC GRIEVANCES involve non-academic policies or practices of the Campus or the Board of Trustees and/or University, Campus employees, or Campus students, such as Public Safety, housing disputes, student employment, censorship, or library policies/practices.

This procedure applies to grievances against nondisciplinary decisions and practices. Disciplinary decisions should be appealed in accordance with the Disciplinary Code.

Excepted from this Grievance Code is any complaint for which an adequate campus dispute resolution or complaint procedure is provided by separate policy, regulation or contract (e.g., Human Rights Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy). This information is available through the Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs.

II. INITIATION OF PROCEEDINGS:

A. Informal Resolution:

For all grievances covered under this Code, the student is required to make a good-faith effort to resolve the issue through the following informal steps before initiating a formal grievance:

1. Initial Attempt: The student must attempt to resolve the grievance directly with the respondent.

2. Escalation to Supervisor: If that does not lead to a resolution, the student must then attempt to resolve the grievance with the appropriate program chair, director, or appropriate supervisor.
   i. For non-academic grievances, successful completion of both Steps 1 and 2 constitute sufficient good-faith effort.

3. Final Academic Escalation (if applicable): If the grievance concerns a matter of academic irregularity and remains unsolved, the student must then attempt to resolve the grievance with the Academic Dean of the appropriate college.

   The student must maintain documentation of each of these steps. Grievances that lack sufficient evidence of this informal resolution process will be automatically dismissed.

   If a resolution is not achieved through informal steps, the formal procedures outlines below will apply.

B. Filing a Grievance:

A student with a grievance against another member of the Campus community shall file a written grievance with the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs within 20 regular Campus class days of the contested action, of the date the action became known to the student, or of the date that informal efforts at resolution are ended. The grievance should contain as much of the following information as possible. The remaining information must be submitted in writing as soon thereafter as possible. The Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs or his/her designee will assist the grievant in obtaining necessary information.

1. The grievant's name, address, telephone number or other means by which s/he can be contacted.
2. The respondent's name, title (if any) and address (if known.)
3. Description of the contested action.
4. Date of contested action.
5. If a BOT/Campus policy, regulation or rule is at issue, a specific reference should be made to it, if known.
6. A statement of the harm suffered.
7. A statement of the remedy sought.
8. The names and addresses, if known, of Grievant's proposed witnesses.
9. Copies of supporting documentation, if any (e.g., papers, tests, etc.)

Preferred forms for filing grievances, available from the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs and the Deans of each academic College, may be used but are not required. Students should maintain a copy of the grievance and all documentation for their use.

C. Transmission of Grievance to the Student Hearing Board:

Upon receipt of a grievance, the Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs shall forward the grievance to the Chair of the Executive Panel of the Student Hearing Board by the end of the next working day. The Office of the Vice-Chancellor shall record the grievant's name, the date received, and the date transmitted to the Executive Panel. If the grievance involves the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, the grievance should be submitted to the Chancellor of the Campus. The Executive Panel shall maintain the official files and records of the proceeding.

III. STUDENT HEARING BOARD:

The Student Hearing Board is created to ensure that students receive a speedy and fair process for resolving all matters governed by this Grievance Procedure. The regular membership of the Student Hearing Board consists of four students, four faculty, two staff members, and two academic professionals, all of whom shall be selected by their respective senates two years (Four Board members will serve an initial one year term) and the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs or his/her designee, ex-officio and non-voting. An Executive Panel meets regularly to conduct the general business of the Board. The Panel is responsible for arranging training in the Codes for new Board members. Administrative and clerical support will be provided by the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. No member of the Campus Appeals Board may serve on the Student Hearing Board or the Executive Panel.

A. Executive Panel:

The Executive Panel will receive all grievances submitted, determine the assignments of such grievances for proper action and disposition, establish a calendar for hearings and notify the parties involved of their rights and responsibilities.

The Executive Panel will act with the authority of the Student Hearing Board between meetings of the Board and will keep the members of the Board and the Campus community informed of operations of the hearing system.

The Executive Panel shall consist of one faculty, one staff, one student, and the Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs or his/her designee, *ex-officio* and not voting. In the event of a grievance involving the Office of Student Services, a Chancellorial designee from another office will replace the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs or his/her designee. Panel members and the Panel Chair shall be selected by the full Hearing Board. Executive Panel responsibilities include:

1. Upon receipt of a grievance, the Chair will immediately send a copy of the grievance and this Procedure to the respondent.
2. Within 7 calendar days of receipt, the Executive Panel will proceed as follows:

a. **Dismiss a case as inappropriately filed or clearly frivolous, providing written reasons**. Grievances which have been filed past the 20-day time limit will not be rejected if there is good cause for the delay.

Within 10 Campus class days of receipt of notice of dismissal, the grievant may appeal in writing to the Board. The Board must respond to this appeal within 5 working days. The Executive Panel members will not vote on an appeal of its decision. A majority vote of the remaining Board members is sufficient to decide appeals. If there is a tie, the Executive Panel's decision stands. If the Board overturns the Panel's decision, the Panel will proceed with regular processing of the grievance.

b. **Seek the agreement of the affected parties to attempt informal resolution of the grievance by acting as neutral mediator**.

