



FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES

STUDENT COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES SUMMARY

Complaint/Grievance (Any issue occurring outside of SOAHS must be addressed within the school/college in which the event occurred.) All students – both undergraduate and graduate, in the School of Allied Health Sciences (SOAHS) have the right to complain/grieve a grade, an academic decision or any non-academic issue that occurs within SOAHS. Students must provide evidence of error, miscalculation, omission, or other action negatively impacting the grade received or the student. The purpose of an academic complaint/grievance or an issue is to provide students with a fair and objective opportunity to be heard. Students will follow established procedures for academic complaint/grievances or non-academic issues.

A. Scope

This regulation shall apply to:

Undergraduate and graduate student complaint/grievance of grades resulting from an instructor's:

- a) Alleged deviation from established and announced grading policy;
- b) Alleged errors in application of grading procedures and/or;
- c) Alleged lowering of grades for non-academic reasons, including discrimination.
- d) Alleged non-academic issues: hazing, harassment, discrimination, and disability accommodations.
- e) Other _____

B. Chain of Command: Students must adhere to the appropriate steps in order to effectively resolve issues and concerns. The SOAHS Complaint and Grievance Process Settlement form should be utilized to document the progression of the complaint/grievance. This should be accompanied by the student's submission of relevant documentation in support of their complaint/grievance for review and discussion at the following levels:

- Course Instructor or relevant University Staff
- Division Director or Appropriate University Official
- Director of Student Affairs
- Dean, School of Allied Health Sciences
- Dean, School of Graduate Studies
- Provost, VP of Academic Affairs

NOTE: In case of a non-academic complaint/grievance student should first seek assistance from the Director of Student Affairs (SOAHS).

C. Process

NOTE: In the case of an academic complaint/grievance, student will use the SOAHS Student Complaint and Grievance Process Settlement form. Steps indicated below are specifically for the academic complaint/grievance purpose.

Prior to entering the formal complaint/grievance process, the student must attempt to resolve the issue with the course instructor. The established procedures must be adhered to and initiated by student within 30 business days of the grade or decision, which is being appealed. However, it is recommended that students initiate this process immediately in order to facilitate prompt resolution.

Step 1

- Student must:
 - a. Email course instructor to request a meeting to discuss concerns.
Copy (cc) the Division Director and the SOAHS Director of Student Affairs.
 - b. Present a clear statement of circumstances with relevant documentation.
 - c. Provide grounds for the appeal request.
 - d. State the desired outcome.
 - e. Present the SOAHS Appeals Process Settlement form to document Step 1.
- Course instructor must:
 - a. Meet with student within 5 business days of their email request.
 - b. Explain and review relevant methods and process of evaluation.
 - c. Provide student with feedback relative to concerns presented.
 - d. Provide rationale for maintaining or changing grade/decision made.
 - e. Complete and sign the Step 1 section of the SOAHS Appeals Process Settlement form, noting what was discussed and decided.

If the issue is not resolved as a result of Step 1, and the student still believes there are grounds to pursue the complaint/grievance/issue further, the student must within 2 business days of the decision, initiate Step 2 with the Division Director.

❖ **If the Division Director is the course instructor, the student may proceed immediately to Step 3.**

Step 2

- Student must:
 - a. Email Division Director to formally request meeting within 2 business days of notification of Step 1 decision.
 - Copy (cc) the SOAHS Director of Student Affairs
 - b. Provide evidence of Step 1 meeting with faculty member via SOAHS complaint/grievance Process Settlement form.
 - c. Present a clear statement of circumstances with relevant documentation.

- d. Provide grounds for the complaint/grievance request .
- e. Identify the desired outcome.
- f. Present the SOAHS Complaint and Grievance Process Settlement form to document Step 2.
 - Division Director must:
 - a. Gather and review all information within 5 business days to facilitate resolution.
 - b. Request faculty member and/or student provide any relevant documentation (within 3 days of official request from Director).
 - c. Hold meeting/communicate with student and faculty member to discuss facts.
 - d. Render a decision to student and faculty/course instructor within 2 business days of meeting/communication.
 - e. Complete and sign Step 2 section of the SOAHS Complaint and Grievance Process Settlement form, noting what was discussed and decided.

If the issue is not resolved as a result of Step 2, and the student still believes there are grounds to pursue the issue further, the student must within 2 business days of the decision, initiate Step 3 with the SOAHS Director of Student Affairs.

