

Subject: Student Grievance Policy
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STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY

The purpose of the student grievance process is to furnish a student enrolled at USCB with a formal, standardized method for seeking a resolution when the student believes he or she has been treated unjustly or improperly by a faculty or staff member. A student may seek a solution to an unresolved difference with a faculty or staff member through the student grievance process. Students seeking a redress of grievances may do so without fear of reprisal. Unfair or improper treatment may be defined as:

- A. An instructor's failure to abide by University policies or failure to abide by written or stated course requirements in such a way as to adversely influence the student's academic standing.
- B. An instructor's inability to speak and write in English fluently, resulting in miscommunication which affects a student's academic standing adversely.
- C. Abusive or improper conduct on the part of the instructor or staff member that clearly has an adverse effect on the student's academic standing.
- D. Prejudiced or capricious grading policies. The procedures herein shall not extend to matters of grading student work in which the substance of a complaint is based on the student's disagreement with the mark or grade placed on his or her work in partial or complete fulfillment of the course. Such matters shall be discussed by the student and the faculty member; however, the final decision regarding grade assignment(s) rests solely with the faculty member. The responsibility for the assessment of student academic performance is integral to the nature of an academic institution and to the professional competency of its professorate. The student may appeal the procedure of the class, but may not appeal a grade.
- E. Discrimination against students by faculty or staff on nonacademic matters for reasons of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, handicap or veteran status.
- F. Improper personal or professional behavior involving students, faculty or staff.

NOTICE: Grievance procedures have been established to provide students with a forum for resolution of problems not otherwise addressed by University policy or procedure. The grievance procedures may not be used to appeal disciplinary decisions, state residency classification decisions or any other type of decisions for which a clearly

defined appeal process has already been established.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The initial phase of the student grievance procedure involves the scheduling of a conference between the student and the instructor or staff member. The discussion must take place within ten class days of the incident that prompted the grievance. The purpose of this meeting is to attempt to reach a mutual understanding of the student's situation and the instructor's or staff member's actions and to resolve all differences in an informal, cooperative manner.

If the student is not satisfied with the results of this meeting, the student should, within ten class days, schedule a meeting with the appropriate authority—the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (in the case of faculty and academic support staff) or the Vice Chancellor for Student Development (in the case of other staff). If either Vice Chancellor is the party against whom the grievance is filed, the Chancellor of the campus will be the proper authority. If the student is dissatisfied with the results of the meeting with the appropriate authority, he or she may begin the formal grievance process.

In writing, and within five class days of the meeting with the appropriate authority, the student may bring a grievance before the University Judicial Board. The request must be filed through the appropriate Vice Chancellor's office and must contain the names of the principal parties involved in the grievance and include copies of the available supporting evidence. In the instance that a Vice Chancellor is grieved against, the request will be filed through the Office of the Chancellor of the Campus.

If a Judicial Board member (see Administrative and Judicial Board) is also one of the parties in a grievance action, the appropriate alternate will assume the individual's place on the committee.

After receiving the student's grievance, the board shall give a copy of the grievance to the faculty or staff member and request a statement, within ten class days, from that individual. After receiving all pertinent information, the Judicial Board shall schedule a formal meeting to be held within ten class days. The Judicial Board shall send a written notice to the student, the faculty or staff member, the appropriate Vice Chancellor and the Chancellor of the campus. This notice will contain the following information:

- Specific allegations.
- Time and place of the hearing.
- Notice of the principal parties' right to bring witnesses, present evidence, and to have representation.
- Notice of the right to appeal to the Chancellor of the campus, President of USC and the USC Board of Trustees.

At the hearing, the principal parties will be present for all testimony, will be able to present witnesses, be permitted to present evidence and to make statements on the

matters discussed, and to have the opportunity to rebut hostile witnesses. Should attorneys be present, their participation must be limited only to counseling the principal parties.

After the hearing, the Judicial Board shall meet in private to discuss the case and reach a decision. The Board shall decide by majority vote a decision for the grievance. Within five days after the hearing, the Judicial Board will inform, in writing, the principal parties of the grievance, the appropriate Vice Chancellor and the Chancellor of the campus of its recommendations concerning the case. A record of each grievance will be kept in the office of the Associate Dean in whose area of responsibility the case falls.