The Executive Panel may seek informal resolution of the case by working directly with both parties or by assigning a Board member to discuss the case informally with the affected parties. Resolution achieved through mediation shall be committed to writing by the Panel/Board member seeking such resolution and filed with the Executive Panel and the appropriate Dean and/or administrator. If informal resolution cannot be accomplished within 5 working days after the affected parties have been contacted or if either party declines to participate in informal mediation, the case shall be returned to the Executive Panel for disposition.

c. **Hear a case which involves a time-sensitive emergency or which it considers minor in importance and make an appropriate determination**.

To facilitate resolution of matters considered to be minor in their impact on the college community [e.g., broken window in campus building, some forms of pranks, etc.], or of matters considered to be a time-sensitive emergency, the Executive Panel may constitute itself as a hearing panel to hear grievances and make determinations in such cases.

Decisions by the Executive Panel that a grievance involves an emergency or is minor can be appealed as a due process violation to the Campus Appeals Board.

d. **Assign the case to an appropriately constituted hearing panel**.

The Hearing Board will determine the appropriate method of constituting hearing panels. However, as the Executive Panel may review the decision of the Hearing Panel under Paragraph IV (2) below, no member of the Executive Panel should simultaneously serve as a member of a Hearing Panel.

B. Hearing Panel:

1. Hearing Panel Composition:

Each panel shall include one faculty, one student, and one staff.

2. Hearing Panel Procedures:

a. Upon receipt of the grievance, the Hearing Panel shall convene within 7 working days.

b. Chairperson: Each Hearing Panel shall select its own chairperson. The chairperson's responsibility shall be to conduct an effective hearing within 15 working days of convening the Panel.

c. Notice to Grievant and Respondent: The Panel chairperson shall notify grievant and the respondent of the hearing in writing at least 10 working days prior to a scheduled hearing. The notice shall include:
   (1) name of complainant
   (2) the date and a description of the action complained of
   (3) the time and place of hearing
   (4) the names of the Hearing Panel members.

d. Exchange of information: At least 5 working days prior to the scheduled hearing the parties shall exchange the names of tentatively scheduled witnesses and copies of relevant documents.

e. Hearing:

(1) The Hearing Panel will schedule a hearing for the grievant and respondent to present relevant information, documents, and witnesses. The Panel members may pose questions and seek such information as is necessary for the fair and just resolution of the matter. Formal rules of legal evidence and procedure do not apply. Each party may bring to the hearing a non-witness friend or representative, who may be an attorney. Such non-witnesses may participate at the discretion of the panel.

(2) Hearings will be closed to the public unless both parties agree to an open hearing.

(3) The Campus shall tape record the proceedings for use in any appeal.

(4) The Panel will make a determination based upon the evidence presented. Within 5 working days of the completion of the hearing, the Chairperson shall submit a report on behalf of the Panel to the Chair of the Board, the grievant, and the respondent. The report will include findings of fact, conclusions, and an order specifying the remedy and implementation.

IV. APPEAL AND IMPLEMENTATION:

1. The determination of the hearing panel is final and binding upon the parties unless either of the parties files an appeal with the Executive Panel Chair within 10 working days of the panel's decision. An appeal must be based only upon the following grounds:
   a. New evidence which was not reasonably available or subject to discovery at the time of the hearing;

   or

   b. Due process violations.
2. The Executive Panel shall review the appeal within 10 working days.
   a. If it finds the existence of new evidence; it shall remand the grievance to the original Hearing Panel, which shall reconvene within 5 working days.

   b. If it finds that there were due process violations, it shall refer the matter to a newly constituted panel, which shall convene within 7 working days.

   c. In all other cases, it shall forward the panel's determination with the grievance file and supporting documentation to the appropriate administrator for implementation of the panel's determination. The appropriate administrator may meet with the hearing panel to discuss any recommended remedy. For the purposes of this policy, the "appropriate administrator" is the administrator with supervisory authority over the respondent to the grievance: the Vice

Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, the Senior Director of Human Resources, the Associate Chancellor for Public Affairs or the Chancellor.

3. The Hearing Panel's fact finding shall be final and binding on the parties.

   The remedy may be set aside by the appropriate administrator only upon a finding that the determination was outside the scope of the authority of the panel or would result in fundamental unfairness to the grievant or the respondent. Should the appropriate administrator set aside the determination of the Hearing Panel, the case shall be sent to the full Hearing Board within 7 working days. The full board will make a final determination and notify the parties within 10 working days.

4. A final decision and remedy ordered by the full Board will be implemented unless they are set aside by the Chancellor of the Campus within 10 working days upon a finding that the determination was outside the scope of the authority of the panel or would result in fundamental unfairness to the grievant or the respondent.

5. A final decision of the Hearing Board may be appealed to the Provost for academic matters and to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs for non-academic matters.

Approved: 01-01-2020

Revised: 03-20-2026

Responsible Unit: Dean of Students