

Graduate Students | Academic Responsibilities and Academic Grievance

Jul 12, 2018

Scope: Who is Covered by this Policy?

Graduate Students

Policy

It is the responsibility of faculty, staff, and students to create an academic community that is free from all forms of prejudice that negatively influence learning, such as those based on age, ethnicity, gender, mental or physical impairment, race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity. All faculty, staff, and students should treat one another with courtesy and respect.

Statement of Good Teaching Practices

Every instructor is responsible for:

1. Informing his or her students within the first two weeks of the course of the objectives, content, assignments, policy on return of student work, and examination procedure in each course and, within reason, abiding by those statements;
2. Specifying in writing within the first two weeks of the course the methods by which the instructor determines the final grade in the course;
3. Ensuring that all materials assigned are equally available to all students in the course;

4. Informing students of the generally accepted conclusion on the subject matter of the course when those conclusions differ from the conclusions of the instructor;
5. Giving adequate advance notice of major papers and major examinations in the course;
6. Providing assignments to permit students to benefit from evaluative experiences during the course;
7. Being fair and impartial in evaluating all student performances, i.e., evaluating all students according to common criteria;
8. Allowing students to review papers and examinations in a timely manner after those papers and examinations have been evaluated.
9. Making himself or herself available for conferences during announced, regular office hours;
10. Treating students with courtesy and respect at all times. Courtesy and respect do not prohibit strong criticism directed at the student's academic errors and scholarly responsibilities.
11. Endeavoring to ensure that the learning environment is free from all forms of prejudice that negatively influence student learning, such as those based on age, ethnicity, gender, mental or physical impairment, race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
12. Adhering to the "Class Attendance Policy".
13. Adhering to the "Statement on Professional Ethics" policy: As teachers, professors encourage the free pursuit of learning in students. Teachers exemplify the best scholarly standards of their disciplines. They demonstrate respect for students as individuals and adhere to their proper roles as intellectual guides and counselors. Professors make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct and to assure that their evaluations of students reflect students' true merit. Faculty members respect the confidential nature of the relationship between professor and student. They avoid any exploitation of students for their private advantage and acknowledge significant assistance from them. Professors protect their academic freedom. No faculty member shall be obliged to make the academic work of students available for inspection by any third party in the absence of compulsory legal process without bona fide academic reasons or without the express written consent of the student.

14. Assuming the positive obligation to confront students of suspected academic dishonesty.

Statement of Student Responsibilities

The Divisional Academic Appeals Boards, in adjudicating any academic grievances, will take note of the following minimum standards of student responsibility.

1. Attending class in accordance with University regulations (*see the policy "Class Attendance"*);
2. Being attentive during class, and participating constructively in class discussions;
3. Doing the work assigned in each course to the best of his or her ability, and submitting it on time;
4. Showing respect for instructors and fellow students at all times;
5. Abiding by University regulations prohibiting academic misconduct (*see the policy "Academic Integrity"*)
6. Endeavoring to ensure that the learning environment is free from all forms of prejudice that negatively influence student learning, such as those based on age, ethnicity, gender, mental or physical impairment, race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Academic Grievance Procedure at Miami University

Each academic department has a specific departmental grievance procedure meant to facilitate the adjudication of most student grievances at the departmental level.

Divisional academic appeals boards have jurisdiction limited to classroom relations between individual students and instructors as specified in the Statement of Good Teaching Practices.

Academic Grievance Procedure

A goal of the grievance procedure should be to effect reconciliation between instructor and student.

Any student has the right to question a grade he or she has received, but the student should recognize the difference between questioning a grade and charging an instructor with a violation of the Statement of Good Teaching Practices. The latter is a serious act and should neither be undertaken lightly nor should the desire to have a grade reviewed and changed be the primary motivation. A student initiating a grievance procedure should be aware that the University Senate has ruled that the final determination of a student's grade remains with the instructor, regardless of the outcome of any appeal procedure. While most instructors will consent to being advised by their colleagues and may change the student's grade on advice from a review committee, they cannot be compelled to do so by any authority in the University.

In all cases the student should first meet with the instructor to voice a complaint and to receive an explanation and possible redress. If the student is not satisfied with the explanation, he or she should confer with the chair of the department and ask for a review of the grade through the departmental grievance procedure. The student must at that time ask either for a grade review or may, additionally, charge the instructor with a violation of the Statement of Good Teaching Practices. If the student asks only for a grade review, the review of the grade will be handled within the department and the final decision will be made according to the departmental procedures.

Formal grievances against instructors for violation of the Statement of Good Teaching Practices must be presented in terms of the provisions of that Statement. Student charges must cite specific violations of specific provisions of the Statement, identified by number as well as by the wording of the accusation. Students should also note that basic issues of contractual obligation and competence are not covered by the Statement of Good Teaching Practices, and that issues related to instruction not covered by the Statement should be discussed with the department chair, the academic coordinator, the program director, or their designees. A student who is charging a faculty member with a violation of the Statement of Good Teaching Practices shall first utilize the departmental grievance procedure. ~~If he or she feels that his or her grievance has not been properly adjudicated, he or she should request a conference with the divisional dean. In addition, in an effort to resolve a grievance short of a formal appeal the regional campus students are encouraged to seek a conference with the academic coordinator.~~

If the student wishes to appeal the decision beyond the departmental level, the student may submit to the divisional grievance committee a written, dated, and signed complaint stating the name of the instructor, the course, the provision(s) of the Good Teaching Practices alleged to have been violated, a brief description of the incident(s) giving rise

to the grievance, and the remedy requested. The student should also provide any materials supportive of the complaint. Within ten working days after receiving this written complaint from the student, the divisional dean will request the chair of the Divisional Academic Appeals Board to convene a committee to consider and investigate the complaint, and to make its recommendations to the instructor within 30 working days after receiving the complaint. A divisional grievance committee will not adjudicate a violation of Good Teaching Practices unless the written complaint is lodged before 5 p.m. Friday of the eleventh week of the fall or spring semester that follows the term in which the alleged violation occurred.

