

STEM Complaint & Grievance Procedure

In accordance with the [University of Washington's Resolution of Complaints Against University Employees](#), the School of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) at the University of Washington Bothell outlines their internal complaint procedure for undergraduate students below. It is our hope this procedure helps students resolve their concerns with faculty and staff quickly and effectively in order to preserve our inclusive and collegial STEM community.

Who should follow this procedure?

Students who believe they have experienced unfair treatment, inappropriate behavior, or a substantive injustice in the administration of academic or university policies may, except as noted below, seek resolution of their complaints under this policy.

What is the timeline for voicing a complaint?

Timely resolution of complaints is beneficial for students, faculty, and staff; therefore, students are encouraged to bring their complaint to the attention of the appropriate party within ten days of the incident.

Where do students go to get assistance?

Students seeking assistance with initiating this process can go to their academic advisors or appropriate division chair.

Exceptions

- Graduate students should follow [Memo 33: UW Graduate School Academic Grievance Procedure](#).
- Students seeking a [grade appeal](#).
- Students involved in disciplinary proceedings for misconduct, including plagiarism and cheating, should refer to the [Student Conduct Code](#).
- Students seeking resolution related to [disability support services](#) (e.g. difficulties in obtaining or receiving your accommodations)..
- Students seeking to resolve [financial matters](#) (e.g. student fees, parking citations).
- Students seeking to file a [Bias Incident Report](#).

Complaint Procedure for Undergraduate Students

Step 1: Student-Faculty/Staff Discussion

The student is encouraged to attempt to resolve the complaint directly in conversation with the faculty or staff member. The student should make an appointment and state that the purpose is to discuss a complaint. Either the student or faculty/staff member may request another person be present during the discussion. Most conflicts can be resolved at this stage. If the student does not feel comfortable speaking directly to the faculty or staff member, they may choose to speak directly to their supervisor (see below).

Step 2: Supervisor meeting(s) with student and/or faculty/staff

If resolution is not achieved in Step 1, complaints should be brought to the appropriate supervisor (e.g., students attempting to resolve a complaint with a faculty member should go to the appropriate division chair), or, if the supervisor is the source of the conflict, then the student should go to the administrative head of the employing organization (e.g., students attempting to resolve a complaint with a division chair should contact the Dean). The student should request a meeting by email and include an explanation of the situation to date. The supervisor will first obtain information from all parties. If all parties are amenable to a joint discussion, then the supervisor will convene a joint meeting to discuss and achieve a resolution. If all parties are not amenable to a joint discussion (e.g., student wishes to remain anonymous), then the supervisor will meet with the parties separately in order to reach a resolution. Disputes resolved in Step 2 need no official reporting but should be documented at the unit level by the supervisor.

Step 3: Mediation by the Dean

If resolution is not achieved in Step 2 and the student wishes to continue to seek a resolution, complaints should be brought to the Dean of the School of STEM within 10 days of their last meeting in Step 2. The student will submit a written summary of the grievance and request an appointment with the Dean by email. A copy of the summary should also be provided to the person concerned in the complaint and their supervisor. Receipt of the student's complaint will be acknowledged in writing by the Dean, and the review process will commence within 10 working days of its receipt.

The Dean will meet with the student to understand the student's ongoing concerns. The Dean will also gather additional information, and may request a response to the issues raised in the grievance from any individuals believed to have information considered relevant to the situation, including faculty, staff, and students within appropriate university policies and applicable state and federal regulations.

The review by the Dean will usually be limited to the following considerations:

1. Were the proper facts and criteria brought to bear on the decision? Were improper or extraneous facts or criteria brought to bear that substantially affected the decision to the detriment of the student?
2. Were there any procedural irregularities that substantially affected the outcome of the complaint to the detriment of the student?
3. Given the proper facts, criteria, and procedures, was the decision one which a person in the position of the decision maker might reasonably have made?

The Dean will normally complete a review of the grievance and issue a decision on the situation in writing within 45 days. That decision is final. All reasonable measures will be taken to finalize the process as soon as practicable. The student will be informed by the Dean that the complaint has been resolved, and of any outcomes pertaining directly to the student. If any part of the complaint resolution involves disciplinary action of a faculty or staff member those actions shall remain confidential.