

# Grievance Policy - Non-Academic Issues

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## **POLICY STATEMENT**

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The right to each student to resolve grievances with the University is affirmed and specific appeal procedures are herewith established to assure timely and appropriate consideration of each grievance. Student grievances generally originate at the department level and the resolution of the grievance is sought at the department level.

## **DEFINITIONS**

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None

## **PROCEDURES and RESPONSIBILITIES**

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### **NON-ACADEMIC ISSUES ONLY**

The right of each student to resolve grievances with the University is affirmed, and specific appeal procedures are herewith established to assure timely and appropriate consideration of each grievance. Student grievances generally originate at the department level, and the resolution of the grievance is sought at the department level.

Instructions regarding the grievance procedure will be available to students at the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and at the Student Government Association office, and will be published in the Student Handbook. If the grievance is regarding a FERPA issue (</pages/4149.asp>), the student should follow the steps listed in Section II below: Student Grievance Process for FERPA issues. If the grievance is regarding a Sexual Harassment issue, the student should follow the steps listed in Section III below: Student Grievance Process for Sexual Harassment Issues.

The President of the University is the final arbitrator of all grievances. It is the desire of the University to settle all grievances as expeditiously as possible. In rendering a decision during the grievance procedure, it is the responsibility of the University to provide the student with written notification regarding the results of hearings.

### **I. STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCESS for Non-FERPA Issue**

To initiate action in keeping with Delta State University's grievance policy, a student should first discuss the grievance with the staff member directly involved. The student should present a signed, dated, written statement of grievance within five days of the cause of complaint. The staff member involved will render a decision within one week of receipt of the grievance. Upon receipt of the staff member's decision, the student then has one week to appeal the decision to the immediate supervisor or department head.

If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, the student should request in writing a meeting with the Vice President of Student Affairs. Students may appeal the decision of the Vice President by requesting a hearing before the appellate committee (</pages/359.asp>), a seven-member committee appointed by the President of the University and composed of four faculty members and three student representatives.

During this official hearing a student may either represent himself or be advised by legal counsel of his or her choice. Legal counsel may speak only at the discretion of the chairman of the committee.

Students may appeal the decision of the appellate committee to the President of the University within one week of decision.

- Step 1: Staff Member
- Step 2: Immediate supervisor and/or head of department
- Step 3: Vice President for Student Affairs
- Step 4: Appellate Committee
- Step 5: President of the University

## **II. STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCESS for FERPA Issues**

The rights of each student to privacy of educational records, as outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), are affirmed by the University (</pages/4149.asp>). To initiate an appeal of a matter covered by FERPA, a student should first discuss the grievance with the University Registrar. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, the student should request in writing a meeting with the Vice President of Student Affairs or the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Students may appeal the decision of the Vice Presidents by submitting a written request for a hearing before the appellate committee, appointed by the President and composed of members of faculty/staff and student representatives. During this official hearing a student may either represent himself or be advised by legal counsel of his or her choice. Legal counsel may speak only at the discretion of the chairman of the committee.

Students may appeal the decision of the appellate committee to the President of the University.

- Step 1: University Registrar
- Step 2: Vice President for Academic Affairs or Vice President for Student Affairs
- Step 3: Appellate Committee
- Step 4: President of the University

## **III. STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCESS for Sexual Harassment Issues**

Sexual harassment is illegal under both state and federal law. It is the policy of Delta State University to insure that the University community remains free from sexual harassment. Any student (or employee) who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action. Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- I. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's education,
- II. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that individual,
- III. such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education or living environment. Deans, division/department chairmen, and department heads must take appropriate steps to disseminate this policy statement and to inform students of procedures for lodging complaints.

To initiate a grievance regarding sexual harassment, a student should first discuss the grievance 1) with the Director of Human Resources or the appropriate administrative personnel (supervisor) if the grievance is against a Faculty/Staff member; or 2) with the Vice-President of Student Affairs if the grievance is against a student. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, the person should request in writing a meeting with the Vice President for Academic Affairs who will make a decision and inform the student in writing. Students may appeal the decision of the Vice President by submitting a written request for a hearing before the appellate committee, appointed by the President and composed of members of

faculty/staff and student representatives. During this official hearing a student may either represent himself or be advised by legal counsel of his or her choice. Legal counsel may speak only at the discretion of the chairman of the committee.

Students may appeal the decision of the appellate committee to the President of the University.

- 1) Director of Human Resources or appropriate administrative supervisor or Vice President for Student Affairs
- 2) Vice President for Academic Affairs
- 3) Appellate Committee
- 4) President of the University



## Non-Academic Student Grievance Report (non-FERPA)

*This form serves as the official cover sheet for the written student complaint file. It will accompany all student and administrative responses and documentation associated with the written grievance.*

<b>Policy Step 1: Staff Member</b>			
Date Received:	Department/Unit:		
Student Name:	900 Number:		
Approve <input type="checkbox"/>	Deny <input type="checkbox"/>	Response Attached <input type="checkbox"/>	Student "appeal by" date:
Staff Member Name		Signature	
Date:	<i>Form with student appeal file sent to the Office of Student Affairs; copy sent to student grievant</i>		

<b>Policy Step 2: Supervisor/Department Head</b>			
Date Received:	Department/Unit:		
Approve <input type="checkbox"/>	Deny <input type="checkbox"/>	Response Attached <input type="checkbox"/>	Student "appeal by" date:
Name		Signature	
Date:	<i>Form with student appeal file sent to the Office of Student Affairs; copy sent to student grievant</i>		

<b>Policy Step 3: Vice President for Student Affairs</b>			
Date Received:			
Approve <input type="checkbox"/>	Deny <input type="checkbox"/>	Response Attached <input type="checkbox"/>	Student "appeal by" date:
Name		Signature	
Date:	<i>Form with student appeal file retained by Office of Student Affairs; copy sent to student grievant</i>		

<b>Policy Step 4: Appellate Committee</b>			
Date Received:			
Approve <input type="checkbox"/>	Deny <input type="checkbox"/>	Response Attached <input type="checkbox"/>	Student "appeal by" date:
Chair Name		Signature	
Date:	<i>Form with student appeal file sent to the Office of Student Affairs; copy sent to student grievant</i>		

<b>Policy Step 5: University President</b>			
Date Received:			
Approve <input type="checkbox"/>	Deny <input type="checkbox"/>	Letter to student, staff member, and department head	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name		Copy to VPSA and committee chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signature			Date:

*The student complaint record must be maintained in accordance with the Non-Academic Grievance Policy and retained for a minimum of five years.*

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## Non-Academic Student Grievance Report (FERPA)

*This form serves as the official cover sheet for the written student complaint file. It will accompany all student and administrative responses and documentation associated with the written grievance.*

<b>Policy Step 1: University Registrar</b>			
Date Received:		Category of Grievance:	
Student Name:		900 Number:	
Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Deny <input type="checkbox"/>		Response Attached <input type="checkbox"/>	Student "appeal by" date:
Name		Signature	
Date:		<b><i>Form with student appeal file retained by Office of Student Affairs; copy sent to student grievant</i></b>	

<b>Policy Step 2: Vice President for Student Affairs</b>			
Date Received:			
Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Deny <input type="checkbox"/>		Response Attached <input type="checkbox"/>	Student "appeal by" date:
Name		Signature	
Date:		<b><i>Form with student appeal file retained by Office of Student Affairs; copy sent to student grievant</i></b>	

<b>Policy Step 3: Appellate Committee</b>			
Date Received:			
Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Deny <input type="checkbox"/>		Response Attached <input type="checkbox"/>	Student "appeal by" date:
Chair Name		Signature	
Date:		<b><i>Form with student appeal file sent to the Office of Student Affairs; copy sent to student grievant</i></b>	

<b>Policy Step 4: University President</b>			
Date Received:			
Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Deny <input type="checkbox"/>		Letter to student and University Registrar	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name		Copy to VPSA and committee chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signature			Date:

*The student complaint record must be maintained in accordance with the Non-Academic Grievance Policy and retained for a minimum of five years.*



## Non-Academic Student Grievance Report (Sexual Harassment)

*This form serves as the official cover sheet for the written student complaint file. It will accompany all student and administrative responses and documentation associated with the written grievance.*

<b>Policy Step 1: Director of HR (issue v. faculty/staff) / Vice President for Student Affairs (issue v. another student)</b>			
Date Received:		Department/Unit:	
Student Name:		900 Number:	
Approve <input type="checkbox"/>	Deny <input type="checkbox"/>	Response Attached <input type="checkbox"/>	Student "appeal by" date:
Name		Signature	
Date:		<i>Form with student appeal file sent to/retained by the Office of Student Affairs; copy sent to student grievant</i>	

<b>Policy Step 2: Appellate Committee</b>			
Date Received:			
Approve <input type="checkbox"/>	Deny <input type="checkbox"/>	Response Attached <input type="checkbox"/>	Student "appeal by" date:
Chair Name		Signature	
Date:		<i>Form with student appeal file sent to the Office of Student Affairs; copy sent to student grievant</i>	

<b>Policy Step 3: University President</b>			
Date Received:			
Approve <input type="checkbox"/>	Deny <input type="checkbox"/>	Letter to student and Director of HR or VPSA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name		Copy to committee chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signature			Date:

*The student complaint record must be maintained in accordance with the Non-Academic Grievance Policy and retained for a minimum of five years.*