

Policy Number	601.000
Policy Title	Student Non-Academic Grievance and Appeal Policy
Responsible Officers	Dean of Student Life
Responsible Offices	Student Life
Summary	The following policy addresses the process by which a student may file an appeal or a formal grievance should a dispute arise regarding a decision made or treatment toward a student by the university whether a department or an employee. (Academic disputes and/or grievances will follow a separate policy.)
Definitions	<i>Student Grievance:</i> A student grievance is a perceived or actual cause for a student complaint arising out of some perceived or actual harm due to an action taken by the university or a university employee. These grievances address a university-related problem or condition which a student believes to be unfair, inequitable, discriminatory, or a hindrance to the overall educational process. A grievance may also include discrimination on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, disability, or biological sex/gender at birth. <i>Appeal:</i> An appeal is made when there is a disagreement regarding a decision made by the university or a university employee affecting an individual student.
Approving Body	The Academic Council; The Administrative Council
Approval Date	May 2014; May 1, 2017; May 8, 2017
Last Revision	January 2016
Re-evaluation Date	Fall 2019
Departmental Impact	All University

Failure to follow the following policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Policy Statement

Columbia International University shall have a process that formally address the process by which a student may file a formal grievance against the university, a university department, or a university employee or appeal a decision rendered to a student by a university department or employee.

Rationale

Students should be provided a structured process by which they may appeal a university decision, or voice a formal grievance as a result of a real or perceived wrong they have incurred resulting from a university action or decision by a department or an employee.

Policy Procedures

If there is a non-academic issue at hand, it must first be determined whether it is an appeal or a grievance. (If the matter is a perceived incident of discrimination on the basis of sex, please refer to the Title IX policy.)

An appeal should be submitted when there is a disagreement with a decision made by the university or a university employee. Appeals should be made, in writing, to the person/department rendering the decision with which there is disagreement. A response will come within five business days. If the response is not satisfactory, an appeal may be made to the supervisor of the person/department responding to the initial appeal. This appeal should be made within three days of the previous decision. The response from the supervisor will come within five business days and is final and binding on all parties. This appeal procedure does not apply to academic decisions (see Academic Matters above). A grievance should be submitted when a student believes he/she has been mistreated by a CIU faculty or staff member. The grievance process is described as follows:

Step 1: After submitting a written grievance, the student should formally discuss the matter with the individual or office involved. If a student believes Step 1 is especially daunting or inappropriate given the situation, he or she may proceed to Step 2. This procedure should not be followed in the case of a disciplinary appeal. Please refer to the disciplinary appeal process stated earlier in the student handbook.

After a discussion with the individual or office involved, if the student feels the situation has not been resolved satisfactorily, Step 2 of this process may be taken:

Step 2: Once a student has addressed the individual or office involved, the student may direct a letter explaining the grievance to the supervisor of the person or office involved. If unknown, Student Life should be contacted for the name of the appropriate person to address. The student should submit the letter in writing within three days of receiving information identifying the contact person.

After submitting a letter, the student may request a meeting to present a verbal statement, bring witnesses and evidence, and to answer questions. In addition, the student may request a neutral observer (only) who is a current CIU student to join him/her at this meeting. Neither the student nor the observer will be allowed to be present during the decision process. Following the discussion and decision, the appropriate university representative will provide a written response to the student outlining the decision within five business days.

Step 3: If this response does not resolve the issue, the grievance may continue through the following process in order:

1. Dean of Student Life X5234 (Student Center)
2. Provost X5027 (Administration Building)

In each instance the student with the grievance should contact the next office within three business days of notification from the previous office. The CIU official will reply back within five business days of notification from the student filing the grievance.

Hyperlinks: www.ciu.edu/policy