

# Grievance Policy

The Grievance Policy applies to all students, faculty, and staff of the University and to issues involving other employees, students, and/or third parties with contractual relationships with the University. These grievance procedures are not applicable to complaints, such as academic appeals, that have other internal remedies in place.

## Informal Resolution:

Discussions between the parties at all levels of the University should occur in good faith to attempt to resolve the dispute. An informal resolution procedure is recommended below.

## Formal Resolution:

If a dispute is not satisfactorily resolved through informal means then a formal grievance may be initiated. In a formal grievance, the following points are important, and are described in detail below: The grievant submits the written complaint to the appropriate Grievance Coordinator within the timelines described in these Procedures for consideration and further action. The written complaint states the nature of the grievance, the steps that have been taken, and the resolution expected.

A Grievance Hearing Panel is convened to determine whether the issue qualifies as a grievance as defined by this Policy and, if so, to hear the grievance and make recommendations on the action, if any, to be taken. The Director of Human Resources will be automatically informed when a formal grievance has been filed against an employee.

## Grievance – Definition:

A grievance is an allegation by an individual based on specific perceptions or experience that there has been a misinterpretation, misapplication, discriminatory application, or violation of a University policy or procedure. The intent of the grievance process is to resolve a dispute over significant issues and is generally not applicable to minor disagreements. A member of the Sofia Community who files a grievance has the burden of demonstrating, by a preponderance of the evidence, that they have been wronged. The following situations may be grieved:

- Alleged violations of academic freedom
- Alleged violations of the University's ethical standards
- Unsafe or inappropriate work assignment
- Unsafe working conditions
- Policy application
- A repeated pattern of harassment or other inappropriate behavior
- Legally prohibited unequal treatment including, but not limited to, discrimination or harassment based on age, sex, race, religion, color, ethnic/national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status

These grievance procedures may also be utilized to review the process and procedures of awarding faculty promotions, classification, salary increases, and non-reappointment. Grade disputes, admission decisions, graduation appeals, and similar academic decisions are not grievance issues, unless they fall into one of the seven categories listed above.

Students have the option of contacting the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education to address grievances at 1747 North Market Blvd., Suite 225, Sacramento, CA 95834, (916) 431-6959 or (888) 370-7589