In the event the instructor is deceased, no longer employed by Miami University, or is otherwise unavailable or incapacitated, the chair or the chair's designee as approved by the dean may act in place of the instructor.

The Divisional Academic Appeals Board will be constituted as follows

At the beginning of each academic year each divisional dean will request every academic department within the division to choose from among its members, with the approval of the department chair, one representative and one alternate to serve as members of the Divisional Academic Appeals Board for that year.

The dean of the division will appoint one of the department representatives as chair of the Divisional Academic Appeals Board for the academic year, and one as a vice-chair.

It will be the responsibility of the chair of each Divisional Academic Appeals Board

1. To appoint, on receipt of a written complaint from a student to the dean, a committee of five (5) members, appropriate to the case in question, consisting of the chair of the Divisional Academic Appeals Board as chair and four (4) representatives from departments related to the discipline in which the complaint originates (including, where appropriate or necessary, representatives from outside the division). No member of the department of the instructor against whom the complaint has been made may be a member of the grievance committee.
2. To convene the committee to consider the grievance and to preside over the hearing.

3. To inform the student that the burden of proof rests with the student and that he or she may attend the hearings (excluding executive sessions) and be accompanied by counsel if the student so desires.
4. To inform the instructor, when the committee decides to consider a case, that a grievance has been received by the committee, and provide the instructor with a full bill of particulars regarding the grievance and its supporting evidence; to request from the instructor in writing information germane to the case; to inform the instructor that he or she may attend the hearings (excluding executive sessions) and be accompanied by counsel if the instructor so desires.
5. To call for formal recommendations from the committee after consideration of the complaint, with majority vote of the members of the committee required for approval of each recommendation.
6. To maintain communication with the chairs of all other Divisional Academic Appeals Boards in order to ensure equity and consistency among the divisions in the adjudicating of grievances.
7. To fulfill the responsibilities listed in the section of this policy titled "It will be the responsibility of a Divisional Appeals Committee".
8. To keep accurate minutes and records of all hearings, including all written documents submitted as evidence, in a confidential file in the Office of the Secretary of the University, each file subject to review only by the chair of the Academic Appeals Board of the division in which the grievance was heard.
9. If for any reason the chair is unable to fulfill his or her responsibilities or to serve as chair of a grievance committee, the vice-chair shall fulfill these functions. Appointees shall excuse themselves in the event of potential conflict of interest.

It will be the responsibility of a Divisional Appeals Committee

1. To determine, prior to considering any case, whether frank and full discussions between the student, instructor, department chair, and dean have been exhausted as a means of resolving the grievance. If not, the case shall be referred back to the instructor, chair, or dean as appropriate.
2. To determine, when hearings are required, the most appropriate procedures to be followed.

3. To hold hearings to determine the fact (such hearings open to the student and the instructor and their respective counsels with the exception of executive sessions), and to determine, by majority vote of the committee, recommendations as outlined in the section of this policy titled “Committee Recommendations”.

Committee Recommendations

If the committee finds that no violation of the Statement of Good Teaching Practices has occurred, or that a violation has occurred but recommends that no redress is warranted, these findings will be reported by the committee chair, in writing, to the student and the instructor with copies sent to the department chair and dean. In addition, a notation of this finding may be made in the student’s permanent record file.

If the committee finds that a violation of the Statement of Good Teaching Practices has occurred and recommends any form of redress for the student, these recommendations should be reported by the chair of the committee, in writing, to the instructor with a copy sent to the student. The instructor will be expected to inform the committee chair of his or her compliance or noncompliance with the recommendations within ten working days after the letter of notification has been sent to the instructor (failure to respond within ten working days will be taken to indicate noncompliance).

1. If the instructor complies with the recommendations, the student will be informed in writing, by the committee chair, with copies to the department chair and dean.
2. If the instructor indicates noncompliance with the recommendations, copies of the recommendations and of the instructor’s reply will be sent to the student and to the department chair and dean. All documents regarding academic grievances and requests for grade review shall be placed in the department’s student complaint file.

Publishing of Statements

The Statement of Good Teaching Practices, Professional Ethics, and the Statement of Student Responsibilities will be mailed to faculty at the beginning of each academic year and/or will be published in *The Miami Student* and *The Miami University Report*.

Related Form(s)

Not Applicable.

Additional Resources and Procedures

Not Applicable.

FAQ

Not Applicable.

Policy Administration

Next Review Date

7/1/2023

Responsible Officer

- Associate Vice President & Dean of Students
- Provost
- Senior Vice President/Enrollment Management & Student Success

Legal Authority

Not Applicable.

Compliance Policy

No

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Graduate Handbook 1.7

Reviewing Bodies

University Senate

Administrative