

Student Complaint and Grievance Process

Definitions

Student: As defined in AP-AA 38.1.

Support person: Any one person who a student chooses at their expense to bring to a complaint or grievance meeting, such as a parent, legal guardian, friend or teacher. The support person may only advise or consult with the student and is not permitted to participate or to speak on behalf of the student. The student will be required to have the support person complete a FERPA release of information form prior to any scheduled meeting.

Informal concern: An informal concern is a written submission of an informal concern or issue from a student. Informal concerns should be directed to the office responsible for the process or service about which the student has a concern. When students submit informal concerns, the university may or may not take formal action or report back to the student submitting the informal concern.

Complaint: A written claim made by a student alleging improper, unfair or arbitrary treatment or action taken by a university employee or student.

Grievance: If a student determines a complaint is not satisfactorily resolved and the complaint alleges improper, unfair or arbitrary action by an employee involving the application of a specific provision of a college or system policy or procedure, a student may file what is considered a grievance.

Appeal of a grievance decision: A written request for reconsideration of a grievance decision under the Student Complaint and Grievance policy.

Business day: Business days do not include Saturday, Sunday, other days when the university is closed and official breaks between semesters and summer session(s).

Procedure

Complaints & Informal Concerns

Students may bring any complaints forward within fifteen (15) business days of the first occurrence of the event giving rise to the complaint, or within fifteen (15) business days after the student, through the use of reasonable diligence, should have had knowledge of the first occurrence giving rise to the complaint.

1. Students are encouraged to use available informal means to resolve concerns before filing a complaint.
2. Students shall use the [Student Complaint and Grievance Form](#) to submit their complaint or grievance completing all the information requested. The form is available at https://uno.guardianconduct.com/student-portal/new-report?incident_type=Student%20Complaint.
3. The Dean of Students (or designee) shall contact the student to discuss the complaint within ten (10) business days of the complaint submission. Where appropriate the complaint will be referred to the academic college or the office overseeing any process or procedures about which the student has complained about review and follow up. The Dean of Students will

inform the student of, and document in the complaint database, a reasonable date by which the student will receive a written response. If the complaint results in a meeting to discuss the complaint, the student may have a support person in attendance for any such discussion.

Grievances

If students determine that a complaint is not satisfactorily resolved, and the complaint alleges improper, unfair, or arbitrary action by a university employee involving the application of a specific provision of university or system policy or procedure, the student may file a grievance. In cases in which a process for review is already outlined in policy (for example: student code of conduct; title IX complaints; etc.), the student must follow the written policy.

1. The grievance must be filed on the [Student Complaint and Grievance](#) form within ten (10) business days of receipt of the written response to the complaint under Part 3 above. The grievance shall state the reason for the grievance, a factual summary of the grievance, the specific policy or procedure application that is of concern, and the requested remedy.
2. The grievance will be referred to the supervisor of the office or employee overseeing any process or procedures about which the student has complained for review and follow up. The supervisor will inform the student of, and document in the database, a reasonable date by which the student will receive a written response. If the grievance results in a meeting to discuss the allegations, the student may have a support person in attendance for any such discussion.

Appeal of a grievance decision

If the grievance is not resolved, the student may submit a written appeal of the grievance decision, within ten (10) business days after receiving the written response in Part 2 above through the following steps:

1. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Vice President responsible for the policy, procedure, or service for which the grievance was submitted. The Vice President's decision is final and binding.

Timeframe

If a complaint or grievance is not presented within the specified time limits, it will be considered waived by the student. If a complaint or grievance is not appealed to the next step within the established time limits, it will be considered settled on the basis of the last decision. If, after submission of the complaint and grievance form at any step, a university employee does not respond to the complaint or grievance within the specified time limits, the student may treat the complaint or grievance as denied at that step and may appeal the complaint or grievance to the next step. The time limits for any step may be extended by mutual written agreement of the student and the appropriate university employee.

Retaliation

Retaliation against a student for participating or not participating in a complaint or grievance is prohibited.

Procedure for change

Procedures for instituting change at the university are available to students. Individual students may submit items for consideration to the Student Government Association. Notice of Student Government Association meetings and copies of the minutes are posted online and all meetings are open to visitors.

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1. The student complaint and grievance form is submitted by a student. The link to the online form can be found on the university website or linked above.
2. The Office of Student Affairs receives an email notification of the submitted form.
3. Staff in the Office of Student Affairs forward the complaint and grievance form to the appropriate administrator for review.
4. The administrator becomes the main point of contact for the student, reviews details of the submitted incident and contacts other individuals to gather additional information and to verify facts.
5. The administrator communicates complaint and/or grievance decision(s) and informs the student of any appeal and/or grievance processes and supportive resources that are available to the student.
6. Informal concern submissions do not require a formal response, but administrators are encouraged to take appropriate action and communicate back to the student with information on any action taken and to thank the student for expressing an informal concern.
7. The administrator updates the student complaint and grievance case in the database.
8. The academic deans and dean of student affairs review complaint and grievance data on a semi-annual basis to identify any trends and/or opportunities for continuous improvement.

Students who have exhausted the University of New Orleans grievance process options and the matter remains unresolved may contact the University of Louisiana System Office.

<https://www.ulsystem.edu/contact/>

Complaints that remain unresolved at the UL System level may be forwarded to the Louisiana Board of Regents.

<https://regents.la.gov/student-complaint-process/>

Policy and procedure adapted from:

<https://www.minnesota.edu/about/policies-and-procedures/student-complaint-grievance-and-informal-concerns-procedure>