



STUDENT COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE POLICY

This policy provides a structured process for resolving problems, complaints, or grievances relating to the execution of institutional policies or procedures. University ensures that students will not be subject to unfair actions as a result of their initiation of a grievance proceeding.

A grievance is a complaint against an individual based on specific facts that there has been a misinterpretation, misapplication, discriminatory application, or violation of a university policy or procedure that may or may not include a violation of rights as set forth in Code of Conduct.

Initial process:

Before filing a written grievance, the aggrieved individual is encouraged to make a good faith effort to talk with the party against whom he or she has a grievance to come to an amicable resolution. For this initial process, the aggrieved party may contact the Director of Student Services for assistance in the resolution effort.

Formal resolution:

If the aggrieved party does not receive an adequate resolution to the grievance after the initial process, he or she may submit a formal, written grievance to the Director of Student Services.

Upon receiving the grievance, the Director of Student Services will acknowledge receipt of the grievance and inform all involved parties that a formal resolution process has been initiated and that the grievance is being referred to a Grievance Review Panel.

A Grievance Review Panel is an independent review panel appointed by the Director of student services to which all student grievances are referred during the formal resolution process.

Within 10 calendar days of being sent notification that a formal resolution process has been initiated, all involved parties must submit information regarding the matter to the Grievance Review Panel. This information must include:

1. The individual(s) or department(s) against whom the grievance is directed.
2. A brief description of the grievance, including the date(s), time(s), and place(s).
3. Any efforts to resolve the matter during the initial resolution process.
4. The corrective action the grievant is seeking.

After receiving all relevant materials, the Grievance Review Panel (the Panel) will meet to review the materials and issue a decision as soon as feasible. The Panel will provide sufficient opportunity to all parties to state in writing their perspective in the case in case it feels additional information is required. Upon evaluating all evidence, the Panel will issue a decision and set forth a resolution to be implemented. Both parties have the right to appeal the Panel decision, as described in the Formal Appeal Process.

**Formal Appeal Process:**

In case of an appeal is requested by either party, a written appeal request must be submitted to the Director of Student Services by e-mail within 10 days of receiving the Panel formal resolution decision. Upon receiving the appeal request, the Director of Student Services will acknowledge receipt of the request and inform all parties involved that a formal appeal process has been initiated.

The Director of Student Services will designate a University Staff member or faculty member to serve as a reviewer. The designee will receive and review all prior evidence, records, evaluations, and Grievance Panel decision associated with the grievance. Following the review, the designee will issue a decision and report it to all involved parties. The decision will do one of the following:

- a) Uphold the findings of the Panel.
- b) Reverse the findings of the Panel.
- c) Direct the Panel to provide additional information.
- d) The designee will determine his or her own findings. In the event the designee requests additional information from the Panel, the involved parties will be notified of a revised time frame for the determination of the grievance.

The decision of the president's designee is final. A record of the final decision and all related materials will become part of the student's official academic record and upon request, will be made available to all University boards and any appropriate regulatory bodies.

External Resolution:

If a complaint cannot be resolved after exhausting the institution's student grievance policy procedures, the student may file a complaint with the Florida Commission for Independent Education; 325 W. Gaines St.; Suite 1414; Tallahassee, FL 32399; 888.224.6684. Students must contact the commission for further details.

If a complaint cannot be resolved after completing the Florida Commission for Independent Education's complaint process, the student may appeal to the Postsecondary Reciprocal Distance

Education Coordinating Council by sending an email to FLSARainfo@fldoe.org

See Council [Student Concerns page](#).

Student Responsibility for University Communication:

SUMMA University uses e-mail as the official means of notifying students of important university business and academic information concerning registration, deadlines, student accounts (including tuition and fees), academic progress and problems, and Many other critical items for satisfactory completion of a University degree program. The university sends all communications to a university official e-mail address to ensure that there is one repository for that information. Every student must check the University official e-mail regularly to avoid missing important and critical information from the university.



Additionally, each student must have an up-to-date emergency e-mail address and cell phone number by which to be reached in case of an emergency. Also, both permanent and local mailing addresses must be on record, so that any physical documents that must be mailed can be delivered.