APPENDIX IIIa: ACADEMIC CONCERNS

IIIa-2 ACADEMIC GRIEVANCES

A. Definition

The term “academic grievance” is defined as: A statement expressing a complaint, resentment, or accusation lodged by a student about an academic circumstance (such as grading, testing, quality of instruction) which is thought by the student to be unfair.

Academic issues subject to grievance procedures differ from those subject to the academic petition process. The petition process includes a request by the student to have a University, college, or program requirement waived or modified. It may include the right to appeal under circumstances outlined in the petition process. The substance of petitions and appeals is under the jurisdiction of individual colleges, schools, programs, or designated University committees. If a student thinks that a petition has not been handled fairly, the student may initiate a grievance based upon unfair treatment, but not upon the substantive issue.

B. The Grievance Process

1. Each undergraduate, graduate, and professional school or college shall have written procedures for academic grievances. Unless a school or college has specified a shorter time, a student must initiate a grievance within 120 calendar days from the recording of the final grade (including an “Incomplete”) in the course in which the grievance arose. These procedures are to begin with discussion between the grieving student and the faculty member, committee, or administrator with whom the student has a grievance. If the grievance is not resolved at this stage, then the student may advance the grievance through the procedures of the college or school in which the grievance originated. (In grievances brought by Graduate School students that involve Graduate School policies, the relevant school is the Graduate School.)

2. Grievances not resolved at the level of the academic unit may be brought by any of the parties to the Student Academic Standards Committee (Registrar’s Office) within 30 calendar days of the final decision of the academic unit (college/school). If the grievance results from an action of a committee not associated with a specific college, it may be taken directly to the Student Academic Standards Committee. Grievances must be presented in writing to the chair of the committee. This written statement should describe the grievance, indicate how it affects the individual or unit, and include the remedy sought from the committee. All documents pertinent to the review must accompany the grievance. It will be the committee’s charge to review the academic grievance, consult with all parties significantly involved in the grievance, tape record its proceedings, and make a final decision within a reasonable length of time (not to exceed 20 school days, except upon agreement of the parties or the inability of the committee to make a quorum) after the grievance has been filed. All submitted documents will be made a permanent part of the student’s educational record. A copy of the decision will be sent to the originator of the grievance, the dean of the unit involved, and those against whom the grievance originated. This committee has the authority to resolve the grievance by such actions as upholding an earlier decision, requiring a re-examination or review, and, in extreme cases, changing a grade. The committee, however, has no authority to take or recommend disciplinary action in these cases either with faculty, administrators, or students or to require permanent changes in classroom, administrative, or committee procedures. The decision of this committee is the final step in the University Academic Grievance process.
3. Students who wish to challenge specific data or information in an educational record or who wish to amend their records should refer to Section 8-3-F of the Code for procedures.

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