Non-Integrity Academic Grievance Procedure

The graduate student complaint and formal grievance processes can involve several steps depending on the nature of the issue. There are many avenues available to Washington State University graduate students to resolve differences that might arise during the pursuit of an advanced degree. If a graduate program has its own grievance procedures, these procedures should be followed before utilizing the Graduate School's grievance procedures. The CON grievance procedure is below:

Differences of opinion between students and their instructor may arise. Students and their instructors are encouraged to communicate regularly and directly to resolve such differences. An attempt should first be made to resolve the complaint by an open discussion between the student and the faculty member(s) involved.

Students must follow typical “chain of command” when attempting to resolve concerns. Students should always attempt to resolve concerns with their course faculty first, then Level Lead, then Program Director, then Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, then the Dean of the College.

- If the concern is related to clinical placements, the Level Lead will include the Director of Clinical Affairs in that concern chain.
- If the concern is from a student at a campus other than Spokane, the concern will also be brought to the Campus Academic Director alongside the Program Director. A visual guide is below to assist with this process.

If a student has questions on who is next in the line of communication or wants a review of readability of their communication, they can connect with the college’s Director of the Center for Student Excellence. While the Director cannot make decisions to resolve the issues, they are available for process explanation and readability review of the concern. Additionally, the University Ombudsman is available at any stage for advice or assistance in resolving academic complaints.

If that line of communication does not resolve a concern, the student can pursue a formal grievance process. WSU College of Nursing follows the established timeframe and line of communication outlined in Academic Regulation 104 - Academic Complaint Procedures. At each stage of the grievance process, the individual addressed will be given 20 business days in which to respond to the grievance via official WSU email and come to a resolution. Should the response be unsatisfactory, the student can then take the grievance and response(s) to the next individual on the list.

A copy of all written complaints and a written record of all subsequent actions will be filed in a confidential Academic Grievance File in the College of Nursing Academic Affairs Office as well as in the student's official student file.

Though chairs and college deans (and program leaders and campus chancellors) may resolve complaints about instruction and grading, they may not change a final grade without the consent of the instructor, except as provided by Rule 105.

Additional Grievance Resources

- Students who have exhausted avenues provided by WSU and still have unresolved complaints may contact the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) who has authority to investigate student complaints regarding the University not following published policy or state law.
WSU is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), whose complaint process is here.

The University Ombudsman is available at any stage for advice or assistance in resolving academic complaints.

Grievance Process

1. Student submits official grievance email to the Course Instructor which details the issue(s) no later than 20 business days following the end of the semester.
   - Student copies Program Director, Director of CSE, and Academic Campus Director if applicable

2. Course Instructor responds to student with receipt of student grievance submission.
   - Course Instructor renders decision to student within 20 business days
   - Course Instructor copies Program Director, Director of CSE, and if applicable Academic Campus Director

3. If complaint is not resolved with Course Instructor, then the student may work directly with the Program Director and Academic Campus Director if applicable
   - Student submits grievance and previous communication thread to Program Director, Director of CSE, and if applicable Academic Campus Director

4. Program Director and Academic Campus Director if applicable responds to student with receipt of student grievance submission.
   - Program Director and Academic Campus Director if applicable renders decision to student within 20 business days, cc-ing Course Instructor and Director of CSE

5. After Program Director decision, the student, or the instructor, may appeal to the Dean within 20 business days. The Dean may designate the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs to handle a response.
   - The statement from the student or instructor should include the concern, how it affects the individual or unit, the remedy sought from the Dean, and all prior communication.
   - Dean or designee responds within 20 days, with Director of CSE cc-ed to document.

The formal Graduate School Grievance procedure is below:

In some instances, such as those related to academic and employment issues (e.g. failed examinations, termination of assistantship, dismissal from program, etc.), the student may wish to appeal a specific decision made by the departmental or program faculty.

- The student must make a formal grievance request to the Dean of the Graduate School in writing, with signature (email is not sufficient). The student must submit documentation describing his/her grounds for a formal grievance to the Dean. Formal grievances must be
filed within 15 (fifteen) calendar days following a notice of decision. The original decision will be held in abeyance until the university has rendered a final decision.

- The Dean will assign these formal grievances to one of the Associate Deans for full consideration and recommendation.
- If the Associate Dean deems it appropriate, the matter will be referred to an independent Committee on Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities (CGSRR) for consideration and formulating recommendations of action to the Dean of the Graduate School. The CGSRR will operate with due respect to the rights of graduate students, faculty, and administrators including the conduct of interviews, the right of all parties to review and address allegations, and the right to a fair hearing. The CGSRR will deliberate and render a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School or the Dean’s designee within 60 days of being formed.
- Recommendations for resolution of formal grievances will be acted upon by the Dean or the Dean’s designee. The Dean of the Graduate School will make a final decision. The decision made by the Dean on academic matters is final.

An Appeal of the decision made by the Dean of the Graduate School can be made to the Provost if the graduate student believes there was a procedural error or failure to follow WSU or Graduate School policy during the complaint or grievance process. The written appeal to the Provost regarding procedural irregularities must be filed within fifteen (15) calendar days following the notice of the decision from the Dean of the Graduate School in response to the formal grievance. The appeal must be copied to the Dean of the Graduate School. If the Dean of the Graduate School does not receive a copy of the appeal within fifteen (15) calendar days, the student’s right to appeal will be waived and the Dean’s decision will be final. The Provost will not reopen cases for the purpose of re-investigating the grievance.