

Student Complaints and Grievance Process

Introduction

This policy describes steps a graduate student should follow to submit a grievance.

Students should first attempt to resolve an issue through informal means, for example, by communicating with appropriate faculty members or the program director. If the issue is not resolved, students should follow the grievance procedure.

Students who believe that they have been erroneously, capriciously, inappropriately, or otherwise unfairly treated in an academic or cooperative education determination should follow the appeals procedure described in the Mills College at Northeastern University Graduate Appeals Policy. Subsequent academic appeals can be submitted by following the MCNU Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure.

If a student's grievance includes a claim of discriminatory acts prohibited by law or by university policy (<https://catalog.northeastern.edu/handbook/policies-regulations/equal-opportunity/>), the student should first submit the grievance to the Office for University Equity and Compliance (<https://ouec.northeastern.edu/>) for resolution through the applicable procedures. At the conclusion of the OUEC resolution process, any aspects of the grievance that remain unresolved may then be brought to the grievance procedure.

Graduate students can contact the Ombuds for Graduate Students (<https://graduateombuds.northeastern.edu/>) that offers confidential, impartial, and informal assistance to graduate students who have concerns related to their university experience.

Note that the college prohibits retaliation against a student for filing a grievance.

Grievance Procedure

A graduate student who would like to complain about their treatment by an MCNU employee (faculty or staff) may submit a grievance.

Step 1. A written description of the complaint should be submitted within 60 days of the alleged activity. The description should state the exact nature of the grievance, against whom it is filed, and the remedy sought.

Step 2. The student should submit the complaint to the faculty program lead (chair or unit head of the department or unit that houses the student's primary program of study) and to the associate dean for curriculum at otp-mcnu-grad-education@northeastern.edu. The program lead shall review the complaint, give any employees named in the grievance an opportunity to share relevant information, gather additional information as needed, and send a written response to the student and the associate dean within two weeks.

Step 3. If the student is not satisfied by the faculty lead's response, the student may resubmit the complaint to the associate dean for curriculum within two weeks. The associate dean shall review all available information and submit a written response to the student within two weeks.

Step 4. If the student is not satisfied by the associate dean's decision, the student may submit the complaint to the dean of MCNU within two weeks. The dean will review all available information and submit a written response to the student within two weeks.