

# **General Grievance Policy for Students**

## **Purpose**

Any student 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 my.umary.edu (Faculty and Staff / General University Policies). For complaints or grievances concerning academic matters, students should use the policies found at my.umary.edu (Home / General University Policies). For other complaints, disputes or differences of opinion that students may have with the University of Mary, or its employees, the procedures outlined in this policy should be used.

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

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## **Statement of the Policy**

Step 1: Each student with a non-academic grievance against the University of Mary should seek first to discuss the situation and problem directly with an employee in the department complained against. Each student with a non-academic grievance against university employee(s) should seek first to discuss the situation and problem directly with the employee(s) complained against or with their immediate supervisor.

Employees and supervisors are expected to provide a supportive environment that fosters open communication and are encouraged to resolve grievances in an informal manner, if possible. 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 to file a report with the vice president for student development using the attached form. The vice president for student development is responsible for keeping a log of all student grievances which indicates the current status or outcome of the grievance.

Step 2: If the grievance is not resolved at Step 1, the student shall present a written grievance to the supervisor identified in Step 1. After complete 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/her written response to the vice president for student development. The vice president for student development is responsible for keeping a log of all student grievances which indicates 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 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. Each appeal must be decided in writing within a reasonable period of time after the receipt of the appeal. 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/her written response to the vice president for student development. The vice president for student development is responsible for keeping a log of all student grievances which indicates 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/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 an impartial and confidential manner as possible. Complaint handlers should protect privacy as much as possible but they cannot guarantee complete confidentiality. For example, people who might have information relevant to a case may learn of the complaint 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 complaints of particular types. It is the responsibility of all members of the university community to cooperate with the investigation of a complaint.

If the complaint handler determines that the complaint is subject to a specific university policy, the complaint will be forwarded to the person(s) responsible for administering that policy.

### **Approved**

President's Council (February 22, 2010)

Executive Committee of the University of Mary Board of Trustees (March 11, 2010)

**University of Mary  
Grievance Report Form**

**PURPOSE OF THIS FORM:** This form is to be completed by an employee of the university when a student contacts an employee to discuss a grievance (Step 1 of the General Grievance Policy for Students). The report should be completed by the employee and submitted to the vice president for student development within 24 hours. It is the responsibility of the vice president for student development to maintain a log of all student complaints.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please provide all the information requested. Be as specific as possible when discussing incidents. Include the date(s) the incident(s) occurred, the name(s) of the person(s) involved and the name(s) of those who may have witnessed the incident. Your complaint is not limited to the space provided. You are encouraged to attach additional materials, which may assist in the investigation process. *Please be aware that the information you provide is considered sensitive and will be shared only with those persons who are considered essential to the investigation and disposition of this complaint.*

**Date this form was completed:** \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**Date the grievance is said to have occurred:** \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**Name and Contact Information of the student(s) who reported a grievance to you:**

Name (Last, M.I., First)

Address

Phone

**Please describe the grievance as stated by the student. As much as possible use the words used by the student:**

**Please describe what actions were taken to resolve the grievance. What was communicated to the student?**

**In your opinion, was the matter resolved? If not, what recommendations do you have for how the matter could be resolved?**