

WAC 132E-122-120 Student affairs grievance procedures. (1) **Definition of a student affairs grievance.** If a student has evidence that they have been unfairly treated in matters related to student services/student auxiliary services, policies, procedures, or expectations, they may be said to have a student affairs grievance. Students who feel that such unfair treatment has transpired should feel free to raise the question of how such a grievance may be resolved with the associated student executive council which will provide information (without judgment) regarding the procedure for filing a grievance. Students should also feel free to contact any member of the campus community who they trust that may assist the student and/or refer the student to the appropriate resources. In addition to the chief student affairs officer, the offices/centers that can generally be of the most assistance in terms of advice, support, and referral regarding these matters are the office of the chief academic affairs officer, the offices of the academic deans, and the office of the chief human resources officer, outreach, diversity and equity center, counseling and career center, center for disability services, Rainier learning center, student activities office, and campus safety and security.

(2) **Informal procedure for resolution.** Informal complaints should be made to the appropriate administrator. Upon receipt of a student complaint by the administrator, the following steps will be taken:

(a) The student will be encouraged to discuss the alleged problem with the party concerned; or if the complaint involves a program, the student will be encouraged to speak to the appropriate supervisor.

(b) If the student is not satisfied as a result of such discussion, they should then meet with the immediate administrator to resolve the complaint.

(c) If the complaint is not resolved at this level, the student, the respondent and the administrator should meet with the chief student affairs officer or the vice president under which the program/service is administratively aligned.

(d) If the complaint is not resolved at this level, the student may institute formal grievance procedures.

(3) **Formal grievance procedure.** To assure an atmosphere free from unfair treatment, the following procedures are established to respond to an unresolved complaint registered by a student. It is understood, however, that this procedure should be employed only after efforts have been made by the student to resolve the issue through the previously described informal procedure. A student who feels a grievance has not been resolved through the informal resolution process may file a formal grievance with the appropriate vice president or designee prior to the last instructional day of the quarter (not including summer) following the date of the alleged grievance. Within ten business days of receipt of the signed written grievance, the appropriate vice president or designee will appoint a grievance committee for the purpose of reviewing the complaint and recommending a resolution.

(4) **The grievance committee will be composed of seven voting members including:**

(a) An administrator (other than the appropriate vice president) who shall serve as the chair and vote only in the case of a tie;

(b) One faculty and two from classified staff;

(c) Three students to be selected randomly and not active members of student activities or the involved program;

(d) A quorum consists of four members of the grievance committee;

(e) All matters shall be discussed in closed meetings and shall be treated with strict confidence by the committee members.

(5) **Formal resolution.**

(a) Parties affected by the grievance will provide the grievance committee with all requested information in order to bring about full understanding and a speedy resolution to the grievance.

(b) In order to ensure due process, the aggrieved student shall have:

(i) The right to respond to the grievance, submitting appropriate evidence to support such response;

(ii) The opportunity to call as a witness any member of the college community who can provide information relevant to the allegation and interview the aggrieved student or any witness presented by the student(s) involved;

(iii) The harasser either knows, or should know, will have the effect of making the college environment hostile, intimidating, or demeaning to the victim; and

(iv) In fact renders the college environment (including the environment for employee students, and patrons) hostile, intimidation, or demeaning for the victim.

(c) The party against whom the grievance is filed shall have:

(i) The right to respond to the grievance, submitting appropriate evidence to support such response;

(ii) The opportunity to call as a witness any member of the college community who can provide information relevant to the allegation and interview the aggrieved student or any witness presented by the student(s) involved.

(d) Once the aggrieved student and the respondent have had sufficient opportunity to present their points of view, the grievance committee will deliberate and reach a decision by a simple majority vote. The committee will provide the appropriate vice president or designee its written recommendation within ten business days of its meeting.

(e) The appropriate vice president or designee will notify the parties in the grievance of the resolution within two business days of having received the committee recommendation. If the grievance committee establishes that aggrieved student has been treated unfairly, the committee will recommend corrective steps to the appropriate vice president or designee.

(f) Either party shall have the right to present a written appeal of the decision to the president of the college. Within one week of having received the appeal, the president shall review the case and render a decision which will be transmitted to both parties.

(g) During any meetings that occur in (a) through (f) of this subsection, the student may invite another person or two to be with them in the meeting. The other person(s) are present to assist and advise the student although an accommodation of a spokesperson (a person who would address the college official, or assist the person in addressing the college official) may be approved if a person's disability warrants such an accommodation. Other circumstances regarding a request by the student for the use of a spokesperson would be considered by the director/dean or supervising administrator facilitating the meeting.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.50.140. WSR 18-01-119, § 132E-122-120, filed 12/19/17, effective 1/19/18.]