

Policies of the University of North Texas	Chapter 7
07.016 Student Complaint	Student Affairs

Policy Statement. UNT provides students with a procedure for resolving complaints against UNT faculty, staff, and the university in matters where no other formal process for resolution of complaints has been established.

Application of Policy. Students.

Definitions.

1. **“Student.”** An individual taking courses at the university, either full- or part-time and pursuing either graduate or undergraduate studies, including those who are not currently enrolled in courses but who have a continuing academic relationship with the university.
2. **“Day.”** Monday through Friday during regular university business hours (8am to 5pm).
3. **“Complaint.”** A student’s expression of disagreement or dissatisfaction with the performance or actions of a university employee or department which a student believes to be unfair or inconsistent with university policy or usual practices.
4. **“Mediation.”** A forum in which the Dean of Students or a designee facilitates communication between parties to promote reconciliation, settlement, or understanding.
5. **“Formal Review.”** A meeting of the Student Complaint Committee to consider a student complaint after informal efforts at resolution have been unsuccessful.
6. **“Student Complaint Committee.”** An ad hoc committee including one student, one faculty member, one staff member and one chairperson all of whom are appointed as required by the Provost and Vice-President of Academic Affairs, for complaints related to academic affairs, or the Vice-President of Student Affairs, for all other complaints.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1. **Role of the Dean of Students** - The Dean of Students (or his/her designee) will:
 - a. Serve as a resource in the complaint process for both the student and the institution.
 - b. Develop and distribute forms and procedures to guide both the informal and formal complaint review process.
 - c. Facilitate the formal review process including the receipt of a request or formal review and the appointment and convening of members of the Student Complaint Committee.
 - d. Complaints against the Dean of Students office should be initiated with the Vice President for Student Affairs. In such cases the responsibilities of the Dean of Students will be fulfilled by a designee of the Vice-President for Student Affairs.
2. **Exclusions** - This policy does not supersede other specific UNT policies relative to student complaints or appeals including discrimination, student financial aid, admissions, academic policies, human resources, involuntary withdrawal, disability accommodations, or the Student Code of Conduct.
3. **Limitations**
 - a. A student must seek initial review of a complaint through the informal process no later than 120 calendar days after the event or occurrence giving rise to the complaint, or within 120 days of the student gaining actual knowledge of the event or occurrence giving rise to the complaint.
 - b. A student may withdraw their complaint at any time in which case the procedures set forth in this policy will cease.
 - c. A student must seek resolution of a complaint on his or her own behalf. Complaints filed on behalf of another student or anonymously will not be considered.
4. **Process for review of a Student Complaint**
 - a. **Informal Process:** Prior to seeking formal resolution, a complaining student must complete all stages in the informal review process.
 1. A student must first attempt to informally resolve the complaint by speaking directly with the employee engaged in the activity or responsible for the activity of concern to the student. Both the student and the employee ("the parties") should openly discuss the student's complaint or concern and attempt to understand the other's perspectives, explore alternatives and attempt to arrive at a satisfactory solution to the complaint.

2. If an informal discussion between the parties does not result in a satisfactory resolution, the student must deliver a written complaint to the employee's supervisor (for example, division leader, department director, or chair). The supervisor will collect information from both parties as deemed necessary and will deliver either a written or verbal decision on the complaint to all involved parties within 10 days of receiving the written complaint from the student.
3. If the decision of the immediate supervisor does not result in a satisfactory resolution, the Dean of Students will convene the parties within 10 days to attempt to reach an informal resolution through mediation. If after mediation, the parties are unable to reach a mutually acceptable resolution, the student may seek resolution through the formal complaint resolution process.

The Formal Process:

1. A student may file a written request for formal review of a complaint with the Dean of Students no more than 10 days after the conclusion of an informal mediation. The written complaint must be submitted on the Student Complaint Form and must include:
 - a. The student's name and address;
 - b. The nature of the complaint, including the date it occurred and the requested resolution; and
 - c. The names of individuals who will provide additional information to be considered as part of the review.
2. The Dean of Students will assign the complaint to be considered by the Student Complaint Committee at a formal review to be held within 10 days of the request, unless extended with the agreement of both the student and the designated Committee Chair. Upon appointment, the Committee Chairperson will:
 - a. identify a date for the formal review and will notify all parties of their obligation to attend the formal review.
 - b. direct the parties to provide a written summary of their positions for advance distribution to the Committee members.
 - c. direct the parties to identify any individuals who will be present at the formal review to offer information relative to the dispute. Attorneys will not be permitted to attend the formal review.
3. At the formal review both parties will be given the opportunity to present their position relative to the dispute and to offer other relevant information through testimony of

identified individuals or documents. The parties and Committee members may all question individuals offering testimony at the formal review.

4. Following the formal review, members of the Committee will immediately meet in a closed session to resolve the complaint. The Chairperson may request additional information which must be provided to the Chair within three (3) days of the request. The Committee will reconvene at the discretion of the Chair to resolve the complaint if additional information is requested. The Committee resolution will be forwarded to the Provost and Vice-President of Academic Affairs or the Vice-President of Student Affairs, as appropriate based on the nature of the complaint.
5. The Committee resolution will be provided to the parties in writing by the Provost and Vice-President of Academic Affairs or the Vice-President of Student Affairs as appropriate based on the nature of the complaint. The decision of the Committee will be final.

References and Cross-references.

UNT Policy 06.003, Student Standard of Academic Integrity

UNT Policy 16.006, Information and Procedural Guidelines for Pursuing and Resolving a Complaint of Discrimination, including Sexual Harassment

UNT Policy 06.040, Grade Appeals

UNT Policy 16.001, Disability Accommodation for Students and Academic Units

UNT Policy 07.012, Code of Student Conduct

Forms and Tools. None.

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Revised: