

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Graduate Grievances

([Proposal 5-12](#))

Senate Policy 417.1

Background/Rationale

This proposal is coming to the Senate to establish a new policy that will allow students to submit grievances to the Graduate School. The proposal has been reviewed by the Graduate School, Graduate Faculty Council, Graduate Student Government, and legal counsel.

Policy Statement

The Graduate School will consider grievances by graduate students who are currently enrolled in a graduate program or who have been enrolled in a graduate program within the preceding year. Graduate students must have exhausted all other avenues for resolution before submitting a grievance to the Graduate School. When appropriate, the dean of the Graduate School will work with the relevant University officers and offices to take necessary actions to resolve the grievance.

Policy Requirements

This policy applies to students who are currently enrolled in a graduate program or who have been enrolled in a graduate program within the preceding year.

Students should first attempt to resolve conflicts and address issues with the faculty, staff, or other students who are directly involved. If resolution cannot be obtained at that level, the student should consult with the graduate program director for their graduate program and/or their department chair or school dean. Students may also seek conflict resolution advice or mediation services through the University Ombuds Office. Resources for conflict resolution are available through the Dean of Students Office at Michigan Tech.

If a resolution cannot be reached at or below the level of a department or school, the student may request the involvement of the Graduate School. The Graduate School will conduct an investigation of a reported grievance under the following circumstances.

1. The student has exhausted all other avenues for resolution.
2. The student has filed the Graduate Grievance form with the Graduate School within thirty (30) calendar days of the most recent event which is directly related to the subject of the grievance. Extensions to file a grievance are allowed only in cases where the student has made a documented effort to resolve the situation and the other party or parties involved have failed to respond to the student.

The Graduate School will only consider the following types of grievances:

- Actions, conduct, or decisions that violate University policy or the accepted professional standards practiced within the discipline served by the graduate program.
- Deviations from written grading, examination, and disciplinary policies at the University, graduate program, departmental, or course level.
- Failure of a faculty, staff, or other member of the University community to disclose in writing the basis for a decision that has an adverse impact on a graduate student when such disclosure has been requested in writing by the student.
- Retaliations against a student due to the result of a prior grievance or appeal.

Reason for Policy

The policy will provide a mechanism for students to formally submit a grievance to the Graduate School.

Related Policy Information

This policy has been reviewed by the Graduate School, Graduate Faculty Council, Graduate Student Government, and legal counsel.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to undergraduate students or graduate students who have not been enrolled in a graduate program within the preceding year.

The following types of complaints will not be reviewed by the Graduate School:

- Academic judgments that cannot be reviewed by individuals lacking advanced content-area knowledge in a specific academic field or discipline. A disputed grade will only be considered a grievance if the student has already attempted to resolve the issue using the procedure outlined by University senate policy 310.1.
- Allegations of discriminatory harassment or discriminatory treatment or any other complaints that are considered by the University's Affirmative Programs Office.
- Allegations of research misconduct which must be considered by the University's Office of Research Integrity and Compliance.
- Allegations of sexual assault which should be reported to the University's Public Safety and Police Services (dial 9-1-1 or call 487-2216 for non-emergency situations).

Contact(s)

Office/Unit	Telephone Number
Graduate School	(906) 487-2327

Definitions

Eligible Graduate Student – student who is currently enrolled, or was enrolled within the preceding year.

Grievance – a formal written complaint.

Responsibilities

Graduate Student - Must be aware of University policies, and exhaust all other avenues of conflict resolution. If no resolution can be obtained at or below the level of a department or school, the student may submit a grievance to the Graduate School using the Graduate grievance form. The Graduate grievance form must be submitted within thirty (30) calendar days of the most recent event directly related to the subject of the grievance, if the student wishes to formally file a grievance with the Graduate School.

Assistant to the dean of the Graduate School with responsibility for professional development - Reviews the Graduate grievance form for completeness, determines if the grievance will be heard by the Graduate Grievance Committee, convenes the Graduate Grievance Committee, and acts as the non-voting chair of the Graduate Grievance Committee.

Graduate Grievance Committee – Reviews the grievance submitted by the student, participates in the hearing of the grievance, and prepares a written report to the dean recommending action the dean can take to resolve the grievance.

Dean of the Graduate School - Reviews the report prepared by the Graduate Grievance Committee, and works with the appropriate University officers and offices to take necessary action.

Procedures

In support of this policy, the following procedures are included:

- Submitting and hearing a graduate grievance

Forms and Instructions

In support of this policy, the following forms/instructions are included:

- Graduate Grievance Form (grievance.pdf)

Appendices

NA

Additional Information

NA

History

Adoption Date:

Introduced to Senate: 21 September 2011

Clarifying Amendments in red: 05 October 2011

Approved by Senate with Clarifying Amendments: 05 October 2011

Approved by Administration: 21 October 2011