



SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY - BATON ROUGE

OFFICE OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

GRADUATE STUDENT ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

PURPOSE

To ensure that students at Southern University understand their rights to seek redress in academic decisions when they believe the decision is unfair or unfounded and that students, faculty members and University administrators fully understand the grievance procedure and responsibilities to provide prompt and equitable resolution to student academic grievances.

Classroom related matters should be subjected to these procedures only when the grievance cannot be settled in the ordinary course of immediate post-class discussion.

GENERAL POLICY

To provide students with the procedure to seek redress for academic decisions considered to unfair by the student. It is Graduate School policy that student grievances should be settled at the lowest level possible having the authority to act definitively as quickly as practical. The policy mandates that individuals follow the specific appeals procedures whenever possible.

PROVISIONS OF THE ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE PROCESS

1. All students have the right to address grievances without fear of coercion, harassment, intimidation or reprisal from the University or its employees; however, it should be understood that capricious charges made by a student against a University employee may make that student liable to charges under the **Code of Student Conduct** or to action through the courts.
2. Confidentiality shall be maintained, where applicable, in all academic grievance proceedings in accordance with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
3. The timeline indicated at each step shall be considered a maximum, and every effort will be made to expedite the process. The time limits specified shall apply to both the person filing the grievance and the faculty/administration but may be extended under certain extenuating circumstances.

ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

A special conference between the teacher and the student should be arranged under optimum conditions. If conditions don't allow for this to occur or the matter remains unresolved the student can submit a grievance as outlined below:

1. The student shall submit a grievance, in writing, to the teacher's department chair or director where the incident occurred. The completed form, with all supporting documents, shall be submitted within ten (10) working days subsequent to the occurrence of the incident precipitating the grievance. Grievances must be filed at the departmental and college level within the academic area where the incident occurred.
2. The department chair or director will acknowledge receipt of the grievance in writing, within three (3) working days of receiving the grievance. The written acknowledgement will be provided to the student in person or by mail or through the official university email or through the student's email.
3. The department chair or director will respond expeditiously, in writing, to the grievance submitted, but no later than ten (10) working days after receipt of the grievance. The department chair or director may appoint a committee to review and submit recommendations regarding the grievance. The department chair or director will review findings and make a ruling on the grievance. The response to the grievance will be provided to the student in person. The student, upon receipt, must state on the grievance form whether he/she is satisfied or unsatisfied with the ruling. If the student is satisfied the matter is closed but if the student is unsatisfied with the ruling the department, the student has three days to take the grievance to the Dean of the College.
4. The Dean will respond expeditiously, in writing, to the grievance submitted, but no later than 10 working days following receipt from department chair or director. The Dean may appoint a committee to review the department chair or director's ruling or review the findings independently. The Dean will provide ruling to the student in person or by mail or by official university email or the student's email. If the student is satisfied, the matter is closed, but if the student is unsatisfied with the ruling, the student can file an appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School.
5. The student must file the appeal to the Graduate School within three (3) working days of being notified of the Dean's ruling. The Office of The Graduate School will acknowledge the receipt of the appeal, in writing, within three (3) working days of receiving the appeal. The written acknowledgement will be provided to the student in person or mail or by university email or the by the student's email.
6. The Office of the Graduate School will respond expeditiously, in writing, to the appeal submitted, but no later than ten (10) working days after receipt of the appeal. The Graduate School Dean may appoint a committee to review the grievance or act independently. The Graduate School Dean will review the findings and make a ruling on the appeal. The Graduate School Dean will communicate the ruling to the student in person or by mail or by the student's email. If the student is satisfied the matter is closed. If the student is unsatisfied with the ruling, the student can file an appeal to the office of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs.

7. The student must file the appeal to the Office of the Vice Chancellor within three (3) working days of being notified of the Graduate School ruling. The office of the Chancellor will acknowledge the receipt of the appeal, in writing, within three (3) working days of receiving the appeal. The written acknowledgement will be provided to the student in person, by mail, through the official university email, or the email provided by the student. The office of Academic Affairs has seven (7) working days to render a decision. If the student is not satisfied, the student may appeal with the Chancellor within 3 days.
8. The office of the Chancellor-President will respond expeditiously, in writing, to the appeal submitted, but no later than seven (7) working days after receipt of the appeal. The Chancellor-President will communicate the ruling to the student in person, by certified mail, through the official university email, or the email provided by the student and the Chancellor-President's ruling is final.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty is an offense against the University. A student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty or plagiarism has failed to meet a basic requirement of satisfactory academic performance. Thus, academic dishonesty is not only a basis for disciplinary action, but may lead to expulsion.

SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY - BATON ROUGE
OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS / GRADUATE SCHOOL
STUDENT ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE FORM
(Please Type)

Department/Unit Where Incident Occurred

Date

Student's Name

Student's ID

Student's Department

Submitted to: _____
Name of Immediate Supervisor

Position

Student Email: _____

1) In the space provided below, please record the specifics of your grievance, including the date and time the incident occurred and name(s) of person(s) knowledgeable about the incident.

2) Relief sought, or desired action:

Attach additional sheets if needed and all supporting documentation.

Signature of Person Filing Grievance: _____

Date: _____

RESPONSES

STEP ONE

Decision of the Department Head:

Additional sheets may be used as needed to explain the grievance and/or any decision.

Signature of the Department Head: _____ Date: _____

STUDENT ANSWER (Circle one, sign and date)

- (a) I am satisfied with the answer to my grievance.
- (b) I am not satisfied with the answer to my grievance and wish to take it to the next step.

Signature of Person Filing Grievance: _____ Date: _____

STEP FOUR

Decision of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs:

Lined area for the decision of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

Additional sheets may be used as needed to explain the grievance and/or any decision.

Signature of the Vice Chancellor: _____ Date: _____

STUDENT ANSWER (Circle one, sign and date)

- (a) I am satisfied with the answer to my grievance.
- (b) I am not satisfied with the answer to my grievance and wish to take it to the next step.

Signature of Person Filing Grievance: _____ Date: _____

STEP FIVE

Decision of the Chancellor-President:

Signature of the Chancellor-President: _____

Date: _____

STUDENT ANSWER (Circle one, sign and date)

I have been notified about the final decision made by the Chancellor-President concerning my academic grievance and

- (a) I am satisfied with the answer to my grievance.
- (b) I am not satisfied with the answer to my grievance.

Signature of Person Filing Grievance: _____

Date: _____

Additional sheets may be used as needed to explain the grievance and/or any decision.

Issued: 11/30/1995
 Updated and Approved/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs: 09/24/2014
 Updated and Approved/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs: 03/20/2018