What are Academic Grievances?

Conflict between student(s) and instructor(s)/mentor(s) with respect to:
• credit-bearing coursework
• research
• mentoring
and while student is registered (and “active” student) at the UW.
What *IS* an Example of an Academic Grievance?

A student who changed their major from Geography to Environmental Science & Resource Management is petitioning to substitute 45 GEOG credits to count towards the 90 credits required for their ESRM major. The Academic Adviser has told the student that this petition is unlikely to be approved by the department. The undergraduate curriculum Director accepted 15 credits, but turned down the rest as major requirement substitutions.

The student is not satisfied with this result.
Who Can Bring a Grievance to the College?

Undergraduates *who are:*
1. registered UW student with a grievance about faculty/mentors in CoEnv
2. *and* taking credit-bearing courses in CoEnv
3. *or* working (e.g. independent study) with a CoEnv mentor:
   • faculty
   • post-doc or graduate student
   • staff
   • official affiliate

Graduates:
• if unable to resolve at unit level, proceed directly to the Graduate School’s grievance process
Student has grievance, not covered by existing policy → Discussion w/ Faculty/Mentor → Not satisfied w/ outcome → Satisfied w/ outcome → Requests meeting w/ Unit Head → *within 3 months of the incident

Not satisfied w/ outcome → Requests meeting w/ Academic Affairs Associate Dean → AA Associate Dean meets w/ Student → *within 10 days of receipt of Chair/Director decision

Satisfied w/ outcome → Satisfied w/ outcome → Not satisfied w/ outcome → Requests meeting w/ Unit Head → Unit Head meets w/ Student → *within 10 days of receipt of complaint

Not satisfied w/ outcome → Requests meeting w/ Academic Affairs Associate Dean → AA Associate Dean meets w/ Student → Provides decision to Student → *within 5 days of meeting

Satisfied w/ outcome → Satisfied w/ outcome → Not satisfied w/ outcome → Requests meeting w/ Academic Affairs Associate Dean → AA Associate Dean meets w/ Student → Provides decision to Student → *within 10 days of receipt of Associate Dean decision

Committee convenes → Recommendation to Dean → Dean final decision → Not satisfied w/ outcome → Appeal to Office of the Provost → Provost final review

*within 15 days of receipt of complaint → *within 15 days of receipt of request → *within 5 days of meeting

Satisfied w/ outcome → Satisfied w/ outcome → Not satisfied w/ outcome → Requests meeting w/ Academic Affairs Associate Dean → AA Associate Dean meets w/ Student → Provides decision to Student → *within 10 days of receipt of Associate Dean decision

*within 15 days of receipt of Grievance Committee decision → *within 15 days of receipt of Dean decision

Key (level of action) - Student, Department or School, College, University

Student Academic Grievance Training
College of the Environment
The Process

Student has grievance *(not covered by existing policy)*

Options:
- discuss with faculty/mentor – *strongly encouraged but not required*

Outcomes:
- satisfied w/discussion outcome – grievance resolved
- not satisfied w/discussion outcome – submits grievance in writing to unit head w/in 3 months of incident

*Alternate Option*: submits grievance in writing and/or in person directly to unit head

Student Academic Grievance Training
College of the Environment
Grievance Process Steps

Options:
- student may bring advocate
- staff member takes notes and provides to both parties within 2 days of meeting
- relevant authority may also meet with faculty/mentor
Grievance Process Steps

Unit level:
- authority is Chair or Director
- if unavailable, or the focus of the grievance, next in command (Associate Director)

College level, step 1:
- authority is Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

College level, step 2:
- authority is Grievance Committee recommendation to the Dean
Grievance Process Steps

Decision indicates:
  • steps possible within rules governing unit, college
  • steps to be taken and why

*Note:*
  • student may meet w/relevant authority to clarify steps
Grievance Committee Process

Grievance received (all written material amassed to date)

Options:
- hearing with student held within 15 days of complaint receipt
  student may bring advocate
- committee meets with faculty/mentor(s) separately
  faculty/mentor may bring advocate
Grievance Committee Hearing Process

Committee provides decision to Dean (*within 2 days*)

- **Committee convenes** *within 15 days of receipt of complaint*
- **Recommendation to Dean**
- **Dean final decision** *within 5 days of receipt of Grievance Committee decision*
  - **Satisfied w/ outcome**
  - **Not satisfied w/ outcome**
    - **Appeal to Office of the Provost** *within 15 days of receipt of Dean decision*

- **Committee**
  - must determine:
    - does grievance have merit
    - or, has grievance already been appropriately addressed
- **majority rules**
  - optional minority report
- **written recommendation to Dean**
  - including justification
Grievance Committee Hearing Process

Dean provides decision to both parties (*w/in 5 days*)

Dean’s decision indicates:
- steps possible *w/in* rules governing College and University
- steps to be taken and why

Outcomes
- student may meet *w/Dean* to clarify next steps
- satisfied *w/outcome* – grievance resolved
- not satisfied *w/outcome* – appeal to Provost’s Office *w/in 15 days of Dean’s decision*
Meeting & Hearing Structure

1. **pre-hearing committee meeting** to review the grievance
2. **complainant hearing** *(optional at student request)*: complainant makes opening statement; committee members ask questions
3. **respondent hearing** *(optional at instructor/mentor request)*: instructor/mentor makes opening statement; committee members ask questions
4. **post-hearing committee meeting** allowing committee to come to a conclusion (can be appended to the hearing)

2.5 hours total for hearing (15-min presentations by complainant and respondent, 2 hours max for questions)