

FAIR TREATMENT POLICY FOR STUDENTS

Purpose

As a Christian, Catholic, and Benedictine community, the University of Mary is wholly committed to upholding and defending the dignity of every human person as created in the image and likeness of God. Those who experience unfair treatment or unjust discrimination within the community of the University of Mary are especially worthy of the University's care and concern. Any student of the University of Mary who believes that he or she has been unjustly treated is encouraged to seek resolution of the issue through policies and procedures established by the University for that purpose. The University has adopted a number of policies which address specific types of unjust treatment. These can be found at umary.edu/dignity.

Information about particular student grievances and appeals, including grievances involving grades and other academic issues, may be found in the relevant section of the [Student Handbook](#). Scholar-athletes of the University are able to raise concerns at umary.edu/athleteconcerns. Other complaints, disputes, or differences of opinion may exist at the University and are called grievances for purposes of this policy. For these grievances, the process outlined in this policy should be used.

It is the University's practice that individuals will not be retaliated against for initiating the process outlined in this policy or any other university policy.

Statement of Policy

Step 1: Often grievances are a result of a lack of understanding or a lack of sufficient information, but before a grievance can be settled, it must be expressed. The student shall first discuss the grievance directly with the person(s) complained against or with the immediate supervisor of the employee. If the student does not know who the immediate supervisor is, he/she shall speak with the Director of Student Life for guidance. Employees and supervisors are expected to provide a supportive environment that fosters open communication and are encouraged to resolve grievances, if possible, in an informal manner. It is the expectation of the University that both students and employees will treat one another with respect and civility at all times during the process. Under this step of the process, it is the responsibility of the employee receiving the grievance to file a [Student Grievance Report](#) with the Office of Student Development. The Office of Student Development is responsible for keeping a log of all student grievances, indicating the current status or outcome of the grievance.

Step 2: If the grievance is not resolved at Step 1, the student shall set forth and submit the grievance, its cause, and a suggested remedy in writing to the supervisor referenced in Step 1. After an investigation of the alleged grievance, including discussion with the student, the supervisor shall make a decision in writing, addressed to the student, within a reasonable

period of time, considering the facts of the matter. More serious matters are expected to take longer to resolve. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to provide a copy of the grievance submitted by the student as well as a copy of his or her written response to the Office of Student Development. The Office of Student Development is responsible for keeping a log of all student grievances, indicating the current status or outcome of the grievance.

Step 3: If the grievance is not resolved at Step 2, the student may choose to appeal the decision to successively higher supervisors in the office or department up to the level of the appropriate Vice President. Each appeal must be made in writing within ten (10) working days of the decision. Submitted appeals must be decided in writing within a reasonable period of time after the receipt of the appeal. It is the responsibility of the each person making a decision on appeal to provide a copy of his or her written response to the Office of Student Development. The Office of Student Development is responsible for keeping a log of all student grievances, indicating the current status or outcome of the grievance.

The decision of the Vice President will be final except in the case where the initial grievance involves the actions or a decision made by a Vice President. In such a case, the initial written grievance should be submitted to the President, who will appoint someone to investigate the matter for him or her. The decision of the President in such a case is final.

Procedural Guidelines

In the event there are related criminal or civil proceedings, those responsible for making a decision shall have the right to delay making their determination in the matter until all legal proceedings have been fully resolved. Allegations shall be investigated in as impartial and confidential a manner as possible. Those addressing grievances should protect privacy as much as possible, but they cannot guarantee complete confidentiality. For example, people who might have information relevant to a grievance may learn of the grievance in the course of an investigation. The assurance of privacy may also be qualified by the duty placed by law or policy on persons receiving grievances of particular types. It is the responsibility of all members of the university community to cooperate with the investigation of a grievance.

If those addressing grievances determine or are advised that the grievance is subject to [a specific university policy or Title IX](#), the grievance will be forwarded to the person(s) responsible for administering that policy.

Approved

28 September 2020 by the President's Council

29 September 2020 by the President of the University

30 September 2020 by the Board of Trustees (EC)

22 October 2020 delivered to University Senate