Step 3

- Student must:
 - a. Email the Director, Student Affairs to formally request meeting within 2 business days of notification of Step 2 decision (or within 30 business days of the grade or decision if skipping Steps 1 & 2 because the Division Director is the course instructor.
 - b. Provide evidence of Step 2 meeting with Division Director via SOAHS Appeals Process Settlement Form.
 - c. Present a clear statement of circumstances with relevant documentation
 - d. Provide a summary explanation of all that has transpired at Steps 1 and 2, including any correspondence with course instructor or Division Director.
 - e. Provide grounds for the appeal request.
 - f. Identify the desired outcome.
 - g. Present the SOAHS Appeals Process Settlement Form to document Step 3.
- SOAHS Director of Student Affairs must:
 - a. Gather and review all information within 5 business days to facilitate resolution.
 - b. Request faculty member, Division Director, and/or student provide any additional relevant documentation (within 3 business days of official request from Director, Student Affairs).
 - c. Document any issues with timeline requirement.
 - d. Consult with the Dean who may direct the SOAHS Grievance Committee to formally review and consider the student's appeal.
 - e. Complete and sign the Step 3 section of SOAHS Appeals Process Settlement Form, nothing additional documents needed etc.

- SOAHS Grievance Committees (Undergraduate or Graduate) must:
 - a. Convene to consider the facts of the complaint/grievance within 5 business days of the Dean's request.
 - b. Request additional information/documentation if required, from any of the parties involved who must return within 3 business days. Any issues with timeline requirements should be noted.
 - c. Render a decision within 5 business days of final meeting – in the form of a written recommendation of the Dean (this is then communicated to the student by the Director of Student Affairs).
- ❖ *Extenuating circumstances which may affect this process will be addressed by the Director of Student Affairs.*

If the issue is not resolved as a result of Step 3, and the student still believes there are grounds to pursue the complaint/grievance further, he or she must complete the following steps:

- Undergraduate students may seek a review by the office of the University Provost/Vice President, Academic Affairs.
- Graduate students may follow the School of Graduate Studies' appeals and grievance process.

GRADUATE ACADEMIC SUSPENSION

Graduate Academic Suspension: Graduate students must maintain the required graduate academic standing of a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average. Students are subject to the application of academic standing policies as warranted by their failure to meet the required minimum cumulative grade point average as indicated by:

- Warning
- Probation
- Suspension, and
- Permanent dismissal

A. Scope

This regulation shall apply to:

Graduate students' appeal of suspension from a SOAHS graduate program.

B. Chain of Command: Graduate students must adhere to the appropriate steps in order to effectively resolve issues and concerns. This includes the student's submission of documentation in support of their appeal for review and discussion at the following levels:

- Division Director/Designee or Committee
 - Master of Health Administration (MHA) students – MHA Academic Progression Committee
 - Master of Science Occupational Therapy (MSOT) students – MSOT Academic Progression Committee
 - Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) students – DPT Student Progression Committee

- Dean, School of Graduate Studies
- Provost, VP of Academic Affairs

C. Process: The established procedures must be adhered to and initiated by student within 2 business days of notification of suspension. However, it is recommended students initiate this process immediately in order to facilitate prompt resolution.

Step 1

- Student must:
 - a. Submit an appeal of suspension to the appropriate Division Director/designee or committee within 2 business days of notice of suspension.
 - b. Document and present a clear statement of circumstances.
 - c. Grounds for the request and relevant evidence (if any).
 - d. Desired outcome.
 - Director/Designee or Academic Progression Committee:
 - a. Considers the student's documented appeals request.
 - b. Meets with the student to discuss the request.
 - c. Reviews and evaluates all pertinent facts and circumstances.
 - d. Committee – Renders decision as a recommendation to the Division Director.
 - e. Informs student within 2 business days of rendering a decision.
 - f. Each of the above steps (a-d) to be completed within 5 business days of receipt of student appeal.
- ❖ If a student is granted an approval of waiver of suspension from their graduate program, they may not seek to appeal a subsequent suspension/dismissal from the program.
- ❖ The SOAHS graduate student appeals process has been exhausted at this point.
- ❖ If the student's appeal of suspension is not approved, they may seek to appeal to the School of Graduate Studies Graduate Appeals Council. The procedures for the Graduate Studies appeals process can be accessed at:
<http://www.famu.edu/index.cfm?graduatestudies&Students>.