

STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY

Eastern University is concerned with how students are treated, desires to help them understand process and procedures and wants to hear and resolve student concerns and grievances. In compliance with Federal Department of Education regulations and because of the aforementioned concern for students, Eastern University has the following policies concerning grievance resolution.

PRELIMINARY POINTS:

- Any student who would like guidance with how to resolve a grievance or what policy or procedure to follow concerning the topic or nature of the grievance or concern, should contact his or her Student Services Representative, Academic Dean for his/her school, Dean of Students or any member of the Student Development Staff.
- Note that contacts relative to these matters can be initiated by the student through phone, e-mail or in person. All students are encouraged to request a face to face meeting if that is their desire, however since all students enjoy the same protections and opportunities regarding redress, students who are not engaged in classes held “on ground” are encouraged to communicate their concerns through e-mail or the phone should that be their need or desire.
- In addition to protections afforded through the Eastern University Grievance Policy, on ground students receive protections regarding grievances within the state where their classes are located. On-line students receive differing protections depending on where they are living while enrolled in the on-line program, and are encouraged to check with that state regarding different grievance policies, procedures and protections as they vary from state to state.

Some Eastern University policies and procedures are designed to address specific types of complaints or grievances. If the University has a policy specific to a grievance type, that policy is available to the student to provide guidance and act as a framework for resolution. Links to specific policy documents are listed here:

- Sexual Harassment
<http://www.eastern.edu/campus/studev/handbook.html>
- Sex Discrimination
<http://www.eastern.edu/campus/studev/handbook.html>
- Grade Appeal
<http://www.eastern.edu/academic/registrar/index.html>

If the complaint or grievance is not listed above, the General Grievance Policy should be followed.

GENERAL GRIEVANCE POLICY

Informal Grievances

- A student may choose to make an informal complaint related to their grievance. An Informal Grievance may be made to any Student Services Representative, Academic Dean for his/her school, Dean of Students or any member of the Student Development Staff or through the submission of the form.
- Informal complaints are taken seriously and used to improve University services, evaluate and retrain employees, address student concerns and make changes to processes and procedures designed to enhance student satisfaction.
- A student may ask how his/her informal complaint will be handled; however specific outcomes of an informal complaint cannot be reported back to students due to privacy concerns for personnel

records (e.g., evaluations, promotion, tenure and other employee probation, advancement or dismissal matters).

- Any student who files an informal complaint may file a formal complaint; however they may not be filed simultaneously.

Formal Grievances

- Any student who has a complaint, concern or grievance (from here on referred to as “grievance”) is asked to first seek resolution with the individual with whom the grievance exists.
- If the grievance is not resolved at that level, the student is encouraged to make contact with the individual’s immediate supervisor to seek resolution.
- If the grievance is not resolved at that level the student may choose to file a grievance through the form found here and enter the Formal Grievance Process.
- Depending on the nature of the grievance, it will be referred to an appropriate Grievance Committee who will hear the grievance and render a decision as to the resolution of the grievance.
 - The committee will be appointed by the Vice President for Student Development and made up of no fewer than two staff/faculty members appropriate to resolve the complaint and no fewer than two students who will have equal voice in the proceedings. One staff/faculty member will be appointed the Committee Chair.
 - The hearing may take place face to face or if through conference call, with student identification certification made to the satisfaction of the Committee Chair.
 - The student will be afforded the opportunity to make a statement (verbal or written, in person or not) concerning the grievance to the committee.
 - The committee will investigate the complaint which may include but is not limited to: gathering information and statements from witnesses and asking for additional information from the student or from involved people from departments/divisions.
 - Every attempt will be made to determine the outcome of the grievance before the conclusion of the academic session within which the grievance is filed, however depending upon the nature of the grievance, the time of submission and the type of program in which the student is enrolled, resolution may take longer.
 - The Grievance Committee Chair *may* report the committee’s findings and outcomes to the student verbally but will *always* report the findings in writing.
- The Grievance Committee’s decision is the final internal step in Eastern University’s formal grievance process.
- A student who files a formal complaint may file an informal complaint; however they may not be filed simultaneously.

Students are expected to exhaust these internal Grievance Procedures before seeking resolution externally.